ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	SELF, SPACE, SOCIETY, AND SAINT IN THE WELL-PROTECTED DOMAINS: A HISTORY OF OTTOMAN SAINTS AND SAINTHOOD, 1500-1780
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Through an exploration of the historical trajectory of Islamic saints and sainthood across the early modern Ottoman world by means of a wide selection of case studies this dissertation argues for the importance of sainthood in all its facets as both a subject of Ottoman history and as a lens for illuminating many other aspects of social and cultural history. Beginning with the newly expanded empire under Selīm I (r. 1512-1520) and stretching all the way to the second half of the eighteenth century, this study explores the intersection with saints and sainthood of large-scale political and social transformations that shaped the empire as a whole at various points during this time-span, from the integration of new provinces into the empire to the rise of Islamic puritanism to the elaboration of new sociabilities and expressions of the self. The case studies that structure this study range from examinations of particular important figures and their textual corpora such as ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī (d. 1565) and ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (d. 1731) to investigations centered on particular regions or communities, paying particular attention to rural contexts in Syria, the Kurdish lands, and Anatolia. Subjects and sources, in a wide range of genres, from both the Arabophone and Turcophone divisions of the empire are treated, the

dissertation examining the empire as an interconnected whole despite linguistic differences. Eschewing a focus on Islamic mysticism or sufi organizations narrowly conceived, I demonstrate the socially distributed nature of sainthood and its interplay with many aspects of wider discourse and practice. Drawing upon theoretical models of script and repertoire, language and dialect, I work to make sense of different yet interrelated practices of Ottoman sainthood across the empire, paying especial attention to the uses and constructions of social space, the performance and making of the self, and the generally socially embedded nature of saints and associated phenomena. Finally, this study unfolds within the context of the wider early modern world, Islamicate and beyond, with the larger goal of situating my arguments and findings within the global patterns and dynamics that marked the early modern world.

SELF, SPACE, SOCIETY, AND SAINT IN THE WELL-PROTECTED DOMAINS: A HISTORY OF OTTOMAN SAINTS AND SAINTHOOD, 1500-1780

by

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In writing a work of this length and scale, so many people are necessarily involved, knowingly and unknowing, in its ultimate shape, whether in direct interventions or in any number of indirect and subsidiary ones. While I have drawn upon the services of many libraries in the course of this dissertation, a couple stand out: while I did not end up using as much of the material as I had originally planned, the staff at the Gazi Husrev Beg Library in Sarajevo were wonderfully helpful and enthusiastic, both in aiding me in using the library's resources and in suggesting other resources in Sarajevo. To them I owe my encounters with the kind sufis of the Mejtaš Tekija with whom I shared a moving night of *zikr*, fine feasting, and long talks about the place of religious life and devotion in the modern world. I must also thank the staff at the National Library of Israel and their enthusiasm in helping me peruse the Arabic manuscripts in their holdings. Relatedly, I offer my thanks to everyone in the former Ottoman lands who, over the last several years, has lent me hospitality, help, and guidance, often in the midst of very fraught and unsettling political situations.

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hold forth ad nauseum about Ottoman saints, repertoires, ʿAlid piety, and God knows best what else, as well as for your kindness and care towards myself and my family. And I owe much gratitude to the administrative staff at Maryland, without whom my graduate career—and that of many of my colleagues, no doubt—would have been much harder and perhaps would have ceased altogether.

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Introduction:

i. The primary arguments, goals, and historiographic interventions of this study:

When, over a decade ago now, I first set foot in Morocco during a bleary February, I had already been studying Islamic history for a few years, and felt that I had some degree of familiarity with the Islamic past and with Islam as a lived religion. However, as I explored the medinas and countrysides of the Maghrib, simultaneously studying Arabic seriously for the first time at a school in Fes, I began to realize that the image of Islam I had rendered from my studies was rather lacking. I had not taken into account the centrality—or even existence, really—of holy men and women, in particular the existence of their tombs and the veneration shown those tombs, evidence of which I was seeing everywhere, and in forms I certainly had not expected—women of all ages and degree of head-covering carrying candles and incense into the opulent interior of Moulay Idriss' shrine at the heart of Fes, for instance. My fascination with the role of saints and sainthood in Islam began with that experience of unexpected discovery, and carried over into my later discovery of Ottoman history and the evident centrality of friends of God—many of whose tombs, scattered across the post-Ottoman lands, remain vibrant sites of pious visitation—in early modern Ottoman life. This dissertation that you have before you is the result, ultimately, of those discoveries. It is my hope for you, dear reader, that while engaging with my arguments, historiographic interventions, and methodological and theoretical approaches, you will also feel some of that sense of discovery, wonder, and reorientation as we navigate together the many saintly realms whose traces lie within the following pages.

But first: this introduction will cover, first, the overall scope of this study and its central arguments, goals, guiding directions, and its most important interventions in the existing

historiography. Second, I have broken down my discussion of major terms, my central methodologies, theoretical approaches, and more particular historiographic interventions through reference to the terms in the title: saint, self, space, and society. This breakdown is followed by a brief discussion of my source base, and finally an overview of the study's seven chapters. We begin with a most fundamental question, namely, what really is this sprawling study that you now have looming before you *about*? Answer: this study is not only an attempt to trace a cultural, social, and religious[1] history of saints and sainthood, primarily but not exclusively in Islamic iterations, within the early modern Ottoman Empire, but just as importantly to locate and place saints and sainthood front and center in Ottoman history overall, and to demonstrate how many other vital aspects of that history can be better seen and understood through placing sainthood at the forefront. The study of women and gender in the Ottoman lands is an obvious analogy: it is not simply a question of introducing neglected subjects and thematic topics, but, in the case of women and gender, of showing the centrality of women and the pervasiveness and vitality of gendered discourse and practice across the width and breadth of Ottoman life, from within the walls of the imperial harem all the way to behind the flaps of nomads' tents, and everywhere in between. Alongside this foremost concern with locating and situating saints and sainthood within early modern Ottoman history, certain other unifying arguments and themes have emerged in the course of my work, each of which engages with different bodies of historiography. While within the various chapters I make a number of subsidiary, though still important, arguments—ranging from the role of rurality in Ottoman sainthood to how best to

[1] The meanings of 'cultural,' 'social,' and 'religious' are of course hardly self-evident, though I explore the first two further below, and trust that my own usages will become clear over the course of this study in a way that my laying them out blankly would not accomplish.

think about issues of heterodoxy, confessionalization, and the role of Shiʿism and deviant dervish discourse and identities—the following arguments are consistently structural.

a. Ottomanization and the role and nature of socio-cultural conflict:

I use the terms 'Ottoman' and 'Ottomanization' in a variety of ways in these pages, reflecting usages during the period, as well as long-standing historiographic conventions, their more recent modifications, and my own contributions. Narrowly, 'Ottoman' refers to members of the ruling elite, those in service in some way—during the first part of our period, primarily as *ḳul*s, 'slaves' of the sultan—and their culture, their language, and of course the political administration centered on the dynasty of the House of ʿOsmān. At its broadest 'Ottoman' encompasses the entirety of the lands that ʿOsmān's descendant ruled (or claimed to rule), including the peoples and their cultures and societies in all their diversity. In between those two definitions are still others: 'Ottoman' and 'Rūmī,' for instance, are often mutually constitutive if not synonymous,[2] while looking further afield 'Ottoman' might be applied to cultural products, patterns, and markers of identity and practice that seem to be unique to the world within the empire (or at least originating there), but not necessarily restricted to Turkish speakers, Muslims, or people connected with the Enderūn. My sense of 'Ottoman' that I am driving at here can be seen best in light of the vectors of 'Ottomanization'—of 'becoming Ottoman'—that I identify, and which may be summarized as processes whereby cultural, social, and religious (to name the factors I am interested in, not as an exclusive list) practices and concepts were drawn

[2] On this broader issue of 'identity' and geographic location and imagination, see Cemal Kafadar, 'A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum,' in *Muqarnas*, no. 24 (2007): 7–26.

increasingly close together, as similar or the same practices and performances came to be shared across the width and breadth of Ottoman space by multiple populations and communities.

I argue for the existence and importance of three major vectors along which I see this process happening vis-à-vis saints and sainthood. First, though not necessarily chronologically prior, is the expansion of Ottoman (here in the more restricted sense of the *devlet* and its personnel) power, authority, and distinctive ruling structures, expansion that took place in different ways through the incorporation of the Mamluk domains, wars against the Safavids, and the articulation and geographic penetration of the Ottoman 'legal-administrative complex' (to name the three most important aspects for this study). This expansion, which included attempts by the sultanic center to both claim and control Islamic sainthood, was met by individuals and communities of sanctity across the empire in similar ways, and it is this combination of centrally-directed projects and shared and frequently similar local responses that I regard as one form of 'Ottomanization.' Second, and related, is the emergence of a distinctly Ottoman 'puritanism' (itself a fraught term, which we will unpack further in part two) in the seventeenth century, beginning in western Anatolia and in Istanbul but ultimately—as this study will demonstrate—present and potent in most if not all of the Well-Protected Domains. Much as sultanic attempts to capture and control sainthood were met by shared—if uncoordinated—responses, the rise and efflorescence of puritanism, which manifest itself along many axes of social and political life—precipitated shared responses from the saints and their supporters across the empire. This time, however, those responses were to some degree coordinated and self-consciously interlocking, something we will explore further in our consideration of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī.[3] Third and

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[3] My thinking here has made use of the insights of Lewis Coser on the role of conflict; the following lines are particularly applicable: '[T]h very act of entering into conflict with an antagonist establishes relations where none may have existed before. Conflict is seen as a binding element between parties that may previously have

finally, closely related to the role puritanism and resistance to puritanism played in driving a shared sense of community and identity across the Arabic-Turkish linguistic divide, was the continually increasing circulation of people, practices, communities, texts, and expressions and forms of sainthood from one end of the empire to the other, perhaps the most robust form of 'Ottomanization' and that which would last the longest, culminating in late Ottoman attempts in the broader political and cultural realm to forge a shared 'Ottomanness' that would transcend even religious boundaries. Again, the work of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī reveals this form of Ottomanization in especial relief, but we will see it manifest starting in chapter one, at first through overt resistance to 'Rūmīfication' (the predecessor in much of the Arab world to 'Ottomanization' proper) on the part of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī.

b. The relationship between saint(hood) and 'sufi,' 'sufism,' and ṭarīqa/ṭarīḳat, and the question of 'popular religion': Another central goal of this study is closely related to my deliberate selection and centering of 'saint and sainthood' (terms whose meaning in these contexts I will discuss further below), and my limited usage and indeed decentering of the terms and routes of approach through which the material I cover, when it has been covered at all, have generally been interpreted: sufi, sufism, and *ṭarīqa*.[4] To be sure, excellent work has been done in

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stood in no relation to each other.' Lewis A Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict.* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1956), 121.

[4] My use of the lowercase for 'sufi' and 'sufism' is deliberate: it suggests the conterminious nature of *taṣawwuf* with other Islamic 'disciplines,' such as *fiqh* or *kalām*, neither of which are typically capitalized in contemporary scholarly discourse in English. Besides being accurate, especially for our period, in which most educated Muslims, men and women, would have some apprehension of and experience with the texts and concepts of taṣawwuf just as they would those of rhetoric, hadith criticism, *fiqh*, and so forth, the non-capitalization of sufism avoids the erroneous and indeed dangerous contemporary commonplace of describing sufism as a 'sect' or a 'form' of Islam distinct from, say, Sunnism and Shiʿism, or even as being detached from Islam altogether (to be sure, *taṣawwuf can* be detached from Islam, as the existence of Jewish sufism or of the use of *taṣawwuf* in South Asian non-Islamic contexts would indicate).

the context of Ottoman religious history, and upon which I have drawn in the course of this study, using those terms as their primary coordinates. John Curry's study of the Şa'bâniyye, a Halvetī *ṭarīḳat* 'sub-branch,' is both thorough and served as an entry point for my own study in some ways, with his examination of saint veneration and shrine formation especially helpful and resonant with my focuses here, even if I have eschewed his focus upon sufism and a particular *ṭarīḳat*.[5] Similarly, Dina LeGall's otherwise excellent study of the Naqsbandiyya in the Ottoman world, *A Culture of Sufism*, while offering many important insights and corrections of the image of the Naqshbandīs and their relation to Akbarian theology, puritanism, and reform, among other things, takes that *ṭarīḳat* as its primary focus, a focus which tends to lose sight of both the situation of a given *ṭarīḳat* within wider contexts while also reifying the role of *ṭarīḳat* across the board, to the exclusion of other sites of authority and legitimation, such as sainthood.[6] Works on specific Ottoman saints (sometimes recognized as such, sometimes not) have faced two problems in this regard: for instance, Derin Terzioğlu's detailed and thoughtful dissertation on Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, by focusing primarily on him as a 'Sufi sheikh,' does not bring into account the wider context of both polemical struggles and of discourses and practices of sainthood in which Mıṣrī participated and in which his career and works make much more sense (Paul Ballanfat's treatment of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, *Messianisme et Sainteté*, while incorporating Mıṣrī's sainthood into

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[5] John J. Curry, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire the Rise of the Halveti Order, 1350-1650* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

[6] Dina Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandīs in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700*, SUNY Series in Medieval Middle East History (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005). Similar things might be said of any number of other less sophisticated studies of ṭarīḳats, such as, for instance, Nathalie Clayer, *Mystiques, Etat et société: les Halvetis dans l'aire balkanique de la fin du XVe siècle à nos jours* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

his analysis, has its own issues that limit its utility).[7] Similar things could be said of Side Emre's treatment of Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī, or the two recent monographic treatments of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, each of which we will have occasion to consider further along in this study.[8]

Why have I not followed the lead of these previous works (and of course many others not mentioned here) in privileging sufism and *ṭarīḳat* as sites of analysis? My rationale is two-fold: one, sufism by this period had become so mainstream, as Nile Green and others have pointed out, that it is not inaccurate to say that Islam was sufism and sufism was Islam for the majority of people, and even for those who might not have gone so far, sufism was a perfectly acceptable and everyday component of normative Islam, such that no one in our period would have completely rejected sufism any more than they would have rejected *fiqh*.[9] In that regard, to call a phenomenon or individual 'sufi' may well be accurate, but not especially meaningful, given the sheer capaciousness of the term during our period and the omnipresence of sufi discourse and practice far beyond the confines of *zāwiya* or *tekke*.[10] On the other hand, 'saint' and 'sainthood,' while certainly deeply colored by specifically sufi theologies, theories, practices, and the contributions and performances of self-identified sufis, cannot be collapsed into 'sufism,' but exists outside of it, analogous to the place of devotion to Muḥammad during our period. Or, to put it another way, while many saints were sufis, not all saints were sufis (and certainly not all

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[7] Derin Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissent in the Ottoman Empire: Niyazî-i Mısrî (1618-1694)' (PhD dissertation, Harvard, 1999). Paul Ballanfat, *Messianisme et Sainteté: Les poèmes du mystique ottoman Niyāzī Mıṣrī (1618-1694)* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2012).

[8] Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascusa `Abd Al-Ghani Al-Nabulusi, 1641-1731* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); Samer Akkach, *ʿAbd Al-Ghani Al-Nabulusi: Islam and the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007).

[9] Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), esp. 125-130.

[10] See, for instance, the role of sufi thought and practice in constructions of the Ottoman 'caliphate,' a topic to which we will return later, in Hüseyin Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

sufis were saints!). *Ṭarīqa*s, in particular, not only played a frequently ambiguous role—or no role at all—in performances and receptions of sainthood, when relevant they often functioned primarily as conduits for the transmission of sainthood or of sanctity more generally (the building blocks of sainthood, we might say). The role and centrality of specific sufi 'ways' varied immensely in our period and across our various geographies. Sainthood as a site and object of analysis, then, provides a much more capacious approach of analysis and discovery, one that need not fix a given individual or his or her veneration within narrow doctrinal or theological forms or specific sufi communities. Instead, the social construction of and engagement with saints and sainthood took place at every level of Ottoman society, and not just among Muslims, much less solely among sufis. That is not to say that sufis and sufism do not play a major role in what follows, particularly in terms of source production, but rather that I am taking them as one set (in reality, a vast and heterogeneous category in themselves) out of other communities and identities in the Ottoman world involved in the history of saints and sainthood.

We might be tempted, having pushed back on or even set aside the terms regularly associated with 'sufi,' to put saints and sainthood in the nebulous category of 'popular religion.' But this approach would do little to solve our underlying methodological problems, while employ of the concept of popular religion has its own issues. In the words of Peter Brown:

> The category of 'popular religion' is, by definition, timeless and faceless, because it exhibits modes of thinking that are unintelligible except in terms of failure to be something else—failure through the pressures of anxiety, failure through the absence of the cultural and social preconditions of rational thought, failure through that hard fate has condemned half of the population of any age, through the accident of gender, to being members of 'that timorous and pious sex.'[11]

[11] Peter Brown, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 12.

The sort of approach that Brown castigates can be seen, to some degree, in not a few treatments of early modern Ottoman holy people and of religious life, whether or not the authors identify the presence and role of the saints. For instance, James Grehan's recent *Twilight of the Saints*, despite being a helpful compendium of saints and saintly practices from our period, falls prey to an overly sharp distinction between the normative Islam of the cities and the 'agrarian religion,' an expression of deep-seated, pre-Islamic notions and norms Grehan argues, of the countryside. In Grehan's rendering, while saints, sainthood, and devotion to saints (and the physical apparatus and accompanying practices) are laid out in some detail, the continuum from urban sainthood to rural is overlooked, as is the complex interplay of local, rural sufism with the more 'canonical' and established urban varieties. Not only does Grehan isolate saints and sainthood from broader Ottoman cultural and intellectual life, reproducing a 'bi-cultural' model of 'high' and 'low' religion, he presents a world of rural religious practice (and its related analogues occupying urban space here and there) that is 'timeless' in its continuity with the pre-Islamic past, incapable of dynamism other than descending into the eponymous 'twilight.'[12] The following passage offers a summary of his view of the relationship between 'low' saint-centered rural religion and the 'literate traditions' of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism: 'Religious learning hardly disturbed an oral culture whose deeply ingrained modes of piety had only a passing acquaintance with literate tradition. The resulting cultural vacuum was quite sufficient to guarantee the vitality of agrarian religion in its manifold forms—or at least to prevent it from being seriously challenged, whether in town or country.'[13] In such a rendering (and Grehan is not alone, but stands in a long history of interpreting 'popular religion' in the Ottoman world as so much shamanism, fertility

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[12] See, for instance, James Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints: Everyday Religion in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Oxford University Press, 2014), esp. 4-19.

[13] Ibid., 60.

cultism, and so forth) practices of sainthood are essentially static—or, if there is any dynamism or response to wider historical change it is irretrievable because of the chasm between 'oral' and 'literary' cultures. Suffice to say, my approach here is quite different, and is in no small part a rejoinder to such perspectives that would take Ottoman saints and sainthood as simply instances of unchanging 'popular religion,' 'syncretism,' or—as has often been the case in studies of Anatolian religious practice—'heresy.'[14]

c. Locating Ottoman saints and sainthood in global early modernity: Here my study lies very much within the current historiographic mainstream of Ottoman history, which has in recent years made considerable strides in placing the Ottoman world in dialogue with the wider early modern world, from the rest of Europe to the Safavids to the Indian Ocean to contexts even further afield.[15] European historiography, too, has made some progress towards reciprocating, with the place of the Ottomans in European early modernity, broadly construed, by far the best research and established aspect of this wider early modern frame. My work fits within this approach in two ways: one, I identify aspects of Ottoman sainthood (or sainthoods, as the case may be) from this period that accord well with trends and processes often identified as 'early modern,' such as (discussed further in this introduction) the increase and spread of many modes

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[14] At least the idea of the 'colonizing dervish,' for all its other problems, contains within it the idea of religious dynamism and the interface of 'popular' practice and sainthood with important political transformations and historical change.

[15] To give but a sampling of recent works: Walter G. Andrews, *The Age of Beloveds : Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham : Duke University Press, 2005); Kishwar Rizvi (ed.), *Affect, Emotion, and Subjectivity in Early Modern Muslim Empires: New Studies in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Art and Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Palmira Johnson Brummett, *Mapping the Ottomans: Sovereignty, Territory, and Identity in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015); I. M. Kunt and Christine Woodhead, *Suleyman The Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014); Virginia H Aksan and Daniel Goffman, *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

of sociability, or the appearance of life-writing in great abundance, or changes to self-perception and performance. While, as many others have expressed too, I am not entirely satisfied with the term 'early modern,' given its teleological overtones, even if this was the place to attempt to field a replacement I do not have a good alternative in mind. My approach has the advantage, in terms of situatedness within a global early modern framework, of taking as its analytic focus a subject that is broadly transposable to (though not collapsible into) other contexts, providing useful grounds of comparison and dialogue in a way that, say, an exclusive focus on sufism and *ṭarīqa* might not.

While I am convinced that all of these overall approaches are in their main points correct and will stand up to further scrutiny, I also recognize that this study is massively ambitious in scope, in historiographic situatedness, in chronological coverage, and so forth, and as such there are arguments that could benefit from greater development, and vast swaths of Ottoman history which I do not cover—most notably in terms of geography, I have made no attempt to include the Balkans in this study, primarily because of space limitations.[16] Had I included archival research in this dissertation—which would have necessarily entailed a narrower thematic or geographic focus—I could have addressed one of the key routes of analysis that I have largely left out, namely, the economic and legal-administrative particularities of sainthood, through examination of relevant *waqf*s and other documents.[17] We will see aspects of saintly wealth

[16] I had originally intended to devote a section to Bosnia at the very least, and spent some weeks in Sarajevo doing archival and field work, traces of which are visible here and there in this study; ultimately I decided that further geographic expansion was just not feasible. For the same reason I was forced to push Ottoman Mosul and most of non-Kurdish Iraq to the background. I do not want to suggest that either region and context is somehow less important than those I have included—as this study will make clear, the Ottoman borderlands played a central role in the realization of Ottomanized sainthood.

[17] I take a certain solace here in Kleinburg's discussion of Latinate sainthood: 'The economic and civic aspects of a saint's presence in a community have often been emphasized (the saint was a source of income and political power), but the sense of spiritual sharing has not. The nun who saw into Lukardis's heart could find consolation for her own frustration through Lukardis. She received heavly hosts that filled her with

accumulation and use, but given my source base (on which see below) we will not be able to engage in fine-grained analysis of the sort archival documents might provide, nor have I attempted, for the most part, to address in-depth issues like patronage of *zāwiya*s and of shrines and the like. Similarly, it is possible that legal-administrative documents could provide additional insights into the social embededness of saints and of institutions like shrines, as well as the local and imperial political connections that might be visible. And related to the absence of archive-based approaches, I have made only provisional use of art and architecture, primarily because of limitations of space within the dissertation and of time to visit and examine relevant structures, along with the currently insurmountable problem that many structures worthy of inclusion in this study are currently inaccessible due to conflict or political tensions. With all these limitations in mind, I have written this study with an awareness of the often heuristic and provisional nature of my findings, and of the need for greater and more in-depth engagement with many of the particular problems and issues raised herein.

ii. Methodologies, theories, historiographic bodies:

a. Saint and Sainthood: Defining 'saint' in any historical context is notoriously tricky; 'sainthood' is perhaps even more fraught. In one sense, this entire study is devoted to 'defining' saints and sainthood, or, rather, identifying the ways in which people in various Ottoman societies through this period defined and practiced sainthood, determining in the process what constituted those things for them, and how. The matter of the applicability of the very terms 'saint' and 'sainthood' outside of Christian contexts has of course been much debated, in an

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consolation… The insignificance of daily life, the drudgery of an uneventful existence, was redeemed by the meaning that the very presence of the saint gave even to the common and the trivial. Aviad M. Kleinberg, *Prophets in Their Own Country: Living Saints and the Making of Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 110.

Islamic context and otherwise. My usage here is in a relatively expansive sense, more or less in line with David M. DiValerio's argument concerning the use of the term sainthood in the context of early modern Tibet: 'across cultures and time there are meaningful similarities to be identified in the processes through which individuals come to be perceived by others as having achieved an exalted religious state, and subsequently become the subject of devotion or worship. For this reason, a general phenomenon of "sainthood," unmoored from the specificities of any particular religion, is a worthy term and object of study.'[18] To be sure, usage of the very term 'sainthood,' must always return to particular contexts, traditions, and histories, but in so doing we may connect those various contexts through similarities of practice and orientation visible, without doing undue violence to those particularities. In an Islamic context, *walī* and *wilāyat*, while hardly exactly equivalent to Western Christian understandings of saint and sainthood, came to encompass—certainly by our period—many similar concepts of special relationship with God, performance of certain practices and deportment, the ability to channel divine power in special and powerful ways, and so forth, to say nothing of the similarities of social production that emerge under closer examination. Or, as Vincent Cornell puts it in his discussion of the terms *wilāyat/walāyat* and their translation:

> When we translate *walāya* and *wilāyat* as "Muslim sainthood," we are simply trying to "understand other cultures as far as possible in their own terms but in our language." Such is the nature of all comparative analysis, whether linguistic or otherwise. Although we should not trivialize foreign concepts by disregarding their historical, cultural, and lexicographical contexts, we may unpack or deconstruct them on different levels.[19]

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[18] David M. DiValerio, *The Holy Madmen of Tibet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 12.

[19] Vincent J. Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), xxi; On the medieval 'theory' of sainthood as manifest in Akbarian theology, see Michel Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993).

One must still decide on criteria for finding saints within the vast corpus of written material and art and architectural evidence that has come down to us. Michel Chodkiewicz offers one straightforward if limited suggestion for identifying saints within an Islamic context: 'Je retiens donc provisoirement un critère intellectuellement peu rigoureux mais pratique: la « canonisation » par la littérature. Sont saints les personnages identifiés comme tels par la tradition hagiographique – et plus particulièrement, ceux dont les noms reviennent toujours dans les grandes compilations.'[20] But while hagiography and hagiography-containing texts will certainly feature prominently in this study, we might object that Chodkiewicz's heuristic is too limited. Robert Ford Campany, whose study of early medieval Chinese transcendents has been a major touchstone for this study and the source of several of my own key terms, provides a broader approach to the meaning and location of sainthood within a given society, and points us towards the often ambiguous interface between individual intention and actual social reception:

> To say that a figure was a holy person is to say something about how others in a certain society perceived and remembered that person. A person may act in a certain fashion, may "present him or herself" by word and gesture in certain ways, but whether this self-presentation is taken up and ratified by other parties does not depend on the one presenting: other people's receptions of the performance is the deciding factor, so much so that individuals who during their lives had no intention of fulfilling the role of saint are sometimes pressed into such service by the force others' perceptions of them, while others who strove for recongition fail to win it.[21]

Campany gets at two crucial aspects of sainthood in almost any milieu, including the Ottoman one: one, sainthood is generated in the interchange between saint (or, we might say, would-be saint) and his or her publics (actual or potential, as it were). As Amira Mittermaier nicely puts it

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[20] Michel Chodkiewicz, 'Le saint illettré dans l'hagiographie islamique,"' *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques. Archives*, no. 9 (April 15, 1992), 3.

[21] Robert Ford Campany, *Making Transcendents Ascetics and Social Memory in Early Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 24.

in regard to contemporary Egyptian sainthood, 'The relationship between saint and believer, crucially, is never one-sided. It is a cycle of exchanges.'[22] Returning to DiValerio, his discussion of saintly repertoire reminds us of the necessarily dynamic and changing nature of socially embedded sainthood:

> Within the culture of their day, in the minds of their contemporaries, there were ideas of saintliness. To act in ways that associated oneself with those ideas was to draw from the repertoire of saintly behavior. Those various ideas of saintliness were not static or agreed upon by everyone; rather, they were perpetuated and contested by individuals and institutions affected by their relative levels of currency.[23]

The contestation and negotiation, as well as transformation in light of more 'neutral' historical factors, will be a major theme throughout this study, with conflict and contestation in turn offering key entry points into identifying and making sense of saintly repertoires and scripts. While I have sought to vary the metaphors I use, with some—such as 'dialect'—appearing in some places, not in others—the metaphors of repertoire, script, and performance will reoccur throughout this study as means of getting at the complex social situation and formation of sainthood, a formation that was at work and is visible both in the saints (or would-be saints) themselves as well as in their publics and in the conceptions and presentations of other observers (and opponents!).[24] Lest my usage here of performance-based metaphors be misunderstood, let me once again draw upon Campany, himself channeling Ann Swidler's *Talk of Love*:

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[22] Amira Mittermaier, *Dreams That Matter: Egyptian Landscapes of the Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 156.

[23] DiValerio, *Madmen*, 113.

[24] 'My point in what follows is not to urge that we eschew metaphor entirely, for that would be impossible, but rather to urge that we become alert to the evidence-distorting and thought-limiting implications of certain particular metaphors with which we have become numbingly familiar…. All metaphors, like categories, highlight certain aspects of things and obscure others, thus affording us handles on complex, abstract, and unwieldy phenomena. A critique of a metaphor, then, does not consist in showing that it is somehow "wrong" but in pointing out what it hides and noting the importance, for certain purposes, of attending to these hidden

> By invoking the language of role and performance, I mean to suggest that the status accorded an ascetic practitioner or a holy person is at least as much a function of how he or she is perceived and received by others as it is a function of his intrinsic attributes; that he assumes a definite role, a role defined by a repertoire of behavioral patterns anyone in that role is expected, by the surrounding public, to demonstrate; and that many of the ascetic's activities—like the activities associated with any other social role—can be fruitfully understood as directed towards this audience of others. To understand the traits and behaviors that constituted the role, the social processes by which those playing the role interacted with their audience, and their audience's response, is to understand… the making of transcendents. [25]

'Script' and 'repertoire' obviously also draw upon this idea of saintly performance and audience or public, but 'script' in particular contains a possibility that might not be immediately obvious in the above citation: the possibility of individual saintly creativity and of longer-term historical change, as 'scripts' are edited and rewritten, and as items of repertoire are modified, adapted, or discarded, sometimes successfully in terms of audience reception, sometimes not.

The language and theoretical approaches that I draw upon here, while not, for the most part, directly analogous to emic categories and terms, do not thereby do unnecessary violence to the discourse and theory of Ottoman observers themselves. While ours are not identical discursive routes, they intersect at points, or run parallel but on different planes or over different topographies. For instance, one of the most important terms in Islamicate hagiographic texts, Ottoman and otherwise, is *karāma* (pl. *karāmāt*), conventionally translated as 'miracle.' While this is sometimes a perfectly accurate translate, the fuller significance of the term might be rendered as 'signs of sanctity,' or 'marker of sanctity.' Taken together, in a hagiographic treatment *karāmāt* are the repertoire of sanctified and sanctifying practices, states, attitudes, and deeds that are the expressed content of sainthood. The shape of an individual saint's sainthood,

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aspects...' Robert Ford Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," in *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 294.

[25] Campany, *Transcendants*, 30.

its social profile, its means of being rendered legible within a community, are all expressed in a saint's *karāmāt*. For instance, in Ḥusayn al-Baytimānī's *al-Mashrab al-hanī al-qudsī fī karāmāt al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī,* to select but one of many hagiographic texts at our disposal, the '*karāmāt'* of the title include some practices and actions that fall within the category of 'disruption of customs' (*kharq al-ʿādāt*, that is, God's 'customs' in his regular operation of the world), such as his ability to know the hidden affairs and matters of people, his teaching of the jinn in his *majālis*, or his miraculous literary prodigiousness. But other practices are to be less understood as 'miracles' and more as 'effects' or 'signs' of sanctity, or even as elements within a repertoire or script of sanctity—albeit inspired by God within His saint. These include such things as ʿAbd al-Ghanī's gentleness with children, his love of discoursing for hours on end about divine reality (*ḥaqīqa*), his teaching abilities, and his willingness, indeed insistence, on teaching the *ḥaqīqa* to men and women of all social classes. In other words, these are repertoire items, actions and attitudes and occurences that many—if not all—in Ottoman Syrian would recognize or might recognize as signs of saintliness.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the societies that made up the Ottoman world—or would in the decades to follow become a part of that world, to varying degrees of integration—there existed a vast range of repertoires of sanctity and sainthood, with many scripts of sainthood in circulation through various means—hagiography, lineages of saints, oral and built memory, and so forth. There was nothing automatic or indeed systematic about how these elements of repertoire and script might be used. Shared cultural worlds—if not Geertzian systems—certainly existed, and the work of saints and sainthood(s) was partially predicated upon the existence of those worlds and the interface of scripts and repertoires of sanctity with those wider worlds—the repertoires of action and stance that constituted sainthood(s) were rarely

autonomous to concerns of sanctity, but were drawn from and keyed to a wide range of social, cultural, poltical, and economic situations and modes of understanding and practice. It is also assuredly true that those larger cultural worlds themselves were the products of life and dynamism and what we often blithely call 'agency'—the interventions of complicated and often unpredictable human beings tangled up in all the contingencies of being human in complex social situations. Saints and sainthood were a part of the constant formation and re-formation of these wider cultural worlds, of the creation and sustenance and adaptation of 'tradition' in its most capacious sense. And if this has been true of many human societies beyond the Ottoman, as we will see in what follows it was especially true of much of the Ottoman world, to the point that the sultans themselves were seen by some as supreme participants in just such a system.

In terms of wider historiography, as the preceding has already suggestd, the literature on saints and sainthood, when all medieval and early modern contexts are taken into account, is vast, with a predominance of works, unsurprisingly, focused on Latinate Christianity, especially medieval, a number of which I have consulted in the course of this study, with Aviad Kleinberg's *Prophets in Their Own Country* perhaps the most useful work from this milieu, given its focus on the 'living saint' and the complex routes of social constitution of sainthood at the level of the local and everyday.[26] If Latinate saints are often seen as products of an intricate ecclesial legal system—the workings of canonization—Kleinberg demonstrates just how local and contingent and relatively uncontrolled the making of saints remained in the late medieval West, a situation closely analogous to what would prevail in the Ottoman world.[27] A few other works, besides

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[26] Kleinberg, *Prophets in Their Own Country*, esp. 71-99.

[27] Along similar lines, Robert H. Greene, *Bodies like Bright Stars: Saints and Relics in Orthodox Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), which deals with saints' cults in late Imperial and early Soviet Russia, demonstrates the continuing 'grassroots' nature of saint-making and veneration even in contexts of continued assertions of official control and even attempts at outright destruction.

those referenced above, deserve mention in situating this work historiographically and methodologically. Lying behind all that follows here, even if not explicitly, is the foundational work of Peter Brown, whose *Cult of the Saints* was my first serious introduction to the study of sainthood historically, while his *Society and the Holy in Late Antquity* has also been particularly formative of my thought.[28] At the other end of the chronological and theoretical spectrum, Katherine Pratt Ewing's *Arguing Sainthood*, which examines the social making and contestation of Islamic sainthood in contemporary Pakistan, has been especially useful, even if I have not made use of her particular psychological approaches.[29] Also in an Islamic context, Scott Kugle's *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, Vincent Cornell's *Realm of the Saint,* John Renard's *Friends of God,* and multiple offerings by Nelly Amri, particularly her *Les saints en islam, les messagers de l'espérance*, have all been crucial in formulating my own questions, approaches, and terminology, as well as in situating Ottoman saints within a wider, related Islamicate context.[30]

Finally, I must reiterate that this is hardly a comprehensive history of Ottoman saints and sainthood even within the parameters I have laid out here, and with the previous qualifications—

[28] Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[29] Katherine Pratt Ewing, *Arguing Sainthood: Modernity, Psychoanalysis, and Islam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

[30] Cornell, *Realm of the Saint;* Scott Alan Kugle*, Sufis and Saints' Bodies: Mysticism, Corporeality, and Sacred Power in Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); John Renard, *Friends of God: Islamic Images of Piety, Commitment, and Servanthood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Nelly Amri, 'La Gloire des saints. Temps du repentir, temps de l'espérance au Maghreb 'Médiéval': D'après Une Source Hagiographique Du VIIIe/XIVe Siècle,' *Studia Islamica*, no. 93 (2001): 133–47; Nelly Amri, *Les saints en islam, les messagers de l'espérance: sainteté et eschatologie au Maghreb aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris: Cerf, 2008). I acquired it too late for this study, but her examination and translation of the life of the thirteenth century saint 'Āisha al-Mannūbiya looks promising: Nelly Amri, *La sainte de Tunis: présentation et traduction de l'hagiographie de 'Āisha al-Mannūbiyya (m. 665/1267)* (Arles: Sindbad, 2008). The following are important for sketching out the deeper historical background to Ottoman sainthood: Christopher Schurman Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyāra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Josef W Meri, *The Cult of Saints among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

limits of geographic coverage and the relative exclusion of economic and legal-jurisdictional approaches—in mind. Just in terms of the socio-cultural production of sainthood there are things I have reluctantly had to largely leave out. One such largely absent subject should be mentioned: all Ottoman saints and practices and objects of saint veneration that originated in Ottoman times participated, in one way or another, in the constructed and continually reproduced and re-enacted memory of saints of the Islamic past—both 'local' saints such as Shaykh Arslan in Damascus or Eyyüb in Ottoman Constantinople, and 'ecumenical' saints such as (above all) ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī or Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-ʿArabī. The work of memory that had brought such saints into the Ottoman present went on in many different ways, from the copying and reading and translation of classic hagiographic works to the ongoing use and renovation of saints' shrines, to name but two important loci of socially reproduced sanctified memory. And these sites of memory played a constitutive role in the continual process of saint-making. Because the topic is so large, and the historiographic base in this regard quite small, I have not been able to take approaches informed by this economy of the deep saintly memory to the degree I would like to have done. I will note when possible strategies of intertextuality, or the reading of saintly scripts out of the Islamic past into the Ottoman present, and so on, but I want to make clear that my approaches in this regard are only preliminary and to be truly effective would require an extensive study of the medieval heritage of sainthood as it was manifest, utilized, and actively reproduced in the Ottoman period. For now, such a study remains a desideratum.

b. Self: In 1641, the Jain merchant and poet Banarasidas completed his *Ardhathanak*, a record of (what he supposed to be) the first half of his life (though he died shortly thereafter), in

effect a poetic autobiography.[31] Scholars of Indian literature who have studied this text hail it as the 'first autobiography' in an 'Indian' language, albeit one that they are hard pressed to place, and which clearly has no obvious connection to the well-known explosition in life-writing taking place in English and in other Western European languages during the same period. I mention the *Adhathanak* because it is a good instance, from another, unexpected context, of another important theme developed at length in this study and structuring many of my more particular arguments: the emergence and articulation of the 'early modern self' and of new and diverse works and acts of autobiography and self-performance, in and out of texts. Ottoman articulations of self, of subjectivity, and of the autobiographic voice—which, as I will show, often emerged out of the saintly milieu—existed upon a vast continuum of similar developments, from East Asia to India to Western Europe and the Americas. In the Ottoman world, whatever global currents and patterns help to explain this conjunction, both the heritage of sainthood and the contemporary issues facing it were drivers in a distinctive Ottoman early modern self.

Overall, I propose that the early modern self'that we can discern coming into focus across these centuries, at different rates of speed and in different forms contingent on local particularities, but in an overarching continuity across much of the world, can ultimately be traced to the convergence of two fields of factors: on the one hand, the 'practiced theologies' of Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist (primarily, though not exclusively) traditions, traditions which during the early modern period saw considerable expansion in terms of adherents and of internal diversification, often of a contested and contentious nature. These practiced theologies built out from medieval iterations, having laid down a foundation of 'metaphysical' or 'theoretical'

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[31] Rupert Snell, 'Confessions of a 17th-Century Jain Merchant: The Ardhakathānak of Banārasīdās,' *South Asia Research* 25, no. 1 (2005): 79–104; Banārasīdāsa, *Ardhakathanak,* trans. by Rohini Chowdhury (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2009).

renderings of the individual, the self, and the self's relation to God (in Christian and Islamic traditions at least), other selves, and the world at large, theory that worked out in the social world—in actual selves, in bodies, in social institutions, in uses of space—through particular practices that both embedded the theological understandings of the self and themselves were the matrix in which those theologies were articulated and realized. A focus on saints and sainthood, then, is liable to uncover both expressions of self and the techniques and contexts in which those expressions arose and became legible and culturally and socially meaningful, including in contexts beyond the expression of sanctity in the usual senses.

The historiographic and theoretical literature on the study of the history of the self is of considerable scope and size, and has not been confined to the disciple of history.[32] While not as in vogue as, say, spatiality, the study of the self and its history has certainly occupied scholars' attention off and on for some time. I have drawn upon both theoretical renderings of this question as well as more focused studies of early modern autobiography, life-writing, and renderings of subjectivity, all of which have shaped my thinking and provided a globally early modern context in which to situate my offerings here.[33] Within an Ottoman context, there is now

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[32] For instance, I have found Christopher Lasch's *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times.* (London: Pan Books, 1985) an important spur in my own thinking (as did, evidently, Foucault late in his career). Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989) is probably the most important work of theory and history in this literature; a full response to his arguments (which, like much of the literature described here, is all but exclusively focused on Western European developments) exceeds my scope here obviously. On the shapes that self and autobiography could take in an early modern Buddhist context, see Beverley Foulks McGuire, *Living Karma: The Religious Practices of Ouyi Zhixu*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), esp. 23-35.

[33] A few historical works that deserve mention here, leaving aside my many readings of actual early modern autobiographies and life writings: important for suggesting the diverse forms in which early modern life-writing could present itself is the seminal article by Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Fame and Secrecy: Leon Modena's Life as an Early Modern Autobiography,' in *History and Theory* 27, no. 4 (1988): 103–18, an argument also followed in an English context in Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), proved an important stimulus in my thinking about how devotional practices might help constitute renderings of the self and of subjectivity. For thinking across early modern contexts, the articles in the following edited volume have

a small body of work dealing this issue, most notably Cemal Kafadar's article 'Self and Others,' and Dana Sajdi's *The Barber of Damascus*, both of which we will reference further along,[34] along with a handful of other offerings identifiying particular instances of autobiography and life-writing in the Ottoman lands, such as Kerima Filan's discussion of the life-writing of one Mulla Muṣṭafā of Sarajevo.[35] Sometimes such works have been noted merely in passing and without reference to the efflorescence of life-writing during this period, as in Michael Robert Hickok's casual mention of a dream journal by an unknown Bosnian administrator or the diary of another Bosnian, Haccī Nesinoğlu Aḥmed ibn Ḥasan.[36]

c. Space: In humanities scholarship as a whole, spatially-based analysis is hardly novel, and if anything, has become somewhat cliché if we are being honest. Within history spatiality

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been especially interesting: Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis, and Philippa Kelly,'s *Early Modern Autobiography: Theories, Genres, Practices* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006) offers useful models and fine-grained detail, being but one of many studies devoted to early modern English life-writing. Much further afield, Kurtis R. Schaeffer's *Himalayan Hermitess: The Life of a Tibetan Buddhist Nun* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) is an excellent approach to life-writing through the prism of gender and women's history in an unexpected context, and further suggests just the extent of the rise of early modern life-writing. And Pei-yi Wu's *The Confucian's Progress: Autobiographical Writings in Traditional China* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990) proved especially valuable in following shared potential routes of self-making and self-performance at the Eurasian level, as many of the 'obstacles' Wu records to autobiography in early modern China applied elsewhere, including in the early modern Islamicate world—as did some of the routes which overcame them. He notes, for instance, in words that could be reproduced almost precisely for the seventeenth century Ottoman world, 'However, during the sixteenth century a combination of circumstances led to the adoption of travel literature as an alternative model for autobiography, and the result was a totally new subgenre, which we shall term spiritual autobiography.' Wu, *Progress*, 95.

[34] Cemal Kafadar, 'Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature,' in *Studia Islamica*, no. 69 (January 1, 1989): 121–50; Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2013).

[35] Kerima Filan, 'Life in Sarajevo in the 18th Century (according to Mulla Mustafa's Mecmua),' in *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community*, ed. by Suraiya Faroqhi, Vera Costantini, and Markus Koller (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 317–45. The intersection of local chronicle, life-writing, and expansive literacy is visible across the early modern world: the well-known early modern English analogue of Mulla Mustafa and Ibn Budayr is the early 18th century 'History of Myddle' by Richard Gough (d. 1723), on which see Robert Mayer, '"The History of Myddle": Memory, History, and Power,' *Studies in Philology* 93, no. 1 (1996): 64–92.

[36] Michael Robert Hickok, *Ottoman Military Administration in Eighteenth-Century Bosnia* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), xxii, 10-11.

has been in vogue for some time, even if Ottoman and Islamic history—the two sub-fields in which this study most obviously participates—have not as yet made especial use of spatial frames and forms of analysis, certain quite recent works aside. While my usage of 'space' and of related concepts and approaches has been informed by my reading of spatiality theory, from Lefebvre forward, my application differs somewhat from Lefebvre in that my reading of Ottoman space owes little to class analysis or other concerns shared by Marxist historiography.[37] In fact one of things I am attempting here is to think through issues of space (and place) without prioritizing concerns more applicable to nineteenth and twentieth century contexts. Extracting from the Lefebvrean matrix the central idea that space matters and that it is socially constructed, I examine at various points in this study how the heterogeneous social construction of space and sainthood intersected and were mutually constitutive within spaces and places both literal and imaginal. There are multiple iterations of space that matter within Ottoman sainthood and which will occupy our attention at different points here, from the extremely intimate space constituted by the presence of the living saint's body (whether encountered in its physical form here below or in its other form in the world of the dream-vision) to the scale of imperial space and the routes and linkages—and barriers and intrusions—that constituted that space. Under 'space' I have also in mind what might be described as more geographic concerns, such as the ways in which the shared discursive resource of sainthood, developed at length and throughout the Islamicate world

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[37] Among the sources I have drawn intermittently upon in my spatial interventions: Albrecht Classen, *Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: The Spatial Turn in Premodern Studies* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012); R. A. Dodgshon, *Society in Time and Space: A Geographical Perspective on Change* (Cambridge" Cambridge University Press, 1998); Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Doreen B. Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Karl Schlögel, *In Space We Read Time: On the History of Civilization and Geopolitics*, trans. by Gerrit Jackson (New York City: Bard Graduate Center, 2016); Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977). For explicitly Islamic contexts, see for instance Nile Green, *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012); Meri, *The Cult of Saints,* esp. 6-14; and Ethel Sara Wolper, *Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

in the centuries previous, was manifest and transformed at the level of the sub-imperial: in regions, in particular cities (and their hinterlands), in villages, even among nomadic groupings ranging over a diversity of geographic units.

d. Society: I have saved the hardest to define term for last, in part because what precedes has already laid out much of what I mean here by 'society' and 'social.' Unlike 'self' and 'space,' terms which have structured particular historiographic bodies and trends in recent years, both, if large, of relatively maneageable size, 'society' picks up on a vast and all but shoreless current of history, and which leads into the equally vast and perhaps impossible to define field of cultural history, this study arguably being situated within both. That this work is concerned with the social construction of saints and sainthood, from multiple perseptives, and the spatial realization of that construction and its intersections with the formation and performance of the self, has already been demonstrated as well. What remains here are further themes and arguments of note that can be usefully gathered under the heading of 'society.' Most notably, perhaps, is the issue of early modern sociability, the idea that during our period practices, spaces, expectations, and general possibilities of social life expanded relative to those found in medieval settings. In the Ottoman case, the rise of the coffeehouse and the related 'conquest of the night,' along with the increased importance and social availability of things like excursions to the countryside, picnics, and other forms of outdoor recreation, all figure into sociability.[38] That sainthood would be a part of this story is not immediately obvious, but as I will argue in part two, not only did Ottoman forms of sainthood intersect with these new (or expanded) forms of sociability, saints sometimes played a direct role in these practices and in their cultural 'mainstreaming' (and in resistance to that mainstreaming!). Somewhat related to sociability because of the interplay of

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[38] As these issues will be addressed in some depth in chapter five and six, I refer the reader to those relevant chapters for further historiography.

gender roles and anxieties, society seems as appropropriate location as any to note the role of locating and analysing women's lives in this history, and, separately but relatedly, the presence of gender practices and discourses.[39] I doubt that in terms of recovering and making sense of women's religious (and otherwise) lives in the early modern Ottoman world few approaches are likely to offer as much depth and diversity as this one, and in fact one of the things I would like to spur with this study is work using sainthood as a lens that takes a more focused look at women and issues of gender and sexual practice. Finally, besides my recourse to the theories and methodological approaches of Swidler, Campany, and others described above in relation to sainthood—all of which are deeply socially inflected—this work engages with other bodies of theory and methodology that might be grouped under the heading of 'society,' including ritual theory, the history of devotion, and the construction and place of cultural memory in Ottoman societies.[40]

iii. Source bases: an outline. Issues in reading and interpreting hagiography.

Each chapter draws upon a different range of sources with their particular concerns and methodological challenges, so it is in those several chapters that I confront particular issues relevant to reading and using those sources. Here I will give a broad overview of my source base in terms of prevailing genres, languages, and methodological issues. First, in terms of languages,

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[39] While further works will be referenced in the relevant sections, important from an Ottoman perspective have been Madeline C. Zilfi (ed.), *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and on gender and sexuality, obviously important are Andrews and Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds*; and Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[40] For an overview of my approaches to ritual theory and the history of devotion, see Jonathan Parkes Allen, 'Up All Night Out of Love for the Prophet: Devotion, Sanctity, and Ritual Innovation in the Ottoman Arab Lands, 1500-1620,' in *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 30, Issue 3 (September 2019), 303-337.

while Arabic sources (the production of which entailed nothing necessarily about one's spoken language, we ought to always keep in mind) slightly predominate, I have drawn extensively upon Ottoman Turkish material as well, as part of my effort to integrate both 'halves' of the empire, reflective of one of the aforementioned core arguments of this study, namely, that sainthood was 'Ottomanized' along multiple vectors over the course of our period. Such Ottomanization only becomes visible when our gaze is thrown across as much of the empire as possible, employing both Arabic and Turkish sources (while I consulted Persian sources for this study they appear only peripherally, in the footnotes primarily).[41] This multilinguism poses a number of challenges, one of the most basic for purposes of writing this study the issue of how to transliterate terms and names found in or otherwise common to both linguistic environments. In order to better reflect this diversity, and to avoid visually unappealing usages of backslashes or partially-parenthesised words, I have not followed any single pattern in rendering names and terms in either Turkish or Arabic conventions of transliteration, but have instead varied them across the text. Hence at times the name of someone active in both Turkish- and Arabic-speaking milieus might be given in Arabic transliteration, at others in Turkish. '*Ṭarīqa'* will sometimes appear as '*ṭarīḳat*.' And so forth. Likewise, in rendering place-names I have follow the conventions of the era as much as possible, most notably in the name of the city now known as Istanbul: early modern Ottomans, whether Turkish or Arabic speakers, used at least three different names for the city: Qonṣṭantaniyya (Constantinople), Istanbūl, and Islambōl, though the latter two were primarily used by Turkish-speakers. As such I have alternatively used both 'Constantinople' and 'Istanbul' to reflect this variation.

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[41] Persian of course continued as an important literary language during our period, but not as a language of hagiography or really of any other of the major genres employed here.

In terms of primary sources, while at some point I make use of most genres of Ottoman literary production, from the (probably largest in sheer page count) meta-genre of *sharḥ* to more obvious genres like *manāqib* literature, there are a handful of genres that appear again and again. Explicit hagiography is unsurprisingly foremost, though the exact forms in which it is found vary, a variety that underlines the ambiguity of a concept like 'genre' in fact. Stand-alone *menāḳıb*s make up one important stream of this genre (or meta-genre), in which the life of a single saint is profiled, sometimes with much shorter entries describing his (and in the Ottoman case it is always *his*, though this is not universal in Islamicate societies) forebearers and descendents in sainthood. But hagiography also appears in *ṭabaqāt* or *tez̲kire* format, compilations of lives—sometimes only saints, sometimes notable people of a given city or *madhhab* or profession or *ṭarīḳat*—with entries of varying lengths and depths. And hagiography appears in other contexts, too, less expected: travel literature, for instance, is an important source for hagiography, one we will consider further as a source in part two. Even historical chronicle can contain clearly hagiographic material, sometimes extracted from *menāḳıb* works. When it comes to identifiying, reading, interpreting, and using hagiography—which in our context is often, but hardly exclusively, in the form of either a *manāqib* or a *ṭabaqāt* entry—our discussion of theoretical and methodological has already touched on some of the relevant issues. Suffice to say, while I have looked to the insights of scholars working in Latinate Christian, Islamic, Chinese, and other contexts, I have also paid close attention to the particularities of each hagiographic text and its context, as the hagiographic genre itself changed over the course of the period under consideration here.

Other genres that reoccur in what follows include the *riḥla*, or 'travel narrative,' but as we will consider the development and nature of that genre in depth later it need not concern us

here. Works of local and imperial history will weave in and out of these pages, sometimes with a decidedly hagiographic bent. While we will encounter them from time to time, explicitly 'theological' and 'theoretical' literature, including works that outline often quite sophisticated theories of wilāyat, do not figure prominently into this work except where such treatises have an especial polemical edge, and so serve to highlight contemporary debates and practices. For quite different reasons, I have made only occasional uses of poetry, not because it is unimportant, but for the simple reason that deciphering it takes me much more time than prose. Finally, with a very few exceptions, I have not drawn upon archival material here, for two reasons: one, Ottoman history has tended now for a long time to be weighted towards the archives and what those archives can—and cannot—reveal, something that I hope to counterbalance with my decidedly 'literary' constellation of sources. Second, and more fundamental, I simply did not have the time and energy to tackle both the literary and the archival bodies of material. In any future version of this dissertation for publication I do think that selective forays into the archives might prove useful, but for now that must remain a desideratum among many.

iv. Outline of chapters.

This study is divided into two parts of three chapters each, with the fourth chapter serving as a 'bridge' between the two. Part one takes as its chronological frame the years from just before Selīm's conquest of the Mamluk domains up until, roughly, the 1620s, past the age of Süleymān and into the period of decentralization and frequent rural violence, uprisings, and outright rebellions, as well as the beginnings of Ottoman 'puritanism.' Thematically, the story of expansion, pushback against, and limitations of Ottoman power and authority runs through each chapter, with especial attention to the formation of and resistance to sultanic identities and claims

of authority (claims which often amounted to a gambit for sainthood and the 'centralized' control thereof), as well as the circulation at other social levels of forms and conceptualizations of 'local' sainthood and related practices. Chapter one focuses on the life, works, and historical afterlife of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī in the context of post-conquest Egypt, examining in depth his work of hagiographic self-construction and presentation as well as his reactions to the increasing 'Rūmīfication' and 'Ottomanization' of Egyptian sainthood. The ʿAlwāniyya '*ṭarīqa*,' named for the early sixteenth century Syrian Shaykh ʿAlwān, is the locus of chapter two, which explores the transmission and transformation of sainthood within a single saintly 'genealogy' and set of practices—my working definition in this context of '*ṭarīqa*.' As such this chapter draws out the question of sufi *ṭarīqa* in some depth; it also introduces us to important aspects of sainthood in sixteenth century Rūm and of the constitutive role of the Ottoman *ʿilmiye* hierarchy. Longer and more geographically expansive than any other chapter in this study, chapter three shifts our locus of analysis to the intersection of rurality and Ottoman sainthood. Through an examination of saints and 'dialects' of sainthood in, by turn, the Kurdish Jabal al-Quṣayr, the Palestinian hinterlands of Jerusalem, a village in the orbit of Aleppo, and, finally, various locations in western and eastern Anatolia, this chapter shifts our focus onto often overlooked rural communities and argues for their visibility and importance in the articulation of Ottoman sainthood throughout the empire. It is in this chapter that I explore the conflict between sultanic claims of saintly authority and the 'resistance' and 'reinterpretation' that saints and their supporters—particularly, it seems, in rural locales—exerted in response.

If the conflict for the control of sainthood between sultanic center and local saint is a major leitmotif for part one, part two takes as even more constitutive the conflict between saints and 'anti-saints,' a vital subset in the wider Ottoman 'culture wars' in which the very nature of

Islam and Islamic society was hotly, sometimes violently, debated and in so doing transformed. A central goal running through part two is to demonstrate the complex and multi-party nature of this 'culture war,' one that involved Kāḍīzādelis and sufis, to be sure, but which was not limited to those groups, and which manifest itself even within otherwise discrete communities and tendencies in often very different ways. Chronologically part two focuses on the period from around 1670 to 1780, with chapter four—the 'bridge'—impressionistically filling in aspects of the period from 1620 to 1670. As such part two includes periods of Ottoman military defeat, territorial loss, and socio-economic strain, but also periods of recovery, economic strength, and cultural flourishing, with the increasing integrative sense of an 'Ottoman culture,' including within sainthood, an important factor across the period. As the link from part one to part two, chapter four examines the failure of the sultanic project to 'capture' sainthood, and, through an examination of select parts of Evliyā Çelebi's work, lays out ways in which members of the 'çelebi class' such as Evliyā perceived and interacted with saints and sainthood during the rise of Ottoman puritanism. I have also used his works to tackle the issue of 'deviant' saints and supposedly 'heterodox' genealogies in seventeenth century Anatolia and Istanbul, a thread that I pull forward into the eighteenth century in the conclusion of the chapter. Chapter five introduces the struggle for sainthood against Ottoman puritans in depth, while also arguing for the place of sainthood in transformations of self-perception, of social space, and of practices of sociability and consumption. This chapter explores the Turcophone side through a close reading of the hagiography of Şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī of Istanbul and his conflict with the Kāḍīzādelis along with his performances of sainthood in a milieu marked at various points by polemical struggle and then economic and cultural 'excess.' Chapter six continues many of the themes of chapter five, but through a focus on ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī and his many interventions into the 'culture wars'

as well as into emergent practices of sociability and subjectivity. It is also a re-evaluation (in conjunction with a handful of other scholars currently working on ʿAbd al-Ghanī) of this central figure in Ottoman history broadly. We return to the borderlands of the empire in chapter seven, which is the most biographical of any chapter here, unfolding much of the life of a Kurdish shaykh and immigrant to Damascus, Ṭaha al-Kurdī, drawing primarily upon his autobiographic *riḥla*, focusing upon his construction of self in relation to sainthood, his participation in ongoing processes of cultural Ottomanization near and far, and what he can tell us of forms and understandings of sainthood in rural southern Kurdistan during this period. Finally, in my conclusion, besides recapitulating the main points made over the course of this study, suggest other approaches and further ways of integrating this work and its historical contexts into global early modernity.

Before we launch into it the thick of things, I would be remiss, having begun this introduction with personal reminiscenes, to not mention some of the contemporary political contexts in which I have researched and written this dissertation. The widespread warfare that has gripped Syria, for instance, meant that archives and sites in Damascus, Aleppo, and elsewhere were—and remain—inaccessible to me, one of the factors that led to this study being so wide-ranging and not simply focused on, say, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, something I had initially contemplated. That conflict, and the ongoing conflict in Israel and Palestine, as well as other conflicts and struggles in the modern post-Ottoman lands, appear occasionally in these pages, though not by design (for instance, I did not start out wanting to address such fraught issues as the nature of Kurdish ethnicity or the historical applicability of 'Palestine' as a spatial unit, but both arose 'organically' in the course of things). But even more fundamentally, two of the underlying constants that thread throughout this study—the centrality of saints and sainthood,

on the one hand, and, at an even broader level, the presence and relative integration of 'religious' and 'ethnic' difference and diversity—are facing challenges of mere survival in much of the post-Ottoman world, and beyond. I cannot pretend to take a neutral stance on either: it would be an immense tragedy to see the extinguishing of veneration of the Friends of God or the final extirpation of religious and other markers of diversity in places like Syria, Turkey, Palestine, and beyond. And while I know that no dissertation or other scholarly work is going to change deeply set patterns and processes long in motion, I still hope that my work here and in other venues will serve as, if nothing else, a reminder of other worlds and possibilities, as a suggestion of how things have been and how they might be once again in the future, God willing.

Chapter I

Fashioning Sainthood, Contested Repertoires, and Technologies of Sanctity in Early Ottoman Egypt: Sanctity and Society in the Life, Works, and Historical Afterlives of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī

> When ʿAlī Paşa the grand vizier was appointed to Egypt the Protected and traveled there, Sayyidī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb went to al-ʿAdīliyya to greet ʿAlī Paşa. ʿAlī Paşa said to him, "If you need anything from the Sultan, I'm very close with him." The shaykh said to ʿAlī Paşa, "If you need anything from God, I'm very close with Him." ʿAlī Paşa was silent, neither offering retort or answer, knowing the power of the shaykh and the power of his word, God be pleased with him.[42]

i. Introduction:

In the detailed introductory *fihrist* of his sprawling 'auto-*manāqib*,' the *Laṭā'if al-minan*, the important sufi and saint of Cairo and main subject of this chapter, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī (1491-1565), summarized the content of the *Laṭā'if*'s introductory chapter (*muqaddima*):

> *The introduction*: it is akin to the vestibule [of a house] (*al-dihlīz*), from which one enters into the soundness of belief in the gnostics, and the lessening of opposition against them. Therein is explication concerning the station of Sayyidī ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ, from whom I have inherited these characteristics, he being from among the greatest of the saints of God who are regarded as unlearned among the majority of the people. One who does not peruse this introduction and scrutinize what is in it is unlikely to benefit from anything else of the characteristics [described] in the rest of the book.[43]

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[42] Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Milījī, *Kitāb al-Manāqib al-kubrá: Tadhkirat ūlī al-albāb fī manāqib al-Sha'rānī Sayyidī 'Abd al-Wahhāb* ([Cairo]: Maṭba'at Amīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, 1932), 131-132.

[43] 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Sha'rānī, *Lāṭā'if al-minan wa-al-akhlāq fī wujūb al-taḥadduth bi-niʿmat Allāh ʿalá al-iṭlāq: al-maʿrūf bi-al-Minan al-kubrá* (Damascus: Dār al-Taqwa', 2004), 16.

While our purposes run in rather different directions, this the opening chapter of my own work has certain parallels with al-Shaʿrānī's introduction as described here. A selective reading and interpretation of the life and historical afterlife of al-Shaʿrānī, whose life spanned the transition of Egypt from Mamluk to Ottoman rule, continuing all the way to the end of the Süleymānic era, will act as the *dihlīz* of this study, introducing in depth many of the themes and lines of approach that will reappear again and again going forward. Al-Shaʿrānī is not chronologically prior to all the other subjects of this study, but his life and historical afterlife lend themselves well as starting-points for other reasons. One of the most prodigious authors of the Ottoman period anywhere and widely hailed as an authority after his death, al-Shaʿrānī was originally of rural origins, his rise to the station of a prominent—and powerful—Cairene saint being in itself no small accomplishment. His rise nonetheless did not isolate him from milieus of craftsmen and peasants, illiterate saints and humble supplicants before the seats of power, with, as noted above, his illiterate shaykh ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ a constant presence in his own performance of sufism and sainthood.[44] The relative disjunctures between al-Shaʿrānī's rural origins, the imaginal and spiritual worlds in which he was formed and which he continued to inhabit, and the urban worlds into which he propelled himself, of *ʿulāmā* and *ʿumārā*, of *shaykhs al-Islām* and Ottoman pashas, helps to explain al-Shaʿrānī's textual and social productivity and point at why he is such a vital source for understanding those diverse and often conflicting worlds. His social position was neither a given nor inherently secure; his life was not immune from conflict with people and groups high and low in the social strata. Far from it. Instead, as we will see, al-Shaʿrānī's own understanding and performance of sainthood were fundamentally shaped by such contexts of

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[44] On this milieu, see Adam Sabra, 'Illiterate Sufis and Learned Artisans: the Circle of ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Shaʿrani,' in Richard J. McGregor and Adam Sabra (eds.), *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamlouke* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2006), 153-168.

displacement, disjuncture, and conflict. His prolix textual productions, which appear prodigious even in light of the standards of an era in which multi-volume *shurūḥ* were often the keystone works of a scholar's career, were in many cases his attempt to deal with the presence of conflict and to turn it to his own ends. His prolificity was not restricted to the textual realm, but was also made manifest in the arena of social life in the physical world. Al-Shaʿrānī moved in many social circles and was engaged in all manner of social and cultural activity, much of it oriented around his familial *zāwiya* complex, a place that by the end of his life had become a veritable little empire of charitable work, spiritual instruction, and saintly self-performance, extending far beyond the physical walls of the place.[45] Al-Shaʿrānī lived in an age of marked uncertaintity and transition, which would have required special measures even if he himself had not been under the particular pressures of humble origin crossed with far-ranging ambition. That he both came to thrive in this world and that his venerable memory and work lasted long after his physical death were not accidental, but reflected his own long-term strategies, constant activity, and adroit social maneuvering, all pursued under the aegisis of sainthood.

Given that anything like a comprehensive treatment of al-Shaʿrānī is not possible here, I have focused on three thematic areas of analysis, preceded by a brief discussion of the wider historical context of al-Shaʿrānī's life and the basic trajectory of his career and works. First, I will examine selected 'technologies of self' which al-Shar'ānī deployed in his project of sainthood, a project that also depended on his constant interweaving with himself of the authority and sanctity of other holy people in and around Cairo.[46] His ongoing project of sainthood was

[45] On the foundational and operation of al-Shaʿrānī's *zāwiya*, see Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt: Studies in the Writings of ʿAbd Al-Wahhāb Al-Shaʿrānī*, (New Brunswick [N.J.]: Transaction Books, 1982), 39-42.

[46] The textual results of this work being one of the most important and probably best-known fruits of al-Shaʿrānī's literary activity, his various *ṭabaqāt*, a full analysis of which is not possible here but which would

situated within a social environment made up of many claims of authority, sanctity, power and the like, to which al-Shaʿrānī responded and which he himself helped to shape. In the context of technics of the saintly self we will also delineate some of the practices and points of repertoire that the great shaykh employed at various points in his life, from his rendering of asceticism to the making and disbursement of talismanic devices. Second, by means of a close reading of his treatise *Mawāzīn al-qāṣirīn* I will consider some of the ways in which al-Shaʿrānī sought to contest and define 'true' and 'false' sainthood in light of new—to Egypt at least—'Rūmī' techniques, practices, and structured genealogies of sainthood and sanctity, considering in this manner the ways that the great Egyptian saint both resisted 'Ottomanization' and the ways in which he ultimately contributed to the transition from Mamluk to Ottoman rule and socio-cultural efflouresence. Third and finally, moving further into the Ottoman era, we will examine instances of his historical afterlife, primarily through Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Malījī's hagiography of the saint, *Tadhkirat ūlī al-albāb*, paying especial attention to how al-Malījī made use of al-Shaʿrānī's own saintly self-presentations. We will see how al-Shaʿrānī's sainthood was imagined in spatial overlap with the spiritual territory of Cairo and beyond, how hagiographic memory dealt with the presence of conflict in the great shaykh's life, and how al-Shaʿrānī was

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be quite rewarding. It will suffice to note, first, the structuring centrality of the person and authoritative presence in the various *ṭabaqāt* and elsewhere in his writings of al-Shaʿrānī's primary shaykh, ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ, who is discussed further below, and whose teachings and saintly status are a consistent theme in al-Shaʿrānī's hagiographic writings. Second in importance for our concerns here are al-Shaʿrānī's depictions of the invisible 'parallel government' that the saints in all their diversity constituted, alongside and within the visible lineaments of political power and ordinary social life. Such a concern was not unique to al-Shaʿrānī, to be sure, since concerns for hierarchical arrangements and networks are almost ubiquitious across the history of Islamic sainthood. However, in his works, both specifically hagiographic and otherwise, locating and negotiating the hidden government of Egypt took on especially great importance, without parallel in any of the other figures treated in this dissertation. In particular, the *aṣḥāb al-nawba*, the hidden saintly masters of political affairs, whose lives overlapped with the visible power-holders whose fates they guided, reoccur with some frequency. ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ, for instance, is described as knowing all of the members of this otherwise hidden body of saints, alongside his own saintly powers within the hierarchy, such as his ability to grant or deny entry into Cairo of the *arbāb al-aḥwāl*, masters of spiritual states.

remembered negotiating the presences and complexities of Ottoman power in Cairo, ending with an impressionistic glance at al-Shaʿrānī's long-term historical memory elsewhere in the early modern Ottoman world. In short, we will see how al-Shaʿrānī, who was born in the twilight of the Mamluks and whose relationship to Ottoman power and cultural interventions would remain ambivalent long after the Ottoman conquest, became 'Ottoman' over the course of his long historical afterlife in the 'well-protected domains.'

Because of his prolific output and prominent position in the religious and cultural life of sixteenth century Egypt, al-Shaʿrānī has been the focus of previous scholarly treatment, most notably Winter's monograph devoted to the shaykh's life, works, and historical context, followed by Eric Geoffrey's study of late Mamluk and early Ottoman sufism, in which al-Shaʿrānī is a constant presence, along with some more recent work by Adam Sabra touching upon specific aspects of the saint's work and context.[47] While Winter's and Geoffrey's works continue to be useful, neither author takes the practice and discourse of sainthood, despite the evident centrality of sainthood to al-Shaʿrānī's life and work, as modes of analysis or even into secondary consideration. Winter's study, while providing an extensive overview of the saint's life and an introductory analysis of his vast corpus of written works, tends towards a simplistic understanding of al-Shaʿrānī's saintly practices and understanding, seeing them as mere instances of 'popular' religion existing in constant conflict with 'elite' scholarly Islam.

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[47] Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt*; Eric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans: orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels* (Damascus: Institut français d'études arabes de Damas, 1995). Unfortunately, Side Emre's recent monograph on Ibrāhīm-i Gülşanî, *Ibrāhīm-i Gulshani and the Khalwati-Gulshani Order: Power Brokers in Ottoman Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), contains only a few scant references to a-Sha'rānī, suffering from, among other things, a lack of attention to the sufist and saintly milieu of late Mamluk into early Ottoman Cairo. While it looks quite promising, Rachida Chih's new book on the later sufi milieu in Ottoman Egypt, in which al-Shar'ānī's legacy was an important element, appeared too late for me to consult for this chapter: *Sufism in Ottoman Egypt: Circulation, Renewal and Authority in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2019).

Geoffroy's work, while benefitting from a more sophisticated and thoughtful evaluation of Islamic religious life in general, is limited by the author's use of 'Sufism' as his primary framing device, a recurrent historiographic issue as noted in the introduction to our study, and which is reflected in his focus on sources and avenues of approach primarily concerned with the doctrinal and theological. Both studies are also now rather dated, with no extensive treatments of al-Shaʿrānī having appeared in the intervening years. In addition to some quite useful articles, Sabra has translated into English one of al-Shaʿrānī's works, featuring an introduction that hints at some of the aspects of al-Shaʿrānī's career and identity covered in these pages, much of which Sabra also covered in a relatively recent chapter in an edited volume, examining al-Shaʿrānī's social situatedness.[48] On the whole, despite his widely acknowledge centrality to later Ottoman sufism and the usefulness of his corpus as a window into Ottoman Egypt's cultural and social worlds, al-Shaʿrānī remains understudied and underutilized, a situation that I hope this chapter will help to rectify somewhat.

ii. *The context of the Mamluk-Ottoman transition and al-Shaʿrānī's life in brief:*

When in 1517 Sultan Selīm the Grim defeated the last remnants of the Mamluk military and so brought Egypt under the sway of the Ottoman *devlet*, he added to the realm of the Ahl-i ʿOs̱mān one of the most developed and richest ecosystems of Islamic sanctity, scholarship, and cultural memory in the world. Such richness is visible in everything from the soaring facades of Mamluk religious complexes to the omnipresence of 'divine drawn' (*majdhūb*, pl. *majādhīb*) and other sorts of saints of the streets and marketplaces, to say nothing of institutions such as al-Azhar or the large body of Islamic scholars active there and elsewhere in Cairo, some born in

[48] 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Shaʿrānī, *Advice for Callow Jurists and Gullible Mendicants on Befriending Emirs*, trans. by Adam Sabra (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). Sabra, 'Illiterate Sufis,' 153-168.

Egypt, others migrants from elsewhere drawn by the religious magnetism al-Miṣr continued to exert. Sainthood and sufism, among other aspects of Muslim religious life (and Christian and Jewish, as well, it is worth noting), had all seen numerous developments in the course of the Mamluk period, flourishing and rising in stature and diversity, penetrating to every strata and station of Egyptian life and social space, in city and in countryside. Whether in the elaboration and flourishing of incredibly popular saints' shrines such as that of Aḥmad al-Baḍawī—described in depth by Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen[49]—or in the spread and penetration, beginning in Ayyubid times and continuing apace under the Mamluks, of sufi *ṭarīqa*s all the way up the Nile into Upper Egypt, as recently discussed by Nathan Hofer, sainthood and sufism not only flourished in Mamluk Egypt but were marked by significant historical development and dynamism.[50] Wider Islamic devotional life (which intersected with sainthood and sufism in various ways)—from the elaboration of celebrations such as the *mawlid* festivities commemorating the birthdays of Muḥammad and of an ever expanding roster of saints, to the development and popularization of *taṣliya* (the proclaiming of blessing upon Muḥammad) and similar practices—was frequently first developed and elaborated in Egypt before spreading to other parts of the Islamicate world.[51]

Even before Selīm's conquests, the infiltration of saints, scholars, practices, and discourses from the lands of Rûm, a process accelerated by Ottoman incorporation, had begun forming additional layers to an already dense and highly developed religious world, though not

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[49] Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, *Al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Badawī: un grand saint de l'Islam égyptien* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1994).

[50] Nathan Hofer, *The Popularisation of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt, 1173-1325* (Edinburgh University Press, 2015).

[51] For an overview of the history of late medieval and early modern devotional life and analysis of a specific example—which centrally involved al-Shaʿrānī—see Allen, 'Up All Night.'

without conflict and resistance.[52] The religious richness of Egypt was paralleled by and causally intersected with the diversity and complexity of the political, social, and economic institutions, stratifications, and communities inherited from the Mamluks and with which the Ottomans would be forced to grapple, with varying degrees of success, in the centuries to come.[53] On the political, social, and economic front, Ottoman rule in Egypt would never be entirely secure, even by the minimal standards of the rest of the empire and of pre-modern polities in general, and would always be marked by local distinctiveness, even during the so-called 'classical age' before the empire-wide devolution of power to local notables and authorities so characteristic of the long seventeenth century and beyond. Such distinctiveness is sharply, and frequently hilariously, visible in the grousing, satirical analysis of Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī's caustic report on the province at the end of the sixteenth century.[54] Yet despite the internal problems, ruptures of rule, and the disgust of learned functionaries such as ʿĀlī, the province of Miṣr would remain a key part of the empire, if a consistently problematic part. It was in the trying furnace of a changing Egypt, an Egypt marked by the dense legacy of its recent Mamluk past while grappling with the present reality of Ottoman rule, that al-Shaʿrānī's life and career unfolded. Not just that: al-Shaʿrānī's exuberant scope and wide-ranging experimentation were made possible by the general disequilibrium that arose out of the Mamluk-Ottoman transistion. A process that opened the

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[52] On the political process concurrent with the changes to the religious milie, see Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Egypt's Adjustment to Ottoman Rule: Institutions, Waqf and Architecture in Cairo, 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), as well as Stephan Conermann and Gül Şen, *The Mamluk-Ottoman Transition: Continuity and Change in Egypt and Bilād Al-Shām in the Sixteenth Century* (Göttingen: Bonn University Press, 2017); Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, 1517-1798* (London: Routledge, 1992); Michael Winter, Ami Ayalon, and David Wasserstein (ed.), *Mamluks and Ottoman Societies: Studies in Honour of Michael Winter* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[53] For overviews of this process in its early stages, see for instance Emri, *Gulshani*, 134-176, 301-308.

[54] Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī, *Mustafa Ali's Description of Cairo of 1599: Text, Transliteration, Translation, Notes*, ed. and trans. By Andreas Tietze (Vienna: Verl. d. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975).

ground for new and even quite radical modes of sanctity, a greater and greater range of saintly repertoires, devotional practices, technics of sanctity, and holy persons and genealogies were moved about and settled into place from one end of the Ottoman world to the other. At the same time, the norms and institutional structures that had long goverened Egyptian society were disrupted, eliminated, or otherwise changed—all, of course, in a long and uneven process that tended to leave no one satisfied, either at the Ottoman center or among various parties in the province itself. Yet if early Ottoman Egypt was a site of disequilibrium and conflict, it was also the site of possibility and experimentation, including—especially—within the ambit of Islamic sainthood, a reality very much on display in the life of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī.

Born in a village some twenty miles north of Cairo, Shāqiyat Abū Sha'ra, to a locally well-known pious and scholarly family, al-Shaʿrānī initially studied under family members and imbibed the saintly presences and practices that permeated the late Mamluk countryside. Following a route that other family members, like so many others in Cairo's hinterland, had taken, as a boy al-Shaʿrānī moved to Cairo and there pursued, initially, a standard course in 'exoteric knowledge' (*ʿilm*)—by his estimation (which admittedly probably overplays the degree of interaction) in the company of the leading luminaries of late Mamluk Islamic scholarship. After an encounter with 'one of the great among the saints of God,' Aḥmad al-Bahlūl, who instructed the student from the countryside to conclude his career in *ʿilm* and to now seek out a perfected shaykh who would bring him 'to the path of God, into the presence of your Lord,' the student from the countryside quit his exoteric pursuits and embarked on the path of *taṣawwuf*—the first step in his ascent to sainthood.[55] After some consultation with his companions, al-Shaʿrānī settled on Shaykh ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ, who would become the foremost figure in al-

[55] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat,* 53.

Shaʿrānī's formation, self-understanding, and self-presentation.[56] ʿAlī's authorizing voice would become omnipresent in al-Shaʿrānī's writings, to the point that it is often difficult to disentangle the two. 'Alī, an illiterate palm-plaiter, provided al-Shaʿrānī with the highest archetype of the friend of God: he earned his living through his craft, and was thereby free of the taint of illicitly-sourced money, goods, or food that might come through living off of donations or endowments of dubious origin.[57] Illiterate, his knowledge, both exoteric and esoteric was the result of his direct perception of the Qur'anic 'Preserved Tablet' (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ*) not through human- or text-mediated learning.[58] Implicitly or explicitly al-Shaʿrānī filtered all other claimants to sainthood—whether he deemed them genuine or not—through the lens of the life and authoritative utterances of this his primary shaykh.

Having been instructed in *taṣawwuf* by this illiterate saint,[59] al-Shaʿrānī would go on to both emulate and move beyond the script of sainthood that ʿAlī embodied, most notably in his extensive continued use (and production) of exoteric, textual sources of knowledge. Al-Shaʿrānī

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[56] There are many references and biographical treatments of ʿAlī scattered throughout al-Shaʿrānī's corpus, but for his entry in al-Shaʿrānī's large hagiographic compilation, see ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Shaʿrānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā: al-musammá Lawāqiḥ al-anwār al-qudsīya fī manāqib al-'ulamā' wa-al-Ṣūfīya* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīnīyah, 2005), vol. 2, 166-169. For a discussion of ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ' hermeneutics, see Samuela Pagani, 'The Meaning of the Ikhtilāf al-Madhāhib in ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī's al-Mīzān al-Kubrā,' *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2004), 180-181.

[57] Avoiding 'tainted' food or other goods was an important aspect of al-Shaʿrānī's own project of sainthood. See Winters, al-Sha'rani, 35 (for the background to al-Shaʿrānī's 'scrupulousness' in food matters), and 122-123 for his own practice, which resembles the late medieval modes of piety explored in Megan Reid, *Law and Piety in Medieval Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 178–96.

[58] Al-Shaʿrānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā,* vol. 2, 166. Wensinck and Bosworth provide a succinct description of the role of the Preserved Tablet in sufi sainthood: 'Mystically-inspired persons, it was held, might have glimpses of the entirety of God's decrees inscribed on the tablet and normally hidden from human comprehension, either by dreams or by a sudden flesh of divine revelation (*ilhām*), removing the veil…' A. J. Wensinck and C. E. Bosworth, 'Lawḥ,' in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*[2].

[59] al-Malījī notes that in lieu of texts and in addition to his 'reading' the Preserved Tablet, ʿAlī 'used to meet with the Messenger of God in waking life, discoursing about the technical vocabulary of *tasawwuf*, and consulting with him about all his affairs.' Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 53-4.

would continue to draw upon his stature as a *faqīh* in making and projecting his saintly identity, in a manner somewhat akin to that of Aḥmad Zarrūq.[60] His perennially popular treatise *al-Mīzān al-kubrā,* which dealt with differences among the *madhhab*s and sought to harmonize, if not precisely unify, them in light of those differences, drew upon his authorization as a saint and as a *faqīh*.[61] Most importantly for the social success of his sainthood during his lifetime, however, was al-Shaʿrānī's eventual establishment and funding of his own *zāwiya* in Cairo, a place which would become the spatial locus of his work for the remainder of his physical life, and the site of his own burial, alongside his master ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ.[62] The foundation of his *zāwiya* followed a conflict-marked spatial trajectory through other institutions, to which we will return further along, a trajectory within that city that coincided with al-Shaʿrānī's maintainence, both before and after the *zāwiya's* foundation, of ties with Cairo's village hinterland and with various communities and power-holders in Cairo. Despite accruing four wives—with whom he seems to have lived in harmony, if we are to take his description of home life as any indication—he would have but one son to outlive him, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who would carry on aspects of his father's legacy and maintain his *zāwiya* after ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's death, though neither he nor any of his descendants would obtain a standing or reputation for sanctity akin to the *zāwiya'*s founder. The most important aspect of al-Shaʿrānī's legacy, instead, lay in the numerous texts he produced, texts which have continued to be copied and read up to the present, and in which his 'project' of

[60] Scott Alan Kugle, *Rebel between Spirit and Law*, esp. 98.

[61] On which see Pagani, 'Ikhtilāf al-Madhāhib,' esp. 184-194.

[62] As al-Malījī describes it: al-Shaʿrānī's *zāwiya* provided for multiple blind people who lived there; sponsored Qur'an memorization; employed twenty people kneading bread at one time (baking presumably took place elsewhere); and hosted numerous guests at any given time. His *zāwiya* largely saw financial inflows without the need for selling in the market, and provided for the neighbor children the same as al-Sha'rani's own children, including through paying for marriage related expenses. Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat,* 72

sainthood is revealed on many fronts, not least of all the centrality of his autobiographic voice, to which we now turn.

iii. Al-Shaʿrānī and the technics of self:

Self-presentation runs throughout al-Shaʿrānī's corpus, the emergent autobiographical voice aimed at supporting and clarifying the author's claim to sainthood. As a way to better classify these forms of hagiographic self-presentation, I have borrowed and elaborated upon the concept of 'technologies of self,' an idea that comes from a late paper by Foucault. In an impressionistic survey of spiritual practices from late antiquity into the Christian middle ages, Foucault descried changing senses and performances of the discrete and dynamic self, changes facilitated by the articulation of what he calls 'technologies of the self,' namely, practices 'which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality,' and which arose within special concern for the discrete self and led to a 'new experience of the self.'[63] Technologies of self, such as practices of mindful introspection, of confession, of self-interpretation, and so forth, all worked to shape, Foucault argued, greater subjectivity and articulation of a meaningful, bounded, but dynamic self in relation to other selves. My own usage of the idea of technologies of self in relation to Ottoman sainthood and formations of subjectivity, in this chapter and further along, builds out from Foucault's rendering, placing greater emphasis on public self-performance.[64] I have further heuristically

[63] Michel Foucault, 'Technologies of the self,' in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault,* ed. Luther H Martin and Michel Foucault (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 18, 28.

subdivided the types of technologies of self that I see as operative in al-Shaʿrānī's case and in other Ottoman contexts: on the one hand are technologies of self-formation and presention that were implicitly or explicitly aimed at performing sainthood, at becoming a saint both in the inner sense of personal transformation and orientation towards God (and towards other holy people) as well as in the social, outer sense of strategy, presentation, and performances, bodily, textual, ritual, and so forth. On the other hand are techniques of self, often developed in the context of the articulation of sainthood, applicable to a wider audience, and not just those striving towards sainthood.

Al-Sha'ranī did not himself invent the strategy of using technologies of self to perform sainthood during one's life. He was the beneficiary of a tradition of sanctity that was considerably more comfortable with projects of living sainthood than were many contemporary Christian societies elsewhere in western Eurasia.[65] Across the Islamicate world it had long been true that one might embark on sainthood as a sort of career and it not be especially, or at all, problematic, though, to be sure, one's social success was not thereby guaranteed—indicative of this background is the case of Muḥammad al-Zawāwī, who, as profiled by Jonathan Katz, was not especially successful in his saintly gambit, despite engaging in an act of 'auto-

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[64] I am using 'performance' here in the sense described in Erving Goffman's classic work on presentation of the self, whereby the development and articulation of self and subjectivity retain a strong social focus and locus, from whence we can locate the impetus for historical change—and which is particularly apt for the life of al-Shaʿrānī. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008), 15. Cf. Kugle's perceptive remarks on saint-making: 'In the theatre of Sufism, the audience can become the screen becasue the medium is not mechanical but social, and the driving power is not electricity but the dynamics of human consciousness. Through mystical experience, spiritual discipline, and the social interaction to which it gives rise, Sufis can hope to become realized saints, who are saints-become-real in the eyes of others.' Kugle, *Rebel*, 29.

[65] To be sure, living saints were very much present in Western Christendom and elsewhere, the fact that ecclesial authorities sought time and again to control or even suppress 'cults' of living saints evidence of their continued ubiquity. What differed was the interface between lived, popular practice and ecclesial authority and textually expressed theory. See Kleinberg, *Prophets in Their Own Country*, esp. 4-17.

hagiography.'[66] While certainly not unique, al-Shaʿrānī stands out from earlier figures and other contemporaries in the sheer scope and audacity of his saintly self-presentation and of the range of technologies of self that he employed. The most spectacular instance, in terms sheer scope and audacity, of al-Shaʿrānī's techniques of saintly self-making was his aforementioned *Laṭā'if al-minan*, an encyclopedic 'auto-*manāqib'* that he made available in two forms, a longer and a shorter version, and which was related to other, similar but shorter works of an 'auto-hagiographic' bent elsewhere in his corpus (the work recently translated by Adam Sabra, for instance, fits within this category, and often overlaps with the *Laṭā'if*). Al-Shaʿrānī pursued through much of his career a consistent strategy of producing and releasing such autobiographical texts, texts meant to reproduce his shakhly, saintly presence at a remove from his physical body and which were constructed in such a way as to facilitate diverse reader interactions. The very layout of the *Laṭā'if* is an example of this strategy. The work begins, as mentioned above, with an expansive explanatory introduction and a detailed 'index,' an index meant, al-Shar'ānī writes, to facilitate a reader locating and reading those parts of the text which interested him or seemed useful—a reading experience closer to interaction with al-Shaʿrānī himself as opposed to reading a text. The remainder of the book details various 'blessings' bestowed upon the author by God, effectively adding up to a disjunctive account of al-Shaʿrānī's life, personality, thoughts, and saintly practices and marks of identity, eschewing a narrative for something approximating the episodic structure of the *manāqib* genre—though it ultimately cannot be placed in any single genre but rather partakes of many, including earlier instances of

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[66] Jonathan Glustrom Katz, *Dreams, Sufism, and Sainthood: The Visionary Career of Muḥammad Al-Zawâwî* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), esp. 31: 'But it is clear from the example of Zawāwī and others that many devout Muslims aspired to become *awliyā'*. Not only that, they were unwilling to sit idly by waiting for devoted followers to compose hagiographic accounts of their deeds, their *manāqib*. At what point and under what circumstances did a sense of self-love and a need for self-promotion supplant the traditional reverence for one's masters? Taking matters into their own hands, aspiring saints wrote their own hagiography.'

'auto-*manāqib'* such as that of al-Zawāwī, as well as early instances of what we might identify as 'autobiographies,' most significantly that of the great jurist and scholar al-Suyūṭī (1445-1505).[67]

The reality was not lost on al-Shaʿrānī that his project was, despite certain generic similarities and overlaps with the works of others, on the whole quite novel, and that it might be seen by others as presumptious, or worse. He addressed potential critics head-on early in the introduction of *Laṭā'if al-minan,* discussing his various reasons for undertaking such a project, as well as antecedants for and the permissibility of writing one's own *manāqib*:

> O my brother, if you hasten to denounce those of the Folk whom I have taken as models, or me in mentioning in this book, and elsewhere, my *manāqib* and my characteristics with which God has graced me, and say, "It is not proper behavior (*laysa min al-adab*) that the servant mention his own *manāqib* in a book"—then that is ignorance and thinking badly of the ʿulāmā' and the gnostics whom I have mentioned. Rather, it is incumbent upon you that you regard the Folk in the best manner, that they have not mentioned anything to the brethren from their *manāqib* and their spiritual states (*aḥwālihum*) except that [others] might take them as models.[68]

Besides expressing awareness that his project is indeed an 'auto-*manāqib'*—undertaken, he argues earlier, as a gift to future readers who would desire just such a text and who would otherwise have to rely on an external hagiographer with more limited access to the relevant material—this passage demonstrates another recurring strategy al-Shaʿrānī undertook. By eliding his self with the selves of other (widely recognized as holy) others and tying his own authority and performance of self into the authorial bodies of other saints, al-Shaʿrānī sought to deflect

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[67] On the medieval Arabic antecedents of 'autobiography,' see Dwight Fletcher Reynolds and Kristen Brustad, *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), which, however, does not pay ample attention to the Ottoman context, in part because of problems in defining 'autobiography' as a genre. Al-Suyūṭī's 'autobiography' is available in English translation and Arabic edition: Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī*, ed. and trans. E. M. Sartain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[68] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 13.

criticism directed at himself, to maintain his own saintly voice, ironically, through its partial submergence in the saintly voices of others. The person and voice of ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ in particular often seems inseperable from that of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, such that master and disciple mutually complement each other, to the point of becoming almost indistinguishable. This voice appears in the introduction to the *Laṭā'if* in support of the project: 'Mention your perfections,' al-Shaʿrānī reports his shaykh as having told him, 'which you have been given, for thereby your thanksgiving to God will increase, whereas mention of your shortcomings will only decrease your thanksgiving to God. What you will gain from looking towards your faults is forfeited insofar as it blinds you from your goodness which God has placed in you.' Examination of faults is to be limited to one's self, while proclamation of one's gifts from God has great value when placed publicly before 'the assemblies of the elite from among rulers and 'ulama.'[69] In this frequent recourse to the voice and authority of other holy people, al-Shaʿrānī's self-performance contrats with some later iterations of saintly self-making to be explored in part two. That said, in the very act of committing to writing his own life and the lives and words of his saintly forebearers al-Shaʿrānī deliberately inscribed his own authority and constructed a publicly performed self meant to demonstrate his own sainthood.

Indeed, perhaps the best way to understand the nature of this genre-bending text[70] is to see it as a textual reproduction of al-Shaʿrānī himself, a means of projecting his saintly, shakhly presence and guidance to others far and near, during his lifetime and afterwards. Not only can we

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[69] Ibid., 14.

[70] To be sure, 'text' is really a poor word here to describe a very complex, multilayered, and somewhat repetitious mass of texts woven together to reflect al-Shaʿrānī himself in all his own complexity. Pagani's remarks on al-Shaʿrānī's legal treatise are apropos across his corpus: 'Sha'rani's unsystematic and occasionally self-contradictory style of exposition poses particular difficulties to the would-be interpreter.' Pagani, 'Ikhtilāf al-Madhāhib,' 178.

see this text as representing a technology of self in itself, as an act of self-elaboration and public performance, the work's content includes much discussion of further techniques of saintly self al-Shaʿrānī followed, as well as manifestations of his inner states and struggles. The reader is meant to peruse the text at will, diving in at various places, encountering the shaykh in the process much as one would encounter him in real life. There is no narrative arc, no consistent organizational principle that unites the various chapters, much less the work as a whole—much as there is in fact no such narrative arc in anyone's life threading together one's self and personality. The textual confines of this 'auto-*manāqib'* contain al-Shaʿrānī only in the sense that they provide a *place of encounter* with the saint, a sort of virtual *zāwiya* that could be reproduced and transmitted through space and time (albeit with the obvious constraint of the book's sheer size, a potential barrier—partially addressed by al-Shaʿrānī in his production of an abrievated version and his scattering of the *Laṭā'if's* components in other, smaller works). Yet this encounter in some ways exceeds that which a casual pious visitor might receive in a visit to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's built *zāwiya* and in interaction with his physical presence. For al-Shaʿrānī's inner states, the shape and direction of what we would call his 'emotions' (a term he would not entirely recognize), his practices and inner actions that would otherwise have remained invisible, feature prominently throughout the work.[71] While close disciples might become aware of these inner states and practices, al-Shaʿrānī's 'textual self' makes them immediately visible, just as visible as any other practice or deportment. This reality points us to one of the other goals of this text, that

[71] This would be as good a point as any to insert a note regarding the 'history of emotions' vis-à-vis this study, given that what we would call emotions figure prominently in al-Shaʿrānī's work and life as well as many other figures and narratives that we will consider (for an overview of 'history of emotions,' see, among other recent introductory works, Barbara H. Rosenwein and Riccardo Cristiani, *What Is the History of Emotions* (Newark: Polity Press, 2017)). I have avoided more extensive engagement with the literature and theory of history of emotions primarily because I am not satisfied with the attempts of others or my own albeit provisional efforts to integrate early modern Ottoman material with a 'history of emotions' framework.

of mimesis, of imitation, of shaping one's own self (including how one feels and reacts to feelings and sensations) along the lines of al-Shaʿrānī's self. In this sense the *Laṭāʾif al-minan* was not just a technology of self for reproducing, projecting, and stabilizing al-Shaʿrānī's saintly, exceptional self: its author also meant for it to be used by others in *their* shaping of self, in monitoring and changing their inner states and outer lives, even if they had no physical access to the author's instruction and presence. Instead, in order, as he says elsewhere, that 'the brethren… might take me as a model' he makes himself manifest textually.[72]

As a sample of what al-Shaʿrānī's textual strategy looks like up close, as well as to uncover further aspects of his saintly repertoire, I have focused in detail on the first four discrete sections from chapter nine, in which the shaykh discusses, in turn, his attitude towards giving gifts; his mercy towards errant followers; his relationship with animals (primarily cats)—in particular his generosity in feeding them; and his presence of heart when eating and drinking. Each 'chapter' of the work is made up of very similarly structured sections, introduced by the phrase 'And from among that which God, blessed and exalted is He, has graciously bestowed upon me' (*mima manna Allāh tabarrak wa taʿāla bihi ʿalayyī*), followed by the 'gift'—a practice, a characteristic, an inner condition, a habitual state—in question. The first such gift described in our selection was the author's practice of giving literal gifts, especially upon return from the *ḥajj*, without the implicit expectation of reciprocity. He here points to what was probably the most important economic aspect of the pilgrimage, which lay not in the value of the gifts bestowed upon others after one's return from the holy precincts, but in the social relationship so established and the ensuing sense of reciprocity.[73] Al-Shaʿrānī did not have such

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[72] ʻAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Shaʻrānī, *Akhlāq al-Matbūlīya,* ed. Manīʻ ʻAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd (al-ʿAzūza [Egypt: Maktabat al-Īmān, 2003), 33.

[73] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭāʾif*, 347.

a relationship in mind—though, he tells us, if the recipient did act reciprocally it would count as a grace from God and ought not be denied. As is so often the case with ʿAbd al-Wahhab's self-descriptions, what is at issue here is inner intention and inner state, which by definition can only be visible if the one intending and feeling makes them manifest. Having so manifest this 'characterstic' of his (in implicit support of his sainthood, such an inner practice setting him apart from most people) al-Shaʿrānī recommends imitation of his inner state on the part of others, and notes that some unspecified 'merchants' (*al-tujjār*) do in fact follow his example.

While there is no immediately apparent link between this 'quality' and the next one—ʿAbd Al-Wahhāb's forbearance with errant disciples and his ability to discern the best course of treatment for them—on closer examination they do bear a resemblance insofar as they involve inner dispositions primarily, which may or may not be reflected in publicly visible external actions or deportment. This second 'gift' from God upon al-Shaʿrānī consisted of his ability to deal with disciples who, having listened to slanderous or demeaning words about their shaykh, rejected his sanctity and authority, abandoned their training and companionship with him and embraced a life of 'dissolution.'[74] It uncovers the social reality al-Shaʿrānī and other aspirants to sainthood faced: even disciples who initially entered under his authority might not ultimately remain under his care and supervision, a contingency compounded by the fact that there were competing and contrasting iterations of sainthood socially available in early Ottoman Cairo. Our shaykh, however, took such a fraught social setting as an opportunity for developing and displaying his divinely-gifted mercy and insight, qualities that would have only occasionally been visible outside himself but for his underlining of them in the *Laṭā'if*. The theme of mercy, in turn, seems to lead into the third segment of our excerpt, the longest of the four in this

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[74] Ibid., 347-348.

subsection, and one of the more memorable and telling passages in the *Laṭā'if*—a story from it is excerpted, for instance, by the seventeenth century satirist Muḥammad al-Shirbīnī as 'evidence' in his humorous work of parodic *sharḥ*.[75] Herein al-Shaʿrānī describes his relationship with and kindness towards non-human animals, particularly, though not exclusively, cats, beginning with several accounts of his own life, followed by accounts of others and excerpts from the teaching of other Cairene saints—an order and composition quite typical of the *Laṭā'if* as a whole.[76] He begins by noting that when a cat or dog came before him while he was eating chicken and sought to eat, too, he would freely bestow his food upon the creature. Not only that, but if a cat snatched chicken out of his hands and carried it off to eat it, he would not stop the animal from doing so and would not permit anyone else from stopping the cat and retrieving the cooked chicken for him. The reason why cats (and, presumably, other creatures) had recourse to the shaykh was bound up with al-Shaʿrānī's understanding of his own self, and of the nature of animals and their powers of apprehension: '[A cat] comes and stands before me because she supposes that I am

[75] Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad al-Shirbīnī, *Brains Confounded by the Ode of Abu Shaduf Expounded*, ed. and trans Humphrey T. Davies (New York: New York University Press, 2016), vol. 2, 367. For other references to al-Shaʿrānī in this humorous epic: vol. 1, 21, 313; vol 2, 213, 257.

[76] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 349. For a broad overview of the cat in Islamicate literature and cultures, see F. Viré, 'Sinnawr,' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam²*, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs (Consulted online, 25 May 2019). Al-Shaʿrānī was not the only person in early modern Ottoman Egypt to express sympathy and kindness towards animals: for a discussion of attitudes towards and treatment of dogs in sixteenth into seventeenth century Cairo, including a supportive treatise concerning by one Nūr al-Dīn al-Ajhūrī (d 1656), see Alan Mikhail, *The Animal in Ottoman Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 77-83. Al-Shaʿrānī elsewhere expressed a less than enthusiastic attitude towards market dogs (though not dogs per se): he tells a parable in which 'a market dog and a hunting dog debated together, the market dog saying: "Why aren't you satisfied with the gleanings upon the trashpiles like me, instead running alongside kings and amirs and sons of the world?" The hunting dog says: 'I mix with kings and others, but I abstain from what is in their hands, not eating anything of it. I hunt for them not for myself, and therefore they honor me and bestow good upon me, bringing me close and having me sit upon their rugs. They do not look to my lowness for they behold the noblity of my intention. But you have much greed and desire for what is in their hands, hunting only for yourself, so the people turn you aside to the garbage-piles and loathe you."' ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Shaʿrānī, *Mawāzīn al-qāṣirīn min shuyūkh wa murīdīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2007), 63.

generous and pious and that I will toss her something to eat if she comes to me—so she understands matters, even if she cannot talk about what she understands. As one of the realized ones said: "Beasts' (*al-bahā'im*) are called such only because of the obscurity (*al-ibhām*) of their affairs to us, not due to the obscurity of their affairs to themselves.'"[77] Not only do animals perceive far more than (most) humans give them credit for, they are able to detect sanctity and kindness in humans, and so—at least in this rendering—act as witnesses of that sanctity and piety.

If al-Shaʿrānī conveys the sense that his kindness to cats was never really in question, his compassion towards the whole gamut of creatures, great and small, was the result of divine intervention, as he relates in this curious story (the story also summarized by al-Shirbīnī, due to its scatological potential):

> Among the things that happened to me: my wife Faṭima Umm ʿAbd al-Raḥmān had a thickness upon her heart.[78] Her mother cried out and was certain that [her daughter] would die, and I was greatly agitated on her account, but a voice spoke to me while I was in the lavatory: "Release the fly from the fly-hyena[79] in the crack that is in front of your face, and We will release for you your wife." I went to the crack and found it to be quite tight such that fingers could not open it, so I took a stick and pulled it open and extracted the fly-hyena along with the fly, and found it whole but with the fly-hyena gripping its neck. I released it from him, and my wife was released from sickness and restored to health and her mother rejoiced—from that day on I have not looked down upon bestowing good upon any creature or beast which the Lawgiver does not command be slain.[80]

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[77] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 349.

[78] It is unclear what precisely al-Shaʿrānī means by 'a thickness' (*ḥādir*) here—perhaps a tumor?

[79] Again, what is meant by 'fly-hyena' (*ḍabu' al-dhabāb*) is obscure, though it would seem to be some sort of spider (al-Shirbīnī, in his retelling of this story, suggests as much, it being clear that he does not know what precisely is meant either!).

[80] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 349-350.

This story has a clear auto-hagiographic purpose: it indicates al-Shaʿrānī's role as a conduit of divine inspiration, the voice clearly meant to be understood to be the voice of God speaking from the Unseen, while also demonstrating his particular capacity for saintly virtues, in this case attention towards other living creatures, even quite humble ones. As elsewhere, al-Shaʿrānī does not shy from indicating his own moral development, though this development proceeds through exceptional means. It is also worth noting the way in which this account, like many others in the *Laṭā'if* and elsewhere in al-Shaʿrānī's writings, takes place within the domestic, indeed intimate space of al-Shaʿrānī's home, revealing in small flashes relationships among the women and men who inhabited that domestic space. Also on display here is another abiding concern of al-Shaʿrānī's saintly repertoire and imaginative world: the affective and effective bonds tying others together, particularly through the person of al-Shaʿrānī and his bodily and spiritual capacity for commensuration, bonds which however had a deeper reality and meaning, such that relief given to a lowly fly could translate into relief for the saint's suffering wife. The pain of women—whether in labor, due to the absence of their husbands, or brought on by a husband seeking a divorce—was an especially potent presence in al-Shaʿrānī's practice of bodily sympathy, a practice which, like so many other 'inward' aspects of his life, found its public outlet in autobiographic rendering like the one above.[81]

If evidence for al-Shaʿrānī's God-given sanctity is meant to be conveyed by the above accounts, the remainder of this subsection aims at encouraging in the reader the quality of kindness towards animals through authoritative accounts and mimetic models from others, saints

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[81] For instance: 'Among the things that befall me is that if there is in my presence ('*indī*) a woman who is in labor pains, I feel as if I am in labor like her.' Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 208-210. Here again we encounter the problem with describing al-Shaʿrānī's practices as 'emotional': in his understanding, feeling what we would classify as 'emotional pain' such as a woman's anguish at separation from her husband is of the same category as the 'physical pain' the same woman might feel during childbirth, and his sympathetic participation in both would likewise be of a parallel category, the pain being divinely translated or transported into his body.

and otherwise. For instance, al-Shaʿrānī relates, his companion al-Ḥajj Muḥammad al-Ḥalabī told him the following story:

> I used to drive away the cat whenever she came to me while I was eating, but then she[82] came to me in a dream-vision and said: "How dare you drive the cat away and be stingy with feeding her when God has bestowed so much benefit upon you and been so generous to you!" I said to myself, "It's just a muddled dream," and so dismissed it. But then she came to me again in a dream-vision and spoke to me just like the first time, and again I said, "It's just a muddled dream," and so dismissed it a second time. But when she came to me for the third time, I began feeding her from everything that I was eating![83]

Along similar lines al-Shaʿrānī shares accounts from his shaykh ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ regarding his relationship with various creatures, including ants which he would feed from sugar and other things. These non-autobiographical materials are all oriented towards encouraging imitation and providing templates to do so.

In the final sub-section under consideration here, al-Shaʿrānī builds on the theme of food and drink in his discussion of relations with animals, describing 'my presence of heart with God when I am eating and drinking, and my witnessing that it is from the grace of God upon me, not that I deserve any of it.' In the event that he slipped from such inner awareness, 'I seek forgiveness from God until it is revealed to my thought that God has accepted my request for forgiveness graciously from Him.' And while this presence of heart in eating and drinking is the means of practicing a sort of asceticism by limiting the amount of food and drink consumed, it also leads to increased sensory enjoyment of food and drink: 'I have seen nothing more delightful than eating in a condition of presence of heart with God, and nothing less delightful

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[82] That is, the cat.

[83] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if,* 350.

than eating while heedless of God.'[84] As previously, and throughout the *Laṭā'if*, the emphasis lies on al-Shaʿrānī's inner deportment and practice, however it might be made manifest externally, and in whatever external conditions it might be present, known or unknown to external observers. Constancy of presence before God, which al-Shaʿrānī maintained, he informs us, even while enjoying intercourse with one of his wives, points to perhaps the most salient aspect of Islamic sainthood in the Ottoman world or elsewhere: abiding and effective proximity to God. This proximity and constant maintenance of relationship, beyond the demands of *sharīʿa* and *sunna*, included for al-Shaʿrānī as well regular awareness of other holy people, from the presence of the Prophet on down, such that he would seek permission (by crying *Dastūr yā Fulān*!) from God, Muḥammad, and various saints 'in my heart' before carrying out certain actions.[85] Yet just as in the above the shaykh indicated his moral development in relation to care of animals, here he also notes his procedure when he slipped in the practice of the presence of God, providing his own practice as a template for the corrective self-formation of others.

The mimetic possibility al-Shaʿrānī envisioned for the *Laṭā'if* and similar works points to another important aspect of his prolix production and saintly repertoire: namely, his emphasis upon the ability of the written text, received in or out of the usual means of transmission, to act as an *in loco* shaykh, to route his own sainthood and the insights manifest thereby to others for use in crafting their own sanctified selves, including others with whom al-Shaʿrānī would never have actual bodily contact, in this world below at least. Al-Shaʿrānī held such a valorization of the role of the textual despite his repeated avowals at various points in his corpus of the necessity of a shaykh's guidance, and of the role that his bodily present shaykhs played in his own

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[84] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 350-352.

[85] Ibid., 20-21.

formation.[86] At the same time, al-Shaʿrānī frequently made explicit the relationship between his saintly realization and the ensuing ability of others to mimetically employ the texts he produced and into which he poured his saintly realization, even if those readers were not under his direct supervision. For instance, in his *Akhlāq al-Matbūliyya*, a compendium of the 'characteristics' and teachings of al-Shaʿrānī's major shaykhs, oriented around the foundational saint of his era, Ibrāhīm al-Matbūlī, al-Shaʿrānī offers various rationales for the work: it is meant, first, to give the reader a way of evaluating claimaints to sainthood in the present age and to stand in rebuke of those who make false claims—a theme to which we will return below.[87] Second, he argues, it is meant as a way of allowing the *reader* to participate in the presence and instruction of these various saints—oriented around and transmiting the virtues of the great axial saint Ibrahīm al-Matbūli—as if the reader were in the 'companionship' (*ṣuḥba*) of the saints themselves. If the reader asks how it is that al-Shaʿrānī is able to enact this translation, he answers that it is because God has blessed al-Shaʿrānī with inculcation in these virtues and characterstics of the great saints, so that having reproduced these things in himself he may now reproduce them textually. 'Some might claim that such a claim stems from pride, but God forbid that such be so!'[88]

It was not just a matter of the textualization of his own presence and authority: in the introduction to his *Durar al-ghawwāṣ fī fatāwā al-Khawwāṣ*, a compilation of the '*fatāwa'* of 'Ali al-Khawwāṣ, responses to al-Shaʿrānī's questions about all manner of things, and not

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[86] 'He who has no shaykh, his shaykh is Satan' being perhaps the best known, indeed ubiquitious, expression of this sentiment, the practice thereof of course far from universal, with the 'Uwāysī option' long a possibility. As we will discuss further along in chapter six, freelancing would become a common feature of seventeenth and eighteenth century sufism and aspiration to sainthood both.

[87] Al-Sha'rānī, *Akhlāq al-Matbūlīya*, 32.

[88] Ibid.

necessarily *fatāwa* in the conventional juristic sense, al-Shaʿrānī notes that of these sayings, 'some I translated due to his being illiterate, neither reading nor writing, his language sometimes resembling Syriac, sometimes Hebrew.'[89] And if al-Shaʿrānī sometimes served as a literal translator and transcriber of the words of the saints into 'proper' literary Arabic, such work proceeded out of a larger and foundational web of relationships that al-Shaʿrānī maintained with other holy people. His identification with the friends of God took place through visiting the tombs of departed saints or meeting them in dream visions, through seeking out living holy people and interacting with them in various ways. The hagiographic *ṭabaqāt* that al-Shaʿrānī wrote, and which would form the most important and widely reproduced part of his literary legacy, describe in abundant detail both the contours of al-Shaʿrānī's relationship with the friend of God of his era as well as delineate what he saw as the positive markers of sainthood, including those that he himself did not seek to reproduce.

Finally, given the degree to which al-Shaʿrānī performed and inscribed his saintly self and repertoire textually in the *Laṭā'if* and related works, we can here only get at a sense of this repertoire and its social deployment, a full examination of which would require a separate monograph. Besides the various aspects of his saintly repertoire and self-presentation we have already seen, he offered up many others, ranging from the highly specific—such as his rejection of discourse labeling the great martyr al-Ḥallāj to be an unbeliever—to his broadly ascetic inclinations whereby he rejected most gifts from the wealthy and powerful, subsisted on a humble diet, and did not resist slights to his honor or reputation by those who did not accept him as a saint.[90] Mirroring his relationships with holy people were the ways in which he related to the

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[89] 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Sha'rānī, *Durar al-ghawwāṣ ʿalá fatāwá Sayyidī ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ,* ed. Abd al-Wārith Muḥammad ʿAlī (Bayrūt, Lubnān: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmīyah, 1999), 22.

[90] See for instance al-Shaʿrānī, *Durar*, 40.

'non-holy': al-Shaʿrānī's writings abound in descriptions of his connections (and conflicts) with people from up and down the social strata, including non-Muslims.[91] He sought—or so he tells us—to especially police his relationships with holders of power, while seeing the urban laboring classes as more virtuous and more worthy of his solicitude, in the aggregate anyway, than members of the elite. This disbursement of sanctified prophylactics, and the performance of what amount to *karāmāt* (though al-Shaʿrānī does not necessarily *explicitly* describe them as such) played a key role in establishing these relationships.[92] He describes his usual procedure in his *Irshād al-mughaffalīn*:

> I might give the faithful one, whom the doctors were unable to treat, a stick made of dirt and tell him, "Burn it as incense." He would do so and be cured. Once, someone came to me with dropsy so severe that his stomach almost reached his beard. I said to him, "This can be cured only by someone in whom you have such great faith that if all the inhabitants of Egypt were in one pan of a scale and he in the other pan, he would outweigh them all in your eyes." He said, "That is how I see you." I gave him a stick to burn as incense before going to sleep. He did that and came to me the next morning free of illness. By this I knew how strong his faith was in me, even if I did not actually deserve it. Know this, my brethren. Praise God, Lord of the worlds.[93]

Besides placing emphasis on al-Shaʿrānī's own saintly powers, this passage and its many analogues scattered through his works is notable for the expectations our saintly shaykh placed

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[91] Al-Malījī summarizes some of these interactions: 'Christians and Jews and others used to take from him amulets, talismans, straw, and dust from the earth, for themselves and their children with the goal of baraka, believing [expressing allegiance to] in him. Then they would attach them to themselves or their children in order to be protected, or on their sick and they would be healed, or to their imprisoned, who would then be released, with God's permission.' Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 128.

[92] 'A man whose wife was angry with him came to [Shaykh al-Shaʿrāniī]. He had presented her with fifty dinars but she returned [them] to him and refused him, as did her family. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb said to him, 'Take this reed and give it to your father-in-law, and he'll return her to you, without need for money.' He replied, 'Don't have a joke with me, ya Sayyidi, I'm in turmoil and sad!' But this back-and-forth with the shaykh did not stop until he took it from him and went out and gave it to his father-in-law. His father-in-law said, Go and get your wife.' He did not detain him even one moment! The husband and the people marveled exceedingly at this. Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 127.

[93] al-Sha'rānī, *Advice for Callow Jurists*, 42-43.

on those who sought his aid, and the sense that his own saintly powers emerged, we might say, through faithful interactions with others. 'Faith'—which might also be translated as 'allegiance' or 'loyalty' in this context—created an operative bond between devotee and saint, impelling a variety of self-formation on the part of the one seeking the cure. Al-Shaʿrānī did not want apprehension of his sainthood, or the sainthood of others, to be a passive experience. His own repertoire of action and of bodily and inner deportment, while in great part shown as special to himself, was in part also meant to be instructional and available to others. Such measures, in particular active devotion and allegiance, were not divorced from the wider social setting, in which al-Shaʿrānī was not the only person laying claim to special sanctity and powers. In fact, the competitive nature of sanctity in post-Mamluk Egypt, the 'field' of sainthood an increasingly crowded one, was certainly a key driver in the above autobiographical renderings and strategies that al-Shaʿrānī deployed.

iv. Contesting sainthood in al-Shaʿrānī's milieu:

Alongside al-Shaʿrānī's embrace of certain saints of Egypt and of diverse forms of sainthood was his rejection of other forms of sanctity, a rejection that coincided with an ambiguous and often fraught relationship with Ottoman rule and the Ottomanization (or, more accurately in this early period, 'Rūmīfication,' a process that took place both alongside and in tension with more overt forms of the stabilization and integration of Ottoman rule) of Cairene social space and religious life.[94] This section will explore, primarily through the lens of his short,

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[94] The distinction is important, since, besides the discontious nature of Ottoman stabilization and sedimentation of political control in Egypt, many of the mainstays of later Ottoman life at the center and in the provinces, such as the Halvetī *ṭarīḳat*, originated outside of Ottoman territory proper, becoming Rūmī in the sense of Islamic 'Anatolian' before their own 'Ottomanization,' a tern which Hasan Karataş defines in the Halvetī context as 'subscription to Ottoman networks.' Hasan Karataş, 'The Ottomanization of the Halveti Sufi Order: A Political Story Revisited,' *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 1, no. 1–2 (2014), 72.

spirited treatise *Mawāzīn al-qāṣirīn,* the negative side of the great shaykh's arguments confronting rival claimants to sanctity and repertoires of sainthood which al-Shaʿrānī deemed inauthentic. In critiquing and even rejecting as fraudulent, or worse, others' claims to and performances of sainthood, others whose identities are never stated explicitly but which would have been obvious enough to contemporaries, al-Shaʿrānī inadvertently reveals the presence of competing forms of sainthood open to aspirants in his world. At the same time, equally inadvertently, he casts striking light upon the broader social expectations for saints and common means for the social production of sainthood in early Ottoman Cairo, demonstrating that far from remaining static, the social script of sanctity as read and generated by the people of the city underwent change in conjunction with the wider social and political transformations to which Selīm's victory over the Mamluks ultimately led.

The changes and disruptions to Cairo's landscape of religious practice predated the arrival of Selīm, though they were accelerated and given their ultimate form by the Ottoman incorporation. In the waning days of the Mamluks' reign, an increasing number of shaykhs and their followers from the Turko-Persianate worlds found their way to Cairo, bringing with them new repertoires and standards of sufism and of sainthood, as inscribed in novel *ṭarīqa*s such as the Khalwatī and the Naqshbandī. Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī (d. 1540), to whom we will turn briefly further along, was perhaps the most significant representative of these 'new' forms of sainthood from the Turko-Persianate worlds to the north and east of Egypt, but he was not the only one.[95] Shaykh Demīrdāş (d. 1547/8), a saint of Turkic origin to whom al-Shaʿrānī actually was not

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For another, legal-jurisprudential approach to the question of 'Ottomanization' during this period, see Emri, *Gulshani*, 301-308.

[95] For Ibrāhīm's pre-Egypt career, see Emri, *Gulshani*, 49-74.

opposed, was, for instance, another exemplary bearer of new (to Egypt) traditions of sanctity.[96] For al-Shaʿrānī the resulting disequilibrium brought on by these 'outsiders' and new practices and saintly scripts was dangerous and unsettling, as it entailed disruption to the saintly practices, hierarchies, and renderings of space in which his own project of sainthood had been formed, and out of which he drew his own authority and social recognition. It is not, as should be clear by now, that sanctity and its bodily and spatial possession were for al-Shaʿrānī or anyone else zero-sum affairs. Though competition did exist, particularly over certain styles of sainthood and the ability of given saints to take hold of the ears of holders of power or to lay claim to particular spaces of the city, individual projects of sainthood, such as that of al-Shaʿrānī himself, tended to be intertwined and mutually supportive, a mosaic of sanctity in which the various pieces complemented and supported one another. New forms of sainthood and practice tended to be isolated from this mosaic-like context, the authorizing structures and genealogies of saints from the Turko-Persianate world not being dependent upon local formations and traditions or

[96] Shaykh Demīrdāş's hagiography reveals a process already underway—to which we will return below—in which the saintly scripts of the Turco-Persianate world were brought together with those of Egypt. Formed under a Şeyh Ruşenî in far away Tabriz, Shaykh Demīrdāş reproduced items of saintly repertoire typical of the region, such as prodigious acts of eating, building up a large base of followers, adherence to the Halvetī *ṭarīḳat*, alongside others more rooted in Egypt. Of the latter, he is described as taking instruction from the chief saint of the end of the Mamluk era, Ibrāhīm al-Matbūlī (ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ's master as well), who says to him: 'Eat of what your hand produces,' which he does by establishing a *zāwiya* in agricultural land (which he is said to have developed himself) on the outskirts of Cairo, also a significant location. He and his wife lived in a 'hut' while they cultivated the land with date-palms—so not exactly *khalwa*, but certainly not an urban and public location, either, at least not initially. 'He used to only sleep a little, spending most of the night walking around the agricultural plot and the *zāwiya*, reciting the Qur'ān.' Regarding his prodigious eating: When 'the state' would overtake him he would eat on the measure of an *irdab* of peppered rice. When one of the ʿUmar*ā'* came to him with food for the *fuqarā'*, in order to protect them from its baleful effects due to it being of questionable status, 'he sat at the *samāṭ* and began eating one mouthful after another until he had eaten it all, and he said, "I'll bear the reckoning of it in place of my brethren the *fuqarā'*." That food would have sufficed three hundred men!' ʿAbd al-Ra'ūf ibn Tāj al-ʿĀrifīn al-Munāwī, *al-Kawākib al-durrīya fī tarājim al-sāda al-ṣūfīya: al-ṭabaqāt al-kubra* (Beirut: Dār al-Ṣādir, 1999), 363. For al-Shaʿrānī's rendering of the shaykh, and an overview of later developments in his ṭarīqa, see Richard J. McGregor, 'Damirdāshiyya,' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*. For a similar feat of prodigious eating, see the story of Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī while still in Tabriz and his ability to eat incredible amounts and kinds of food: Muhyî-yi Gülşenī and Şemleli-zāde Ahmed Efendi, *Menāḳıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenī; ve, Şemleli-zāde Aḥmet el-Gülşenī, Şive-i ṭarīḳat-i gülşeniye*, ed. Tahsin. Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982), 49-50, 55.

traditional power structures. The saintly script and hagiographic memory preserved in the *menāḳıb* of Ibrahîm-i Gülşenī is a good example: Ibrahîm's saintly genealogy stretched back to far outside of Cairo, from whence also came his constitutive practices, with much of his work in Cairo focused on carving out a space for himself, his followers, and the Khalwatī set of sanctified practices, with less attention, at least initially, to local circulatory networks of sanctity or local norms of proper saintly behavior. More important for Gülşenī was navigating the political landscape, first the late Mamluk and then the Ottoman, with the latter posing its own challenges despite Gülşenī's extensive ties with Rūmīs in and outside of Egypt.[97] Such is the context within which al-Shaʿrānī penned *Mawāzīn al-qāṣirīn,* that of a saintly ecosystem increasingly disrupted by the intrusion of shaykhs, lineages, repertoires of action, and relational ties—often with members of the Ottoman *devlet,* but also with non-elite people and groups—that ran counter to those of pre-Ottoman Egypt and which, in al-Shaʿrānī's view, threatened to undermine existing saints and modes of sainthood.

The new friends of God from the Turko-Persianate world and their immediate successors worked to reproduce their models and scripts of sanctity in others, which set up the trajectory, in al-Shaʿrānī's rendering, for yet more new claimants to sainthood, as he argues in the following passage, near the beginning of the *Mawāzīn,* that neatly encapsulates so much of the sociology of sainthood in this period:

> It happens that every one whose imperfect (*al-qāṣir*) shaykh gives him permission to inititate *dhikr* in assembly, or permission to inculcate in people [practices of *dhikr*], and gives him permission to act as a shaykh and preceptor, upon hearing a disembodied voice in his *khalwa,* from a *jinn* or a *shayṭān*, he now imagines himself to be a saint of God, and so gathers to himself a group from craftsmen and others among the common people,

[97] Gülşenī's, and, later, his hagiographer Muḥyī-i Gülşenī's struggles with the Ottoman center ought to be seen in the context, developed in later chapters, of the wider contest for the control and meaning of sainthood itself vis-à-vis the Ottoman sultans, with whom Gülşenī was to some degree in competition—one of the major insights of Emre's work on him and his *ṭarīḳat*.

> sometimes holding session in one place, sometimes wandering about from place to place, and burdening people in these days with trouble, toil, and turbidity, upon common and elite alike.[98]

The first few lines here identify a common trajectory of sainthood, one not all that far from al-Shaʿrānī's own formation and career: serving as a *khalīfa* to an established saintly shaykh, whereby one took the shaykh's (or the *ṭarīqa's*, the two senses often being mutually interchangeable) particular form of *dhikr* (and perhaps other practices and teachings) and set up an assembly of one's own, could begin one on one's own career as a friend of God. It is the trigger that follows which points us towards the aspects that al-Shaʿrānī found troubling: the newly established shaykh, who has secluded himself in his *khalwa* (which here could plausibly mean either the ordinary sense of a personal cell, or the more technical sense of a period of retreat, as used by the foreign Khalwatī), hears a voice and imagines himself to now be a proper saint. What follows such a personal revelatory experience—which al-Shar'ānī summarily dismisses as coming from a '*jinn* or *shayṭān'*—is a concise depiction of the route one might follow to become a socially recognized saint.[99] Followers must be accumulated, authority must be instilled through group gatherings, and one's saintly space demarcated. So far, the astute reader may notice, this basic script is one that al-Shaʿrānī himself followed, as did most of the saints profiled in his hagiographic compositions. If one wished to become socially recognized as a friend of God, the trajectory sketched out here was typical, and almost unavoidable (and not just in early Ottoman Egypt, we might note). Another passage further along clarifies what in the saintly repertoires of these 'pseudo-saints' our shaykh finds so troubling and disruptive, while also succinctly expressing al-Shaʿrānī's attitude towards the 'laboring classes':

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[98] al-Shaʿrānī, *Mawāzīn al-qāṣirīn,* 22-23.

[99] On the ways of distinguishing voices, see al-Shaʿrānī, *Durar*, 45.

> By my life, the peasants and craftspeople are more righteous in condition and closer to God than these false claimants! For [the peasants and craftspeople] spend the length of their lives in work inclining towards the benefit of people, but these false claimants spend the length of their lives hastening to the harm of people, because in their *khalwa*s, ascetic exercises, and *dhikr* at certain times, they aim at misrepresentation towards the people, mere preliminaries for their path which they desire to be claimants to. One of them suffers excessive hunger such that his bodily disposition is distorted, and he sees suns and stars due to the severity of his hunger, imagining that such is an indication of the Way, and that one who sees such has become a wayfarer towards God—but rather he is wholly stumbling about in darkness![100]

This valorization of the 'peasants and craftspeple' was an abiding feature of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's thought and practice, an attitude inherited from ʿAlī al-Khawwāṣ, who was himself decidedly non-elite in origin (as were several other important shaykhs in al-Shaʿrānī's formation), and who supported himself through his own manual labor, laying great stress upon the virtuousness of the laboring classes.[101] Here, while the labor of the urban and rural workers is beneficial to others, the ascetic and devotional labor of these 'false claimants' benefits no one but instead harms society. The 'pseudo-saints' al-Shaʿrānī has in mind here are marked by their extreme asceticism, and the ensuing physiological and psychological consequences, which they take as signs of sainthood. We can see in al-Shaʿrānī's polemics traces of the kinds of spiritual experiences that marked Ibrahîm-i Gülşenī's life, and which appear in Turko-Persianate models of practice and sanctity more broadly. The Kubravī *ṭarīqa*, for instance, laid out a gradated range of lights that the initiate could be expected to see and which indicate one's spiritual progress, though it is unclear to what degree al-Shaʿrānī would have been familiar with such models of spiritual progress.[102] Critiques of excessive asceticism and attendant modified states would

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[100] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Mawāzīn*, 24.

[101] On this theme see for instance his comments in al-Shaʿrānī, *Laṭā'if*, 417-420.

[102] On the role of colored lights and spiritual gradations in the thought and practice of the important Kubravī sufi al-Simnānī, see Jamal J. Elias, *The Throne Carrier of God: The Life and Thought of ʿAlā' Ad-Dawla as-*

continue to be a feature in the Arab provinces, culminating in the 'post-asceticism' of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī. However, for al-Shaʿrānī the distinction between 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' asceticism lay as much in rhetorical deployment and imagination as in any practiced reality. For instance, early on in his own career ʿAbd al-Wahhāb had engaged in (as he himself describes and as his hagiographer al-Malījī celebrates and amplifies) some rather extreme ascetic practices himself,[103] had had recourse to periods of strategic withdraw into a space in a mosque (a physical *khalwa*, that is, a private cell), before his full-fledged entry into public life, and in general maintained the sort of asceticism towards 'things of this world below' that had long been markers of the 'jurist-saint' in particular. At issue then is, to some degree, the intensity of the ascetic practices and the precise form they might take. Strict solitude in one's cell in a *zāwiya* for forty days was and looked quite different in many ways from the sort of seclusion practiced by the like of al-Shaʿrānī, which tended to take place either in a public place, such as a mosque, or within the inner precints of one's home, while the world-denying asceticism of the *majdhūb* saints would not have been regarded as true asceticism by al-Shaʿrānī, since their practices were by definition involuntary, the result of divine 'attraction' (*jadhb*). Al-Shaʿrānī forcefully conveys the sense of excessive asceticism being added to proper amounts of world-denying practice or acts of self-control and self-formation in the following satirical passage:

> Know that the most toilsome of the people in that are the climbers upon sainthood who seek to become saints through hunger and retreat (*al-khalwa*), busying themselves with Iblīs, staring at him with their eyes, imagining that he does not leave them due to their seeing themselves as the Folk of God,

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Simnānī (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 135-141. Al-Shaʿrānī was directly familiar with at least some of the works of the Kubravī eponym, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, per Winters, *al-Sha'rani*, 164, fn148.

[103] For instance, al-Malījī describes, in part using citations from *Laṭā'if al-minan*, al-Shaʿrānī's practices (early on his career for the most part) of taking refuse water and food and subsisting on them; according to the *Laṭā'if*, al-Shaʿrānī would tie a rope around his neck and to the ceiling at night in his *khalwa*—this before he met his shaykhs, he clarifies—to keep himself from lying down. Other acts of asceticim: eating dirt when *halāl* food was not available; poverty of dress; solitude, including occupying abandoned and uncomfortable structures, religious and otherwise. Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 135-138.

> though they are in fact too insignificant for him to worry about them, because they save him the trouble [of having to be concerned about them], for their ascetic struggles are all but the glance of the lower self, and none can draw closer to God through something in which the lower self enters.[104]

Herein lies a longstanding critique of asceticism, one that ran back to the earliest days of *taṣawwuf*, namely, that ascetic discipline erred through placing the emphasis on the lower self (*al-nafs*) and not upon God.[105] 'Hunger and retreat' here indicate that it is the Turco-Persianate routes of sanctity that are at issue, particularly—though probably not exclusively—the Khalwatī *ṭarīqa*, with the degree and rigor of saint-making asceticism ostensibly being at issue. Al-Shaʿrānī unintentionally indicates here the way in which sainthood was very much a 'career choice,' one in which a person might follow a particular script and socially project one's ensuing sanctity—including sparring bouts with Iblīs himself. What al-Shaʿrānī does not quite make explicit, but which is evident from his critiques, is that these 'pseudo-saints' were often being recognized as legitimate saints, by ordinary people as well as by members of the new Ottoman ruling strata. We ought not be surprised: as much as al-Shaʿrānī and others might have railed against the 'false' asceticism of 'pseudo-saints,' asceticism of different kinds was socially well established in Egypt as elsewhere as a marker of sainthood, with ordinary devotees, for whom the stakes were rather different, evidently less committed to policing the bounds of proper asceticism and authentic sainthood. The scripts of sanctity that Turkish-speaking immigrant saints followed were far from wholly incommensurable with those with which the inhabitants of Egypt were already familiar—otherise the newcomers would have caused al-Shaʿrānī no anxiety at all as their social purchase would have been necessarily limited. Other sources in fact indicate

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[104] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Mawāzīn*, 48.

[105] See, for instance, the discussion of the relationship and tensions between *zuhd* and early *taṣawwuf* in Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 1-7.

that while Khalwatī shaykhs, for instance, drew much of their support initially from other Turkish-speakers present in Cairo (whether connected with the Mamluks, with the Ottoman newcomers, or other émigrés from the Turkic lands to the northeast) they did in fact acquire followers from among native Arabic speakers as well, and would in time become fully indigenized in Egypt. A glimpse of this process, still in its early stages, can be had from a story that Muḥyī-i Gülşenī relates in his *menāḳıb* of Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī:

> [T]he *meczūb* ʿAlī Bey who, in Rūm, was a thirty-thousand *akçe za'īm*, came to Mıṣr in order to make the *ḥacc*, but upon seeing [Şeyh Ibrāhīm-i] Gülşenī, God sanctify his secret, in the Muʿayyadiyya [Mosque],[106] was taken with *cezb*… Among his *ṭarīfāt*,[107] one was when Aḥmed Paşa, his treachery not being yet disclosed, one day with great pomp was passing through the Iron Gate[108] when he [ʿAlī Bey] stopped before his horse and, though he spoke but rarely, cried out: "I want to be sultan of Mıṣr and I want to kill Gülşenī and his followers—but by divine decree my head will go to Istanbul!" Then crying *Huwa! Huwa!* he entered the Muʿayyadiyya. In the Ka'ba the late *kapūçī* Ilāhī Muṣṭafā related to me [Muḥyī-i Gülşenī]: "I and Hayālī Efendi, in the service of the *pīr*, were stopping by alone in his room when suddenly anger was manifest in the *pīr* and he said: 'Go, and treat harshly that crazy one (*mecnūn*), and say: "Before its occurrence [in the world], why speak of the secret of divine decree? Because you revealed the judgement concerning Mıṣr, the sultan of the world, do not come forth from Bāb-i Zuwayla!" Say this [to him]!' When we entered the door of the mosque, upon seeing us, still saying *Huwa, Huwa,* ʿAlī Bey said: "Has he confined me within Bāb-i Zuwayla? The command is his!" he cried, and rushed forth from the mosque, and said, "If he summons, we will come; we hope that every year for one moment we may be present in ʿArafāt."'[109]

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[106] A mosque that served during this period of his career as Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī's headquarters. See Emri, *Gulshani*, 218-221.

[107] That is, a saint's disposition or ability to perform an action.

[108] That is, Bāb Zuwayla, one of the major entry points into walled Cairo, a site with dense, rich layers of meaning along multiple fronts, and which played a prominent role in Gülşenī's career in the city, on which see Emri, *Gulshani*, 179-185.

[109] Muhyī-i Gülşenī, *Menāḳıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenī*, 434-436. Note that this passage is translated in Emri, *Gulshani*, 184, but with a misunderstanding of who is speaking when ʿAlī Bey stops in front of Ahmed Paşa's horse—Emri assumes it is Ahmed Paşa speaking and that it is he who is punished.

The central character in this story, ʿAlī Bey, is described as a *meczûb—majdhūb* in Arabic—a variety of saint that was by the time of the Ottoman conquest of Egypt ubiquitious in Cairo and its rural hinterlands,[110] al-Shaʿrānī's *ṭabaqāt* bearing witness to this ubiquity through the sheer number of entries devoted to *majādhīb*.[111] Al-Shaʿrānī himself was quite close to some of these strange saints, and saw them as integral parts of the Egyptian hidden hierarchy of saints, a support which seems to have been mutual: the above *meczūb* ʿAlī Bey is recorded slightly later in Muhyâ's *menāḳıb* as requesting that al-Shaʿrānī perform his funeral prayer when he died, one of a very few mentions of the Egyptian shaykh in this sprawling hagiography (we will see the other substantial reference further along).[112] ʿAlī Bey, while of Rūmī origin (his brief background story a good reminder of the many routes linking Egypt with Rūm even apart from official channels), adopted, we might say, a practice of sainthood especially resonant in Egypt, the saintly performance displayed here very similar to actions of the *majādhīb* al-Shaʿrānī

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[110] The relative novelty of this type of sainthood—as well as indications that not all observers accepted it—is indicated by Aḥmad al-Zarrūq's remarks on the *majādhīb* from slightly before al-Shaʿrānī: 'There is a community of Sufis who have appeared with divine distraction and behave like the insane. They cultivate such qualities until such distraction and irrational action become their habitual, natural character and they are unable to return to routine daily life. They are called to such a life by the apparently spiritual states that they see in other such irrational people and how society responds to them with wonder and acceptance. Common people, especially ignorant people who pursue worldly goals, are very fond of these folk who appear crazed. Such people are greatly affected by these displays of 'holy madness' and love those who display it.' Trans. in Kugle, *Rebel*, 208. Ibrāhīm expresses similar ambiguity in the above story when he calls ʿAlī Bey 'crazy' (*mecnūn*), a term with a quite different sense in this context, suggesting mere madness and not divine attraction.

[111] On *jadhb/cezb* and *majdhūb/meczūb* during this period, see Arin Salamah-Qudsi, 'The Concept of Jadhb and the Image of Majdhūb in Sufi Teachings and Life in the Period between the Fourth/Tenth and the Tenth/Sixteenth Centuries,' in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 28, no. 2 (April 2018): 255–71; Sara Scalenghe, *Disability in the Ottoman Arab World, 1500-1800*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 102-122; and Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie*, 309-333. For the majdhūb's role and development in the context of late medieval and early modern North African context, see A.-L. de. Premare, *Sîdi 'Abd-er-Raḥmān el-Mejdûb: mysticisme populaire, société et pouvoir au Maroc au 16è siècle* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1985); Nelly Amri, '« L'homme de la terrasse » [La pratique religieuse et sociale d'un « ravi » en Dieu, le saint tunisois Ahmad b. `Arûs (m. 868/1463)],' *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 220, no. 4 (2003): 487–526.

[112] Muhyî-yi Gülşenī Menāḳıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenī, 438.

recorded.[113] At the same time, Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī is shown in this account holding a decidedly ambiguous attitude towards the meczûb-saint in his following: he is angered by 'ʿAlī's premature revealing Aḥmed Paşa's evil plans, confining the errant *meczūb* to the Iron Gate and so asserting the scope of his own saintly authority over both an Egyptian form of saint and over a crucial component in the Cairene built landscape. At play, then, is precisely the sort of situation al-Shaʿrānī worried about: a foreign Khalwatī saint inserting himself in the sacred topology of Cairo, without regard for its saintly hierarchies and norms (which we will discuss further below). That this story also suggests the gradual assimilation of Rūmīs into those hierarchies and norms may not have assuaged those fears.

Somewhat ironically, one of al-Shaʿrānī's more prominent disciples, ʿAbd al-Ra'ūf al-Munāwī, would later embrace Rūmī *ṭarīqa*s and saints zealously, including in the final *ṭabaqa* of his hagiographic compendium *al-Kawākib al-duriyya* numerous saints of Rūmī or otherwise Turko-Persianate origin, as well as a handful of native-born Cairenes, such as Karīm al-Dīn al-Khalwatī, who obtained sainthood by means of foreign *ṭarīqa*s.[114] The life trajectory of one Rūmī saint described by al-Munāwī, Shaykh Ibrāhīm ibn Timurkhān, can allow us to better understand how such saints were integrating themselves into Egyptian life post-Ottoman conquest, in ways analogous to those seen above in a Gülşenī context.[115] From a town in the

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[113] It is beyond the scope of this chapter, but suffice to say by the seventeenth century if not slightly earlier *meczūb* saints would become common features of the Istanbul saintly landscape, too, traces of which we will see in chapter four. Figures like ʿAlī Bey can be seen as crucial links in the circulatory routes making such transfers of saintly dialect and practice possible within the empire.

[114] Paulina B. Lewicka, 'Challenges of Daily Life in Early-Ottoman Cairo: A Learned Sufi's Perspective. Preliminary Remarks on al-Munāwī's Memorandum on Decent Behavior,' in Stephan Conermann and Gül Şen (ed.), *The Mamluk-Ottoman Transition: Continuity and Change in Egypt and Bilād Al-Shām in the Sixteenth Century*, (Göttingen: Bonn University Press, 2017), 461.

[115] For a related style of sainthood from slightly earlier, see my brief discussion of Üryānlī Meḥmed Dede below in section v.

vicinity of Constantinople, as a young man Ibrāhīm set off to 'travel in search of encounters with the illustrious saints,' taking on different names in the places in which sojourned, working as a silk merchant as he went.[116] He took the Bayramiyya-Jīlāniyya *ṭarīqa* from a Shaykh Muḥammad al-Rūmī, and, after spending some time in Mecca and Medina he made his way to Cairo, where, after a serious of mosque dwelling places, he set up his silk wares in a shop near the citadel. He wrote treatises on 'the knowledge of the Folk.' He liked to roam, 'like a wild lion,' among the tombs of the saints, and once saw Muḥammad and ʿAlī in a dream-vision, they instructing him in his practice of solitary retreat among the tombs of the saints.[117] For al-Munāwī all of these practices, plus a handful of attributed *karāmāt*, pointed to his sanctity, Ibrahīm's practice of sainthood drawing—in al-Munāwī's depiction at least—upon distinctly Rūmī sources of sanctity as well as aspects with which even al-Shaʿrānī would have been comfortable, such as earning a living through his own labor, even if al-Shaʿrānī would have eyed Ibrahīm's peripatetic seeking out of saints and his solitary retreats with suspicion. Ultimately, it was the relationships and textual work of people like al-Munāwī that both reflected and drove this indigenization of new forms of sainthood and sufism in the Egyptian milieu, encouraging the integration of holy men from the Turko-Persianate world into existing forms and genealogies of Egyptian sainthood as in the case of Ibrahīm.

Returning to al-Shaʿrānī, despite attempts at localization and at integration into existing networks and hierarchies of sanctity, the sorts of Rūmī saints that his disciple al-Munāwī would

[116] 'His name in Rūm was 'Ali, in Mecca Ḥasan, in Medina Muḥammad, and in Egypt, Ibrāhīm. Among the common he was known as al-Qazzāz (the silk merchant), among the elite as Abū Muḥammad.' Al-Munāwī, *al-Kawākib,* 474-475.

[117] Ibid., 475.

come to embrace appeared dangerously out of place within Egyptian saintly space, a critique that is particularly visible in the following passage:

> We say: it is stipulated that one who inculcates *dhikr* and establishes a method (*maslakan*) be a saint—so are you a saint? If you say no, then we say: You're not permitted to claim precedence in shaykhhood. If you say: I am a saint, then we say: We ask you about the knowledges (*'ulūm*) of the saints *which they circulate amongst themselves* and which are not written in a book.[118]

Now we arrive at what was arguably the driving motivation for al-Shaʿrānī's disdain for and outright rejection of these 'new' saints and forms of sainthood: one could not simply become a saint in isolation, or even only from within a single saintly genealogy, no matter how exalted. Instead, what was necessary was being a part of a much larger community, a circulatory community, of holy people, rooted in a given place—in this case, Egypt. What this entailed for al-Shaʿrānī—for whom it was an outsized aspect of saintly identity—was not just the possession of special knowledge—signs of belonging, as it were—but the cultivation of an attitude of respect and deference towards the other holy people of the land. This attitude is explained in detail in the following passage from al-Malījī's hagiography, synthesizing material in al-Shaʿrānī's own writings:

> He used to preserve *adab* with the *aṣḥāb al-waqt*[119] from among the ʿulama and the holy, hidden and present, neither teaching nor preaching nor practicing *dhikr* until saying in his heart and with his tongue, "Permission, o *aṣḥāb al-waqt*, that I teach, or preach, or practice *dhikr*, with the judgment of delegation from you"… He would seek the permission of the *aṣḥāb al-nawba*[120] whenever he left his homeland or entered it, seeking thereby that he be under their gaze wherever he was. He would not knock on the door or enter the house of a judge in supplication or need for someone except that he would say with his heart and perfect attention at the threshold of the house or at the knocking, "Permission, o *aṣḥāb al-nawba*, my face is today

[118] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Mawāzīn,* 27.

[119] A special category of saints in the overall saintly hierarchy secretly 'governing' Egypt. See al-Shaʿrānī, *Durar*, 31-38.

[120] Yet another category of governing saints in al-Shaʿrānī's complex saintly hierarchy.

> under your sandals, give me good graces with this *amīr* or this *qāḍī*—" and he would not leave save with the fulfillment of the need or supplication, by the permission of God and through their *baraka*.[121]

Outsiders arrived without formation and connection within this ocean of sanctity, of special knowledge, and proper deportment and showing of respect to the 'hidden government' of the lands' saints, all of which permitted a degree of coordination and cooperation within the broad 'economy' of sanctity (in theory, if not always in practice, as al-Shaʿrānī's own life evidences). To set up saintly shop, either totally on one's own, or through adherence to an 'outsider's' saintly geneaology, was to step outside the authorizing structure of the community of the saints, it was to introduce a dangerous and potentially destabilizing disequilibrium. In a passage that combines analogy with the socio-economic situation alongside further analysis of the sociological conditions of sainthood, al-Shaʿrānī makes this danger even clearer:

> Know that the most powerful of the indications of the non-existence of the sainthood of those shaykhs is the fact that they do not know the saints who are masters of *taṣrīf,* for if they were from among them they would know them, as is the case with masters of any guild—even if they don't know all of them they know some of them. They do not possess a name in sainthood save among the commonality who believe that anyone who sits in a *zāwiya* giving out *dhikr* formulas is a shaykh, for which they make for him [after death] a veil and a *tābūt* and other tokens ('*alāmāt*) of the saints. We ask God for forgiveness, amen.[122]

In other words, pseudo-saints do not belong to the hidden guild of the saints, as indicated by their inability to name the guild-masters, a sure sign of their lack of membership and hence of their unauthorized and potentially disruptive presence within the 'marketplace' of sainthood. A market metaphor is in fact quite apt in depicting the sainthood al-Shaʿrānī envisions, provided we are thinking of the market as it was envisioned by Ottomans and by those before them in fact

[121] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 99.

[122] Al-Shaʿrānī, *Mawāzīn,* 58.

(idealized to be sure but also to some degree actually operative), one in which tradesmen and craftsmen were not engaged in mere competition but cooperated and coordinated their efforts. Competition was low-level, or was supposed to be anyway, and capital might circulate amongst guild members or neighbors within a market—in a similar way that the resources of sanctity could pass among aspiring saints, who could delineate the territory that belonged to them and whose saintly identities might build upon one another.[123] Just as craftsmen or tradesmen who set up shop outside of the confines of this cooperative economic community threatened the overall economic equilibrium (but need not lack for customers!), intrusive would-be saints following somewhat modified scripts of practice and standing outside of the wider Egyptian community of sanctity threatened, in al-Shaʿrānī's view, to draw off customers and even monopolize the field of saintly reproduction for themselves. The overhead involved in becoming a socially recognized saint was not necessarily high, especially provided one's ambitions were limited to, say, a neighborhood quarter.

Finally, the passage above sets out the conclusion of the basic trajectory of sainthood as it was commonly understood in Cairo and elsewhere (including by al-Shaʿrānī, polemics as here aside) wherein the shaykh who has formed himself ascetically, received or himself developed a particular devotional practice, gathered a following, and carved out a spatial profile for himself, receives, after death, markers of his saintly identity, primarily a proper tomb that might act as a locus for veneration and hagiographic memory, his 'share of the market' outlasting his physical, bodily life here below. The people of 'hunger and *khalwa'* against whom al-Shaʿrānī's critique was principally directed probably understood this social situation and the social expectations just

[123] For overviews of Ottoman guild life (and the open question of how far back early modern guild traditions can be traced), see for instance Suraiya Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire: Crafts and Craftspeople Under the Ottomans* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009); Amnon Cohen, *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

as well as al-Shaʿrānī did, and sought to adapt their own particularities and special characteristics to that situation, making, or at least attempting to make, such ‘innovations’ broadly legible among the populace of Cairo, a process whose beginnings can be seen in the life of Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī, with people like Shaykh Demīrdāş and al-Munāwī’s rather more retiring saint Ibrāhīm ibn Timūrkhān providing evidence of deeper integration and ‘indigenization.’ The Ottoman incorporation of Egypt into the empire and the ensuing changes—some driven by official policy, but many, such as the infiltration of new forms of sainthood and new iterations of *taṣawwuf*, already underway though accelerated by the Ottoman intervention—did not, then, fundamentally reorder the topography of sanctity, even if al-Shaʿrānī feared such dire ends. Rather, much as the Ottoman *devlet* itself preserved or simply modified many aspects of Mamluk administration, continued to draw upon longstanding Egyptian architectural forms, and made other acts of indigenization (many of which were decried by Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī and other critics), the practioners of ‘Ottoman’ or ‘Rūmī’ forms of sanctity followed a similar path of adaptation, negotiation, and incorporation. This did not prevent ʿAbd al-Wahhāb from decrying the ensuing disruptions, or from voicing suspicion and hostility towards both the Ottomans themselves and the ‘people of hunger and *khalwa’* who filtered in with them, his critiques of the latter carrying a latent political critique as well. While, it is true, al-Shaʿrānī was not simply a critic of the Ottomans or of the holy people who came in their wake, on the whole during his life he resisted incorporation into emerging Ottoman norms, and maintained his distance from holders of power even as he benefited from some of them (as we will explore below). His historical afterlife, however, reveals a rather different picture of Ottomanization, and to it we now turn.

iv. Conclusions: ʿAbd *al-Wahhāb in his historical afterlives:*

As one of the commonly recognized axial saints of the Ottoman era[124] and as a prolific author whose works took on a strongly canonical hue in the successive centuries, al-Shaʿrānī matters not just within his own context but within the wider Ottoman world well past his physical death. Al-Shaʿrānī expanded, through contact and collaboration with others to be sure, the scripts and the resources available to the repertoires of Egyptian sainthood, and hence to the wider Ottoman world in which his works and memory would circulate for centuries to come. He did this through both his work and presence in Cairo itself during his physical lifetime as well as through a prodigious corpus of texts, texts intended to reproduce and extend their author's saintly presence both during physical life and after death—which is precisely what they did. Al-Shaʿrānī did not establish a *ṭarīqa* of any great significance or reach, at least in the sense of a discrete lineage and attendant practices and institutional sites and communities, even if his descendants did maintain the sanctified power of the al-Shaʿrānī family for some centuries to come, centered around the tomb of the saint. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's memory and saintly presence lived on primarily in his textual self-representation and reproduction, in a way paralleled by only a handful of other Ottoman saints, examples of which follow.

We begin with al-Malījī's already referenced account, which drew upon his reading and selection of al-Shaʿrānī's own writings as well as accounts of *manāqib* circulating down to his own lifetime, the late seventeenth century (al-Malījī completed his account in 1701). Since he often includes different versions of the same story, we have the benefit of seeing different layers

[124] On the identity and role of the 'four poles' (that is, the axial saints who stood at the summit of the various saintly hierarchies), of whom al-Shaʿrānī was one, as depicted in somewhat later hagiographic imagination, see Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, 'La vision du monde par une hagiographie anhistorique de l'Egypte ottomane: Les *tabaqât sharnûbiyya* et les quatres Pôles,' in *Le soufisme à l'époque ottomane, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle,* ed. Rachida Chih, Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, Denis Gril, Richard McGregor (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2010).

or iterations of the same account, differences which can sometimes indicate the social dynamics shaping the hagiography of al-Shaʿrānī. One of the most clearly contested or at least problematic aspects of al-Shaʿrānī's career was his spatial trajectory through Cairo and the process whereby he acquired a generously endowed *zāwiya*—a *zāwiya* that, as mentioned before, functioned as sort of charitable mini-empire as much as anything, boasting food distribution to disciples and neighbors, clothing dispersment, a school for neighborhood children, the upkeep of the tomb-shrines contained therein, and support for sufi disciples attached to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and his descendants. A traveler to Cairo, al-Malījī reports, exclaimed that in all his travels around the Ottoman lands he had never beheld such a *zāwiya*, in either its economic scope or the piety of its inhabitants and dependents.[125] Before becoming invested with this *zāwiya*, however, al-Shaʿrānī and his family and disciples spent time in a range of places. At some point he settled into the Mosque of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Ghamrī, a site that is no longer extant but which appears to have been a modest structure maintained by the son of its saintly founder (who was buried nearby). It was while living here that al-Shaʿrānī was married (by way of saintly intervention we are told), and it was here that he began leading the all-night *ṣalawāt* sessions of Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Shūnī.[126] At first we are given indication to think that al-Shaʿrānī's sessions were not terribly popular: when he was leading the all-night *ṣalawāt* in the Mosque of al-Ghamrī, if no one else came to be present, Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Ghamrī would himself come out from his tomb and

[125] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 104.

[126] A form of nocturnal devotion pioneered by the peasant-turned-shaykh, al-Shūnī's *ṣalawāt* would eventually become popular across the Ottoman world under moniker of *maḥyā*, but, as I have discussed elsewhere (Allen, 'Up All Night'), also proved controversial and indeed contentious in many places, even as it could become a sign of sanctity (in the very sort of logic ʿAbd al-Wahhāb contends against above!).

perform the ritual with al-Shaʿrānī, at least until someone else came along, at which point he would go back to his grave![127]

Out and out conflict, and not just low attendance at al-Shūnī's ritual of *ṣalawāt*, also evidently afflicted al-Shaʿrānī time here. 'Among the things that occured to him,' al-Malījī reports, relating one story of why al-Shaʿrānī left this neighborhood mosque, 'in this mosque is that his *ḥāl* became very intense so he cried out with a loud voice in the mosque, 'God!' such that the mosque shook as well as the house of Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ghamrī ibn Abī ʿAbbās al-Ghamrī the aforementioned, while he was inside [his house]. He came out and said, "Who cried out in this way that it shook my house?" They said, "This is the cry of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb!" Abū al-Ḥasan could not quite deal with such an ecstatic state breaking out in his mosque, and so had al-Shaʿrānī leave. He moved on to the Madrasa Umm Khūnād, waiting outside its gate 'until the Prophet gave him leave to enter.' There he and his family served as caretakers, lighting candles and sweeping, while he also instructed disciples, eventually taking up residence in his endowed *zāwiya*.[128] So goes the first account, one which only suggests that ʿAbd al-Wahhāb had quite simply grown too powerfully saintly to stay in the little neighbhorhood mosque; his sanctity literally shook the walls.

However, al-Malījī also reports another story explaining his departure from the Mosque of al-Ghamrī: there were some of 'the people of the mosque' who greatly opposed al-Shaʿrānī, 'without the permission of Abū al-Ḥasan,' and swore that they would never be present in his *majlis* of al-Shūnī's *ṣalawāt* and instead took to assaulting all those from the neighborhood who were present, actions which cut down on the number of participants, only people from outside the neighborhood remaining, for whom the social stakes were low. The Prophet was seen by one

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[127] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 139.
[128] Ibid., 139-140.

Shaykh Aḥmad who instructed al-Shaʿrānī to go to the aforementioned *madrasa* instead, but then al-Shaʿrānī had a dream in which Abū al-ʿAbbās came to him and asked him to stay on, which ʿAbd al-Wahhāb tried to do, with the saint's aid. But now, alas, things escalated, as the group that did not like ʿAbd al-Wahhāb set up a counter session also with candles and raised voices. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's attempts at mediation—arguing, for instance, 'We're all equally occupied with good!'—failed. When al-Shaʿrānī next said to them instead, '"Please keep your voices down,"' they did not. However, 'God cast over them sleep until none of them were able to keep vigil, and instead they all fell asleep, sleeping until morning prayers, at which point the people coming in to pray laughed at them!' So they set out on a new plan: they decided to put on a *mawlid*, inviting various people—Qur'ān reciters, a preacher—to assist in its performance. When the *mawlid* was performed, on the usual night of the *ṣalawāt*, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and his companions tried to remain quiet, but ended up angering the sponsor of the mawlid, who came over and threatened them with various measures, which, we are told, the people were aghast at, and threatened to drag him off to the *qāḍī*. Nonetheless, at this final move al-Shaʿrānī, his family, and his followers moved down to the madrasa.[129] Ironically, given our discussion above of *Mawāzīn al-qāṣirīn*, it appears that al-Shaʿrānī's introduction of the novel ritual of al-Shūnī itself disrupted the delicate equilibrium within the little mosque and among its various users. His sainthood was not well established enough to act as an authorizing mechanism, particularly upon being dislodged from his space of practice. Even in later hagiographic memory his ambiguous and contested place was preserved, in the form of an interstice between the two versions of the event.

[129] Ibid., 140-141.

Later, after his time in the madrasa, al-Shaʿrānī received a generous endowment, from the well-connected (under both the Mamluks and the Ottomans) Qāḍī Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Uzbakī, which, as Winters and others have noted, was both a very benefical and disquieting development for the saint given his stated aversions to dependence upon the powerful and wealthy, as well as the sense of conflict with the Ottoman authorities, something that the hagiography attempts to deal with.[130] Al-Malījī reports that Qāḍī Muḥyī al-Dīn was inspired to endow this complex because al-Shaʿrānī promised him delivery from the wrath of Selīm during his conquest of Egypt, Muḥyī al-Dīn being part of the *ancien régime*. The story is as follows: as Sultan Selīm, whom later Ottoman memory would mark as pious and even saintly himself,[131] was consolidating his rule in the land he inquired about the saints of Egypt, and was told about al-Shaʿrānī, who was at the time still quite young (he would have been twenty-four), but was already known, al-Malījī tells us, as 'the great saint' of Egypt. Since al-Shaʿrānī did not go to visit rulers, Selīm himself went to visit the saint, and was amazed at his way of life and characteristics, and so 'believed in him with great belief.' Selīm asked the saint if there was anything he could do for him before his return 'to the Rūmī lands,' to which the saint replied that while he himself had no needs the sultan could aid someone he had been angered with, namely, Muḥyī al-Dīn. The sultan forgave Muḥyī al-Dīn and reappointed him to his former position under the Mamluks, for which mercy Muḥyī al-Dīn used his considerable personal wealth to endow a *zāwiya* for his delivering saint.[132] This is one story, at least—in another story it is

[130] Winters*, al-Sha'rani*, 37-42.

[131] On which see H. Erdem Çıpa, *The Making of Selim: Succession, Legitimacy, and Memory in the Early Modern Ottoman World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 210-250, esp. 233.

[132] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 154.

merely a delegate of Selīm who sought Muḥyī al-Dīn's ruin and with whom al-Shaʿrānī intervened.

In either telling (regardless of their actual veracity),[133] two things stand out: one, al-Shaʿrānī is shown to have been an exceptional saint quite early on, enough so that Selīm himself would have heard of him and sought him out.[134] Furthermore, his intercession was indeed powerful, even on behalf of a representative of the old order of things. It was this saintly power that explained his apparent worldly benefits in terms of his endowment, and it was Muḥyī al-Dīn who sought al-Shaʿrānī out, not the other way around. Second, this story points to how in later memory ʿAbd al-Wahhāb was 'reconciled' with Ottoman rule, being recognized by the Ottoman sultan—and not just any sultan but Selīm himself, in effect establishing Selīm in saintly subordination to himself.[135] This recognition allowed al-Shaʿrānī, in hagiographic memory at least, to negotiate the transition from Mamluk to Ottoman, securing aid for a member of the old

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[133] Winters argues (though with a rather opaque source base) that in reality Muḥyī al-Dīn endowed al-Shaʿrānī with land and property as little more than a ploy to escape confiscation, a sort of tax shelter. Winters, *al-Sha'rani,* 39-40. That this was probably the case is backed up by the fact that in 1551 during an Ottoman investigation of fraud in Egypt al-Shaʿrānī's *zāwiya* came in for scrutiny, but was ultimately absolved of wrong-doing and his income placed on a legal basis. Winters cites al-Shaʿrānī's own take in the *Laṭā'if* on this 'investigation,' which points to his pointed self-awareness of his own saintly performance: 'Sha'rānī mentions that during the investigation the Divan members told him: "The Pasha has allowed you to benefit from your revenue-bringing *waqf*s and now you are eating *halāl* (lawful food)." "The residents of the *zāwiya* were happy about it," says al-Shaʿrānī, "but I was not, because I knew that had the Pasha not heard that I was a saintly man (*ṣāliḥ*) he would not have given me a single inch of land, after a report about it had reached the Sultan. I deduce this from what they do to people who are not known as saintly."'

[134] Both the continued memory of Selīm and Süleymān's saintly figures and their subordination to al-Shaʿrānī are displayed in al-Malījī's introduction to his treatment of al-Shaʿrānī's interactions with Ottoman officialdom: 'When our Master Sultan Selīm turned to the clime of Cairo, he entered it on Thursday of the beginning of 923, when Sayyidī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb was twenty-four years old. The Sultan loved him and believed in him and accepted his intercession and gave him many things. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb lived another fifty years after the entry of Selīm and died during the reign of the just, the saint, Sultan Suleymān, God be pleased with him and be merciful through him to his descendants.' Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 152.

[135] This is more significant than it may at first appear: as we will see in more detail in the following chapters, Selīm was constructed in later memory as a veritable 'sultan-saint,' as part of a larger 'project' of sanctification of the Ottoman sultanate, entailing the subordination and control of other saints in the provinces, a project that was much resisted by the saints and those who constructed their memory in the years to come. Evidence of such contestation is clearly on display here.

order while simultaneously inscribing himself in the new order. And, indeed, his rhetoric elsewhere aside, it does seem that al-Shaʿrānī made considerable peace with the way things had become, to the point that an Ottoman functionary turned renunciant of sorts, Ḥasan Bey, would finance the shaykh's not inconsiderable tomb project. Later memory, arising out of a milieu in which Ottoman rule—whatever its practical ups and downs—had become thoroughly normalized, such that it made perfect sense that the conquering sultan would seek ʿAbd al-Wahhāb out and listen to him on behalf of one of the saint's disciples.[136]

Alongside these rather mundane iterations of space, al-Malījī records rather more extraordinary uses of space by al-Shaʿrānī, renderings that reinforced and spatially inscribed his saintly power and authority, pointing to both a sense of his universal reach and his firm investment in the land of Egypt and particularly Cairo. In terms of the universal, al-Malījī informs us that the saint would undertake a rapid mystical circumambulation of the world every night, pointing his fngers at the various corners of the earth while proclaiming 'God, God, God!' He would then be transported through 'Old Cairo, then New, then in its villages one by one until he reached the city of Gaza, then Jerusalem, then Damascus, then Aleppo, then the land of the Persians, then the land of the Turks, then the land of Rūm,' from whence he would cross the Encompassing Sea to the land of the west, looping back to the rest of Africa and Eurasia and finally ending in Medina where he would pronounce *taṣliya* upon Muḥammad.[137] Rather more

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[136] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 160.

[137] Ibid., 132-134. The *zāwiya* itself was imagined as being linked physically to the Hijaz, as the following story indicates: ʿAbd al-Wahhāb delved wells for the ablutionaries of his *zāwiya*, but one proved intractable in the construction. One of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's shaykhs, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī al-Shūnī, 'used to see the Prophet waking and sleeping, and would talk with him and bring up various matters, so one of the lovers said to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb: 'Ask your shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Shūnī to seek advice for you from the Prophet concerning the area in which you are digging the well of the washroom of your *zāwiya*.' 'So when I met with Nūr al-Dīn I repeated that to him,' and when Nūr al-Dīn met with the Messanger of God he related the issue to him. Muḥammad gave instructions about where to dig. Later, one of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's followers was in Mecca where he dropped a copper cup into the well Zamzam. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb told another follower to go down into 'my well'

localized, al-Malījī reports the shaykh's curious habit of seeking out and temporarily inhabiting 'abandoned' or otherwise inauspicious places in the city that had attracted malignant creatures, such as jinn:

> He once slept, God be pleased with him, in an abandoned entrance hall (*qāʿa*) which belonged to one of his friends. He lit a lamp for him and locked the door and left him alone. Then a group [of jinn] came to him and extinguished the lamp and raised a din in the entrance hall around him until morning. Then he left them. During this time [that is, during the night] he said to them, 'If I grasped hold of one of you he would not be able to free himself from me, not even the Red King!' Then he went to sleep, and slept until morning, not a hair on his head being disturbed even though they remained around him.[138]

Besides indicating the saint's power over the jinn—a hagiographic commonplace that goes back to quite early hagiography, such as the stories told of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlanī—this story also suggests the threatening presence of urban decay in Cairo, and the need for a saint to establish his 'territory' within decay and abandoned properties, places that became sites of establishing the saint's power and memory.[139]

Besides al-Malījī, we may consider a few further iterations of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's memory and veneration, the first of which also involves spatial plotting, but of a different kind. Muḥyī-i

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and to take out the fallen cup, which he does. 'I witnessed with my own eyes that when they cleaned out the well in the year 1073 there came out in its mud many broken pitchers from the pitchers of Mecca, and I found therein a whole pitcher which I used for a long time until it finally broke.' 'So from that is known its virtue over all the over wells of Egypt, due to the indication of the Prophet through the hand of Nūr al-Dīn and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, and its conjunction with Zamzam due to what is related in these two occurences, making it among the wells which bestow blessing, and whose waters heal all manner of diseases and ailments. And if someone came to my father complaining of a disease he would say to him "Drink from the water of the ablutionary of the *zāwiya*, and God will heal you from your sickness." So the person would do so and God would heal him from his sickness, eye inflammation, lack of memory or understanding, or other things, God be merciful to all of them and benefit us through soundness of belief from us in that. Praise be to God, lord of the two worlds!' al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 158-159.

[138] Ibid., 130.

[139] Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn, the eponym of the Safavids, is described in his hagiography as having carried out a similar nocturnal operation, only in a 'deadly' saint's shrine in Shiraz, emerging unscathed in the morning and invested with the resident saint's divine light. Ibn Bazzāz Ardabīlī, *Ṣafvat al-ṣafā: dar tarjumah-'i aḥvāl va aqvāl va karāmāt-i Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn Isḥaq Ardabīlī*, ed. Ghulām Riżā Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd (Tabriz: G.R. Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd, 1373 [1994]), 98-99.

Gülşenī (1528–1604), the author of the *menāḳıb* of Ibrahîm-i Gülşenī, relates the following strange story about the beginning of his own wayfaring, which took place in Cairo (and further underlines the complex nature of sainthood in the city years after the Ottoman conquests). A holy man of Rumelian origin and for a while affiliated with the Gülşenī tekke, known as Üryānī ('Naked') Meḥmed Dede (d. 1590),[140] came to Muḥyī, disquieted 'with the experience of divine majesty (*celâl*)*,'* and said to him 'We must go!' They went out into the Muqattima Hills, where he told Muḥyī to sit down upon a hilltop. Üryānī Meḥmed Dede left and was gone for an hour, returning with a coterie of birds and other animals, which he then scattered. They next went and met a man who had 'the utmost knowledge of things,' and with him came to a small pool, where they met and sat with two men, one of whom was ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, 'but his clothes had been changed,'[141] while the other was a Hijazi 'whom they honored greatly.' They talked about how intellect and spirit are ephemeral, and then the Hijazi pulled out a book which he gave to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, then stood and turned back towards to the Hijaz, disappearing 'in the blink of an eye.' ʿAbd al-Wahhāb did his ablutions, then led them in prayer, during which time animals came and went, drinking from the pool. Then ʿAbd al-Wahhāb left, after which Muḥyī underwent yet stranger occurences, eventually ending up back in the city with Üryānī Meḥmed

[140] His life is profiled in ʿAṭā'ī (for an introduction to this hagiographer see the following chapter), for whom also he was, for reasons not unlike Muhyî's, a significant saint, ʿAṭā'ī encountering him through tomb-visitation and in the world of the dream, as described by Aslı Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2017), 30-32. Born in the village of Yergöğü (now Giurgiu, Romania), he followed a basic course of learning, then underwent divine *cezbe*, stripped off his clothes head to foot, and took up the life of an itinerant dervish. He 'wandered the lands,' eventually ending up in Egypt, where he initially followed an ermetical life in the wild (the context of Muḥyī's encounter), subsisting on plants, before coming down into Cairo and spending time in the Gülşenī sufi lodge. After some time there, he returned to 'the lands of Rūm,' where he studied the works of Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, dying in Ruscuk (modern-day Ruse, Bulgaria) and being buried in Yergögü. Nev'īzāde ʿAṭāyī, *Ḥadāʾiḳ al-ḥaḳāʾiḳ fī takmīlāt al-şaḳāʾiḳ* (Istanbul: Tab'hâne-i 'Âmire, 1851), 365-368.

[141] What are we to make of this phrase? I am not entirely sure.

Dede informing him that he was not cut out for wilderness life![142] For our purposes, besides pointing us to some of the very aspects of Turko-Persianate sanctity which al-Shaʿrānī found so troublesome—the practice of (wandering, in Meḥmed's case) ermeticism, the saint's deviant wildness, with Meḥmed a migrant from the cultural sphere of Rūm—it is significant that Muḥyī included the Egyptian saint at all in his weird journey through the wilderness. On the one hand, al-Shar'ānī is clearly rendered subordinate to Üryānī Meḥmed Dede, a determinedly Turko-Persianate saint in origin and in scripting (if with traces or at least imaginal proximity to the 'divine drawn' saint[143]), his pre-Gülşenī repertoire reminiscent in many ways of earlier saintly figures like Otman Baba (d. 1478), from the northern tier of Rumelia.[144] At the same time, al-Shaʿrānī is still included in the saintly group Muḥyī and his guide encounter, and id recalled as a master of esoteric knowledge and possessed of other saintly virtues. While al-Shaʿrānī does not figure frequently or prominently in the main body of Muḥyī's hagiography—which deals with a period more or less contemporary with the saint's life—this tale is clearly of later origin, and probably reflects the already emerging concilatory view of al-Shaʿrānī at the end of the sixteenth century whereby he was rapidly becoming a properly 'Ottoman' saint, embedded into Ottoman culture and hierarchy without thereby making himself subordinate to the saintly claims of the

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[142] Muḥyī-i Gülşenī, *Menāḳıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenī*, 61-62.

[143] ʿAṭā'ī describes the beginning of his spiritual journey as one marked by the inrush of 'divine attraction' (*cezbe-i ilāhiye*), which led to his stripping off his clothes, hence his sobriquet. Üryānī Meḥmed Dede is significant as well for our purposes as an agent of the Ottomanizing dynamism and circulation of saintly practices and scripts throughout the empire, in often unexpected ways.

[144] See his extensive *vilāyetnāme*: Küçük Abdāl, *Otman Baba Velayetnamesi: tenkitli metin*, ed. Filiz Kılıç, Mustafa Arslan, and Tuncay Bülbül (Ankara: Grafiker Ofset, 2007).; and most recently, Nikolay Antov's extensive and sensitive treatment in his *The Ottoman "Wild West": The Balkan Frontier in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 71-88. Figures like Otman Baba and others in his milieu—analysis of which sadly lies outside the scope of this study—ought to be seen as providing symbolic resources and repertoire items for the saints and communities of later centuries, often resulting in combinations quite different from those of the fifteenth and earlier centuries. On this wider theme, and the later trajectory of 'deviant' dervishes and their communities, see chapter four of this study.

sultans. In the form of Muḥyī's Ottoman Turkish *menāḳıb* that memory was literally translated while also being subject to dispersal into the wider Turkish-speaking portions of the empire.

Veneration of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb continued apace in Cairo, oriented, it seems, primarily, but not exclusively, around his tomb. Among the miracles al-Malījī reports as having been worked after the shaykh's death through his *baraka* is the following: a girl was born—long after al-Shaʿrānī's physical death, since she was known to al-Malījī, writing in 1699—with congenital deformation in her legs. When she grew up she came to 'love the shaykh,' believing in him and seeking his aid all the time—'whenever she stood, sat, slept, or awoke, she would say "Ya Sīdī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb!"' One day she beheld him in a dream-vision, and he told her to visit his *maqām*, adding to her otherwise powerful devotion to him. So she visited his *maqām* three times, sleeping there, and on the third visit 'God healed her deformed knees.'[145] While perhaps not an especially exceptional *karāmāt* account, this story is striking in that it reveals a woman's knowledge of and devotion to the saint long after his death, and, at least at first, apart from physical contact with his tomb, the usual site of veneration and encounter. How did she learn of al-Shaʿrānī? Clearly his hagiographic memory circulated beyond his tomb's confines, perhaps in oral *manāqib* accounts, in reports of visits to his tomb, or through exposure to his written works (whether through reading, or, more likely in this woman's case, oral delivery). Whatever the means, this anonymous woman grew devoted to the saint, taking him as a protector, and investing him with her love, to the point of encountering him in a dream-vision. His message to her points to an important aspect of so many saints' tombs and the presence of saints in general, and not just that of al-Shaʿrānī: unlike so many other spaces in this world, the presence of the saint was not gendered exclusively male. This woman was welcome to visit and indeed sleep

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[145] Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 160.

there, and was celebrated by our (male) author for doing so—and, it is not too much of a stretch to imagine, her inclusion in al-Malījī's hagiography may have spurred other women to take this saint as their protector, as the memory and presence of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb moved about even within the supposedly 'inner' and restricted worlds of Cairo's women.

Finally, al-Shaʿrānī's works and memory circulated far and wide in the Ottoman world, the reception history of his works and the further permutations of his memory potentially forming an entire study in itself. In lieu of such exhaustive treatment, I offer the following curious but telling story, related by the Baghdadī scholar and traveler ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī al-Baghdadī in the autobiographical opening section of his *riḥla*, *al-Nafḥa al-miskiya*.[146] In the several pages al-Suwaydī devotes to describing his family—men and women—he notes that while God had blessed him and his pious and patient wife with several good children, the most outstanding of them was Abū Khayr ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Shaʿrānī, who was named after ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, due to something in his works that al-Suwaydī read shortly after his marriage to his wife: namely, that al-Shaʿrānī, whose wife was also named Faṭima, had a son named ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. 'I said to her,' he writes, '"Ya Faṭima! Look at what the shaykh said! If God blesses us with a son, we should name him ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, as a blessing linked with the name of the shaykh's son, because he will be ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Faṭima, and this ʿAbd al-Raḥmān is the son of Faṭima, so let us make his *nisba* al-Shaʿrānī, connected to Shaykh al-Shaʿrānī."' Their son was born in 1134/1721, and they did indeed name him after the Egyptian saint.[147] This little story, besides revealing a precious insight into family dynamics, points to one possible route of saint veneration: naming one's child in honor of a saint, and in so doing forging

[146] ʿAbdallāh ibn Ḥusayn al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafḥa al-miskiya fi al-riḥla al-Makkiya,* ed. ʿAli ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafah al-Diniyah, 2009), 67-78. We will return to this text in part two.

[147] Ibid., 73.

a *baraka*-conveying connection with the saint. More particularly, it points to the sense in which the memory and veneration of al-Shar'ānī had, by the early eighteenth century, spread far and wide, in no small part through the texts that al-Shaʿrānī composed and which he hoped would convey both his teachings and his saintly presence far and wide. He was indeed successful in this measure, at least within the confines of the Ottoman world, such that a shaykh in far distant Baghdad could encounter his saintly presence via his works and be compelled to name his son after the great shaykh of Cairo, in hope of the saint's blessings thereby. Al-Shaʿrānī's 'technologies of self' proved successful—such that they outweighed his clear reluctance shown towards embracing the new Ottoman rulers or the changing landscape of sanctity that came in their wake. By virtue of his own productions and the work of hagiographic memory of others after him, al-Shaʿrānī became a properly Ottoman saint—whether he had intended to become so or not—and contributed through his legacy to the general inclination of later forms of sainthood across the Ottoman world.

Chapter II

The Twisting Trajectories of a *Ṭarīqa*: Multiple Formations of the ʿAlwāniyya in Syria and Rûm

i. Introducing the ʿAlwāniyya:

> He was preaching in Hama, in accordance with the custom of preachers—using a notebook with pleasing stories, wise anecdotes, and edifying reports and accounts[148]—when al-Sayyīd ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, who was also preaching in Hama, passed by him, stopped before him, and said: "O ʿAlwān, preach from your head, and not from a notebook!" But Shaykh ʿAlwān did not pay him any mind, so he said the same thing a second time, then a third. Then, [Shaykh ʿAlwān] reported, "That caused me to finally pay attention, and I knew that he was from among the Friends of God. So I said to him: 'It's no good for me to preach from my head'—meaning by heart. He replied: 'Nay, preach from your head!' I replied: 'Ya Sayyīdī, only if you help me!' He said: 'I do, and trust in God!' So when I awoke the next morning I went to the *majlis*, with my notebooks in my sleeve. When I sat down the Sayyīd was opposite me. I began speaking from the heart, and God inspired (*fataḥa*) me, and that inspiration has continued until now!'"[149]

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[148] While he may have laid aside such notebooks for purposes of preaching, Shaykh ʿAlwān did not leave aside the stock of such stories: he includes one in his *manāqib* of Shaykh 'Alī, in which two men are taken from the Fire on the Day of Judgment, and are rewarded Paradise due to their praiseworthy responses when God sets out to return them to the Fire. The story—which is described as just that, a *ḥikayat*—has all the marks of being just the sort of account a late medieval preacher might have had 'up his sleeve' (literally!) when delivering a sermon. ʿAlwān al-Ḥamawī, *Mujlī al-ḥuzn ʿan al-maḥzūn fī manāqib al-shaykh al-sayyīd al-sharīf Abī al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Maymūn,* in Matthew Wiley Simonds [ed.], "'Ali b. Maymun: An Early 16th Century Sufi Saint and Critic of the 'Ulama' with an Edition of 'Alwan Al-Hamawi's 'Mujli Al-Huzn 'an Al-Mahzun Fi Manaqib Al-Shaykh Al-Sayyid Al-Sharif Abi Al-Ḥasan 'Ali b. Maymun'" (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1998), 567. On the stories and themes used in late medieval preaching practices see Jonathan Porter Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 40-50.

[149] Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī, *al-Kawākib al-sā'ira bi-aʿyān al-mi'ah al-'āshira,* ed. Jibrāʾīl Muḥammad Jabbūr (Beirut: Jāmi'at Bayrūt al-Amīrikīyah, Kullīyat al-'Ulūm wa-al-Ādāb, 1945-58) vol. 2, 204-205.

This interchange, between a charismatic itinerant sufi saint from the far Maghrib and a not especially notable local scholar and preacher in a neighborhood mosque of Hama, encapsulates some of the productive tensions that underwrote the life, work, and saintly memory of the orienting subject of this chapter, Shaykh ʿAlī ibn ʻAṭīya al-ʿAlwān (d. 1530) of Hama. One of the most prominent saints of sixteenth-century Ottoman Syria, Shaykh ʿAlwān, as he was widely known, will serve as our entry point into several further approaches into the history of Ottoman sainthood, as we explore the 'practices of sanctity' that in different and sometimes contrary ways he either originated or were somehow closely connected to him, with his career reminiscent of that of his younger contemporary ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī on some points, divergent at others. The above story, which comes from the *ṭabaqāt* of Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī (d. 1651),[150] presents the turning point in Shaykh ʿAlwān's life as he himself was said to have remembered it and as it was remembered by others after him: as the experience of the breaking-in of a saintly outsider, the wandering Maghribi shaykh ʿAlī ibn Maymūn (d. 1511), not just into the physical, performative space of Shaykh ʿAlwān as a preacher, but also into the space of his own self-understanding and self-presentation. As a result of his encounter with a saint, Shaykh ʿAlwān underwent a reorientation of self and public self-performance, moving from dependence on written notes (themselves drawn from the words and suggestions of others) to reliance upon spontaneous divine inspiration. In other words, when he set aside his notes and began speaking 'from the heart,' Shakyh ʿAlwān began a career as a saint, a career that would carry over into the formation—which might be too strong a word, as we will see—of a 'way,' a *ṭarīqa*, whereby

[150] On al-Ghazzī, for a useful overview of his work, which will feature further in the coming chapter, see Michael Winter, 'Al-Ghazzī,' *in* *Historians of the Ottoman Empire* (June 2017). For a study of particularities of his thought and context in his wider milieu, see Youshaa Patel, 'Muslim Distinction: Imitation and the Anxiety of Jewish, Christian, and Other Influences' (PhD dissertation, Duke University, 2012), the only, so far as I am aware, full-length study concentrating on any aspect of al-Ghazzī's works and thought.

Shaykh ʿAlwān passed on the sanctity and sanctifying practices that he had received, elaborated upon, and transmitted further.

This chapter tells the story of this transmission of sainthood and practices of sanctity as that transmission is visible in the lives and works of several key people in the ʿAlwāniyya 'genealogy,' starting with Shaykh ʿAlwān's initiator into the path, ʿAlī ibn Maymūn. In this story, sainthood moved from one claimant to another, and touched upon the lives of many other men and women in the process. In it we will see sainthood move geographically, from the Maghrib, to Syria, to Bursa, and back to Syria. It moved spatially in other ways as well: from place to place within a given city (and the story of this genealogy is primarily oriented around urban spaces), from interior-facing retreats to bold political gambits to public performance in the streets with antinomian-like bodily deportment, with claims on particular spaces—of mosques, of madrasas, of graves—a common thread joining the various links in the genealogical chain (*silsila*) of the ʿAlwāniyya *ṭarīqa*. It is also a story of movement across political spaces, from that of the Maghrib to the Mamluk realms to the Ottoman to the polities perched precariously on the edge of Well-Protected Domains on the cusp of Sultan Selīm's conquests. And it is a story of movement *within* a genealogy of sainthood, resulting in an expanding and changing script of sanctity, a script that was in fact many scripts, the accumulation of repertoires and resource bases stretching from the Maghrib to the lands of Rūm, as men and, occasionally, women across the geography of the *ṭarīqa* undertook careers in sainthood that were at once unified and starkly divergent.

Tying all these iterations together is the multivalenced concept of sufi *ṭarīqa*, a term that carries within it a vast range of emic and etic perspectives, a word with a dense and tangled genealogy of its own. Here we may benefit from taking it very literally: as a way, a path, a means

of movement from one place to another, or, as here, among many places. Like all routes, the ʿAlwāniyya *ṭarīqa* was many routes in one, a path whose characteristics might change dramatically. The historiographic path here has been rather lightly trod: ʿAlī ibn Maymūn has received some degree of coverage, in the most notable forms of an article by Eric Geoffroy, a dissertation by Matthew Wiley Simonds, and scattered treatments by Michael Winter, with each addressing Shaykh ʿAlwān to some extent as well, Simonds importantly including an Arabic edition of Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiography of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn.[151] My treatment here will stand out from these previous efforts particularly through my use of sainthood as a central organizing concept, as well as in my tracing Shaykh ʿAlwān's life and legacy both through Ottoman space and down into the seventeenth century.[152]

Our exploration of the ʿAlwāniyya genealogy begins in earnest by tracing ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's sojourn in Bursa at the turn of the sixteenth century, a sojourn that provides an entry into his own uses of space and place in crafting sainthood, his complex relationship to women and to gendered space, and the intersection with sainthood of the Ottoman *ʿilmiye* 'system,' which was by then well-elaborated and pervasive in the core Ottoman lands of Rūm and Rûmilia. ʿAlī's rather fleeting interaction with the social world of the *ʿilmiye* will lead us on an excursus, via the hagiography embedded in Ṭaşköprüzāde 's continuator ʿAlī al-Balī, whereby we will see

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[151] Éric Geoffroy, 'La voie du blâme. Une modalité majeure de la sainteté en Islam, d'après l'exemple du cheikh ʿʿAlī Ibn Maymûn al-Fâsî (m. 917/1511),' in Nelly Amri and Denis Gril (eds.), *Saint et sainteté dans le christianisme et l'Islam. Le regard des sciences de l'homme* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2007), 139–49; Matthew Wiley Simonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn. An early 16th century Sufi saint and critic of the ʿulamā, with an edition of ʿAlwān al-Ḥamawī's Mujlī al-ḥuzn* (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley 1998). A good short overview and bibliography of Shaykh ʿAlwān's works can be found in David Larsen, 'al-Ḥamawī, ʿAlwān,' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three,* ed. by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson (Leiden: Brill, 2019). Michael Winter's article 'Sheikh ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and Syrian Sufism in the sixteenth century,' *IOS* 7 (1977), proved impossible to acquire, so obscure is the venue in which it was published.

[152] Simonds provides a brief overview of the post-Shakyh ʿAlwān trajectory of the *ṭarīqa*: Simonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn,* 230-233.

the emergence of a new script of sainthood in the core lands, one marked by the tensions felt by ʿulama in connection to the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy's successful implantation and pervasiveness. Returning to ʿAlī's career, we will discern two differing trajectories: instances of success in Bursa, on the one hand, but more importantly, a return to Syria where his sainthood would become more widely known and socially successful, and where Shaykh ʿAlwān would take over from him, at the same time that Syria passed from Mamluk to Ottoman control. In making sense of Shaykh ʿAlwān's own career, we will pay especial attention to his own uses and contestations of space; the 'technology of self,' the *shakwāt al-khawāṭir* (roughly, the 'expression of passing thoughts'), which, while it did not originate with him, would become closely associated with his authority and memory; and the ways in which he presented himself and was presented in hagiographic memory after his physical death, particularly in relation to the new Ottoman dispensation. Finally, we will see the divergent directions Shaykh ʿAlwān's various *khalīfa*s took, both during and after his lifetime, using their own strategies of space, self, and repertoire-selection, a process of transmission and elaboration that took place under the aegis of Ottoman incorporation and the concurrent interplay of many 'scripts' of sainthood recognized, to various degrees, in Ottoman Syrian society. I conclude this chapter of Ottoman sainthood with a closer look at what exactly might be meant by '*ṭarīqa'* in relation to sainthood, by means of an ʿAlwāniyya saint of seventeenth-century Aleppo.

We begin with aspects of the life and wanderings of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, a sufi shaykh and Mālikī *faqīh* from the rural Maghrib who, like so many others before and after him, after a sojourn in Fes, gradually made his way east in pursuit of a religious career or sanctified mission (or, we might say, elements of both). His life in the Maghrib, and to some degree in the east, both of described in some depth by Simonds, is reminiscent of other 'juridical saints,' figures who

combined in one career the practices of charismatic saintly shaykh, rigorous Mālikī jurist, and trenchant social critic.[153] Our particular interest in ʿAlī picks up, however, during his arrival and stay in Syria in the final few years of the fifteenth century, in what would prove to be the waning days of the Mamluks. After an evidently tumultuous career in his native Maghrib, in 1496 he left his current residence of Fes, traveling east into the Nafzāwa region of what is now Tunisia where he entered under the saintly tutelage of Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Tabbāsī al-Maghribī, from whom he would derive much of his own later distinctive 'style' as a saint, including the basic lineaments of his own distinctive *shakwāt al-khawāṭir*.[154] By his own description, his progress under his shaykh's training was prodigious, a sure sign of his own sanctity, as he all but declares outright in the following:

> I finished before the end of the forty days [of *khalwa*], and [Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tabbāsī] said to me, "O ʿAlī my son, there remains nothing above your station (*maqām*) except for the station of prophethood, but fully realize your [present] station until you complete the [required number of] days." I achieved far more than I could possibly have hoped for many times over.[155]

After his training and decidedly rapid advancement into sainthood under al-Tabbāsī, late in 1497 ʿAlī left the Nafzāwa and eventually headed east in search of a place to fulfill his own saintly aspirations, settling for a time in Hama where he would meet Shaykh ʿAlwān, as related above,

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[153] '[Aḥmad Zarrūq's] paradigm of the juridical saint was his way of ensuring this balance between religious disciplines of knowledge, which he perceived as having become fragmented and dispersed. He argued that the juridicial saint, by juxtaposing devotion and law, sincerity and rectitude, had an intensified authority, as if he were the human embodiment of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, the master discipline of diverse types of Islamic knowledge. In claiming to be a juridical saint, Zarruq endeavored to reconcile these disciplines of knowledge, and on a deeper psychological level he also tried to reconcile the dispersed pieces of his past and present.' Kugle, *Rebel between Spirit and Law*, 3. See also esp. ibid., 98.

[154] For al-Tabbāsī's life, see Simonds, ʿAlī b. Maymūn, 125-132. 'The Shābbiya [Aḥmad al-Tabbāsī's *ṭarīqa*] was built above all, says ʿAlwān al-Ḥamawī, upon the practice of "meeting and talking (*al-ijtimā' wa al-kalām*) as was true in [the Prophet's] time…" with the disciples asking questions and the shaykh answering…. The methodof instruction based on questions and replies encouraged the asking of all question which arose in the disciple's mind, including questions that the disciple might have been embarrassed to ask.' Ibid, 137.

[155] ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, *Silsilat nasab āl al-Tabbāsī*, fols, 7a-7b, translated in Simmonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn*, 135.

and began building a community of followers, a community to which we will return later.[156] In his move east, whether consciously or not, ʿAlī was contributing to the role of the Islamic West as a veritable 'resource basin' for lands further east in terms of practices of sanctity and of saints themselves: in the late medieval into early modern period in particular several major developments and movements in devotional practice, *taṣawwuf*, and 'scripts of sanctity' first emerged in the Maghrib and were then carried east where they were received and transformed. Some such 'transmissions' are extremely well-known, such as the incredible success of Ibn al-ʿArabī's works or the long reach of other Maghribi saints like Abū Madyān. Others have not received as ample historiographic coverage, but were just as, if not more, important and socially pervasive as Akbarian theology or Shadhiliyan models of sanctity and sufism. The most popular text of devotion to Muḥammad, for instance, *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*, along with the later accompanying hagiographic 'superstructure' composed by Aḥmad al-Fāsī (who himself sojourned in Ottoman Syria for a time), was composed in Fes but was quickly spread to the Ottoman world and beyond, in both its original Arabic and in Turkish translations and adaptations.[157]

Indeed, much of the liturgical and imaginative apparatus of devotion to Muḥammad—one of the defining features of early modern Islam across the world—was first elaborated in the

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[156] Simmonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn*, 154-173.

[157] Despite its incredible popularity—it is ubiquitous in seemingly every single collection, great or small, of Islamic manuscripts or art—the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* has yet to attract the sort of sustained scholarly attention it arguably deserves. See however most recently Jan Just Witkam, 'The Battle of the Images. Mecca vs. Medina in the Iconography of the Manuscripts of al-Jazūlī's Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt,' in *Theoretical Approaches to the Transmission and Edition of Oriental Manuscripts*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer and Manfred Kropp (Beirut: [Orient-Institut]; Ergon in Kommission, 2007), 67-82 (including 76-81 for a nice breakdown of all the copies in but one—Leiden University Library's—collection); Hiba Abid, 'Un concurrent du Coran en Occident musulman du Xe/XVIe à l'aube du XIIe/XVIIIe siècle: les Dalāʾil al-khayrāt d'al-Jazūlī,' *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, Oct. 2017, Vol. 19, Issue 3, 45-73. For the life and hagiographic afterlife of the text's compiler, al-Jazūlī, see Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*, 155–229.

Maghrib, the genealogical lines of authorization for so many of these texts and practices running backwards to the mountains and hills at the far end of the Mediterranean. New models and carriers of sainthood would follow a similar spatial trajectory, with ʿAlī ibn Maymūn an especially apt example. In sum, that the Maghrib produced saints and practices of sanctity was widely recognized in many of the lands further east, and provided the broad atmospheric context for ʿAlī's career there. However, the *degree* of recognition varied, as ʿAlī would discover, particularly as one moved away from the Arabophone and into the core lands of the Ottoman Empire. Probably in a bid for a career at the Ottoman center, as many saintly shaykhs from elsewhere had achieved in the previous century and a half, ʿAlī ibn Maymūn chose not to remain in Syria but set out, first, for Bursa, crossing from the Mamluk domains into the Ottoman realm, with a few of his Syrian disciples—including Shaykh ʿAlwān—eventually following after him into Rūm, where ʿAlī's Maghribi origin and Mālikī affiliation would have a rather different sort of reception from that for which he had probably hoped.

ii. ʿAlī ibn Maymūn between Rūm and Syria:

ʿAlī arrived in a Bursa that had been a major city of the Ottoman lands since 1326, almost in fact from the inception of the polity as one *beylik* among many on the western Anatolian frontier, with an ensuing Islamic religious landscape—physical and otherwise—that had been in formation since those early days of the fourteenth century, richly developed by ʿAlī's time some century and a half later.[158] Like many places in the core Ottoman lands, Bursa had been a field of migrant sainthood before ʿAlī's sojourn there, a context worth briefly considering: the city's 'patron saint' was (and would remain) the Bukharan in origin Emīr Sulṭān (d. 1429), his *türbe*

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[158] For the city's Ottoman history and its spatial situation, see Albert Gabriel, *Une capitale turque: Brousse, Bursa.* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1958), 2-11.

enclosed within a complex (*külliye*) perched at the edge of the city up on the flanks of Ulu Dağ. Closer to ʿAlī's experience than that of Emīr Sulṭān, son-in-law of Sultan Bāyezīd I Yıldırım (1360-1403) and subject of a perennial devotion expressed in shrine construction, pious visitation (*ziyāret*), and *menāḳıb* writing,[159] was Emīr Sulṭān's contemporary, Ebū Ḥāmid el-Aḳsarāyī (d. 1412), also known as Somuncu Baba. Like Emīr Sulṭān the object of a long stream of hagiography for centuries to come,[160] Ebū Ḥāmid would follow the same immediate trajectory as 'Alī, coming from Syria to Bursa (though his previous journeys of formation had taken him from Rūm to Khoy outside of Tabriz, and hence to Damascus), initially remaining 'concealed,' gathering wood on Ulu Dağ (a mountain to whose solitude ʿAlī ibn Maymūn too would also have recourse) and baking bread, which he would then carry on his back and distribute to 'the believers,' earning his sobriquet Somuncu ('bread-giving') Baba.[161] His entry into public recognition, here elaborated upon by Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh (d. 1660) in terms similar to the saint's other hagiographers, was dramatic:

> It is related that when he had finished building his great mosque in Bursa [in 1395], Sultan Yıldırım Bāyezīd Khān himself came to Emīr Sulṭān and asked him, 'For blessing, come and be the first to act as the imam and give instruction to the community of Muḥammad in the mosque that I built!' But Emīr Sulṭān replied to him, 'The greatest succor (*gavs̱-i aʿẓim*) of the present is right now in your city, and in light of his being present it is not appropriate for us to preach and deliver instruction!' And so he gave indication of the identity of Ebū Ḥāmid.[162]

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[159] For an overview of the numerous hagiographies devoted to Emīr Sulṭān, see Hüseyin Algül and Nihat Azamat, 'Emir Sultan,' *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*.

[160] See the list of sources that treat Ebū Ḥāmid to some degree or another in Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī, *Akşemseddin hazretleri ve yakın çevresi: Menâkıb-ı Âkşemseddîn: Göynüklü kadı Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī*, ed. Metin Çelik (İstanbul: Ark, 2016), 75, n. 167.

[161] 'Bringing bread on his back he would distribute it crying out "Bread, bread to the believers (*müminlere somun somun*)!" The people would take his bread for *bereket*.' Enīsī, *Akşemseddin,* 76.

[162] Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh Efendi, *S̱emerātü'l-fu'ād fīl-mebdī vel-me'ād* (Istanbul: Evkâf-ı İslâmiye Matbaası, 1288), 230-232.

The hidden saint, in Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's rendering, not only delivered the first *khuṭba* in the mosque at the heart of Bāyezīd's new *külliye*, but embarked upon a series of exegetical discourses—descending from the exoteric to the increasingly esoteric meanings—that held the gathered ʿulama in absolute awe. Yet shortly thereafter Ebū Ḥāmid would leave Bursa, settling in the smaller town of Aksaray, due, the mid-sixteenth hagiographer Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī says tersely in his entry on the saint, to the crowds flocking to him.[163] We may read between the lines in these accounts, however, and see in them the suggestion that the field of sainthood in Bursa was, in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries at least, not necessarily an easy one to master.[164] Ebū Ḥāmid was far more successful in Aksaray, accumulating both disciples and material goods (again, reading ever so gently against the grain of the hagiographic literature), suggesting as well that popularity was perhaps not so problematic for him, but rather that Ebū Ḥāmid's 'performance' of sainthood did not register as effectively there as elsewhere in Rûm, or encountered opposition or political friction unmentioned by the hagiography. Could it be that, unlike Emīr Sulṭān, Ebū Ḥāmid—and ʿAlī after him—failed to adequately connect with the ruling elite, including, in the late fourteenth into fifteenth century, the sultan and his retinue, in a way that would help cement their success? Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's story hints at such a situation: Ebû Ḥāmid was an unknown, recognized only by a fellow saint, the much better connected, and decidedly *not* unknown, Emīr Sulṭān. As a core city, one whose religious resource base was somewhat more limited than, say, Constantinople or even Edirne, interaction with the ruling elite, including the sultan himself, could be especially crucial. Ebū Ḥāmid was not, perhaps, so successful on this front, the smaller, decidedly more rural, and not yet Ottoman town of Aksaray

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[163] Enīsī, *Akşemseddin*, 76.

[164] There are other possibilities: the invasion of Timur may have been at play here, though interestingly the hagiographies make no mention of him in relation to Ebū Ḥāmid.

(only incorporated into the empire in 1468) providing a more productive setting for Ebū Ḥāmid's saintly career. As is suggested by a tale of *kerāmet* related by Ḥüseyin Enīsī, featuring a peasant cultivator follower of the şeyh and his apportionment of a field's produce to the saint, Ebū Ḥāmid's repertoire of sanctity found readier purchase in the Anatolian countryside, even if in time he would become a part of a saintly genealogy—the various iterations of the Bayrāmiyye—present in the major urban areas as well. Cultural and social 'fit' mattered in the success or failure of a bid for recognition of sanctity.

Much had undoubtedly changed in Bursa in the years between Ebū Ḥāmid's departure and ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's arrival—the city, while still a part of the core, was no longer the imperial capital, supplanted by Edirne and then Constantinople—yet ʿAlī too would also encounter difficulty in making himself suitably legible to potential saintly publics in the city. While it is clear enough, reading ever so lightly against the grain, that ʿAlī (initially) hoped to pursue a career, either as an *ʿālim* or as a saint or perhaps as both (as would have been perfectly imaginable in his native Maghrib) somewhere in these core Ottoman lands, Bursa does not seem to have been his ultimate goal, but ended up as his primary base of operations in the core lands of Rūm after a frustrated attempt to relocate to Edirne.[165] He seems to have immediately faced two significant problems in the lands of Rūm: one, he spoke only Arabic, which limited his direct interactions with ordinary people, interactions for which he depended upon the services of a translator (though here he would resemble Emīr Sulṭān, who is described in one *menāḳıb* as speaking only Persian, at least initially, depending upon his nephew Pīr Emīr for translation).[166] Second, even as his status as a Mālikī lent him a certain prestige or at least curious interest in an

[165] Simmonds, *ʿAlī ibn Maymūn*, 184.

[166] Ḥüsāmeddīn Bursevî, *Menāḳıb-ı Emīr Sulṭān* (Millet Ktp., Pertev Paşa, nr. 457), fol.3b.

environment in which such individuals were rare, it could also be alienating, particularly given ʿAlī's insistence on acts of asceticism and of critique precipitated by his observation of Ottoman norms (critiques no doubt sharpened by his failure to attract a substantial following). Besides his fierce critiques of members of the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy, to which we will return, he seems to have been especially incensed by what he saw as improper use of the sacred space of mosques, in particular, in the case of Bursa, that of worshippers wearing soiled footwear (soiled in the streets of the city, which ʿAlī supposed to be especially filthy compared to those in his native land). Proper honoring of the sacred space of the mosque—and in ʿAlī's estimation, these places of prayer were indeed properly sacred, marked off from 'profane use,' in a way that might not necessarily have been true for all of his contemporaries—would become an abiding concern of ʿAlī's, as we will see further in his return to Syria, a concern which Shaykh ʿAlwān would carry forward himself in similar ways. Due—or so ʿAlī argues—to this improper behavior on the part of the inhabitants of Bursa, as he himself reports in his *Taʿẓīm al-sha'āʿir,*

> I isolated myself in my house [near the c.1490 Başçı Ibrāhīm Mosque, due south of the Ulu Camii], and I only went out for the Friday prayer, believing that I would be disobedient by agreeing with them in their entering the mosque with sandals. If I found a way to stay away from that, I stayed away. I ask God Most High to forgive it by His kindness. I pray the five prayers in my house in a group with my companions who are weak like me in a manner permissible and lawful in the school of my imām the Imām Mālik ibn Anas (may God be pleased with him). I did not do that because of my own opinion or fancy (*wahm*), but because of certain knowledge…. Satan cried out (may God curse him and those who have assumed his traits), 'This person is an innovator! He has left the congregational prayer in the mosque," and so forth, from what the souls have seduced people to do through the inspiration of Satan (may God curse him). My reputation for this increased in the Ottoman (*Rūmī*) lands, far and wide, and I heard about that from someone. Even books were received by me from distant lands containing refutation and criticism, and I did not find anyone [worthy of a response]. Rather, I left them playing in their discussion.[167]

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[167] The translation is Simonds, since none of the manuscript copies of this text were available to me at the time of writing. ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, *Taʿẓīm al-shaʿā'ir*, fol. 158b-159a, cited in Simmonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn*, 181.

This 'inward turn' of ʿAlī can be read in several ways. On the one hand, it surely reflects a desire on ʿAlī's part to imitate, both in actual practice and in his self-narrative, the life trajectory of the Prophet, a trajectory that, in ʿAlī's own rather auto-*manāqib*-like re-telling, structured much of his life and career, a life and career which ʿAlī himself saw as pursuing and undertaking *al-ṭarīqa al-Muḥmaddiya*, 'the Muḥammadan way.'[168] This retreat into a domestic space of seclusion also served as a critique, not just of uncouth worshipers who couldn't be bothered to remove their shoes, but of the general 'outwardly' tenor of the religious and scholarly life ʿAlī encountered in Rûm, and his own sense of exclusion from that life. ʿAlī's use, and, just as if not more pointedly, avoidance of particular space, the space of the congregational mosque, was, as he notes above, a public strategy which contributed to his image-formation in the Ottoman lands, or at least in Bursa. Not that ʿAlī minded making enemies: on the contrary, attracting opposition, whether he aimed deliberately at it or not, further aligned ʿAlī's life with that of Muḥammad. But such active opposition seems to have lain mostly in the future, in Bursa and then in Syria. Embedded for now, both physically and in the imaginations of others, in his own domestic space, ʿAlī laid the groundwork for a further foray into sainthood through futher imitation of the life of the Prophet. After his unsuccessful journey to Edirne—probably, as Simonds suggests, in search of a better situation, though neither ʿAlī nor any of our other sources states this explicitly, instead arguing that ʿAlī wanted to journey back to the Maghrib to visit his shaykh, despite the improbability of one taking such a route—ʿAlī returned to Bursa, and, in July of 1503, he set about on a much more public career: 'Then God cast into my innermost heart (*sirr*) that I dedicate myself to useful speech for whoever seeks justice and piety, leaves the incitement of the

[168] On his use of this term—which predates by some decades the far better known usage of Meḥmed Birgivī—see Simonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn,* 150-152.

lower self and the passions, desires the truth and guidance, and leaves destruction and what is false.'[169] In other words, Shaykh ʿAlī began actively seeking and accumulating followers in Bursa, depending, for the most part, on two successive translators to reach the majority of people who would not have spoken Arabic. Even if his position in Bursa would prove ultimately unsatisfactory if not outright untenable, he would be active there for a few years and would leave behind a successor and a small community of Rūmī devotees.

How might ʿAlī's public deportment and saintly performances have indicated his sanctity to (at least some of) the inhabitants of Bursa? If we accept ʿAlī's own self-reporting, his inward retreat and absence at prayers had become well-known, a notoriety which, alongside his studious asceticism in food, drink, and, especially, dress, could have signaled sanctity—though not necessarily for the reasons ʿAlī might have supposed, that is, as instances of his strict adherence to the Mālikī *madhhab.* Non-performance of prayers, after all, had a long genealogy in Rūm as one item among many in the repertoire of the radical renunciantion of deviant dervishes. It seems likely, especially based on the later trajectory of ʿAlī's *khalīfa* in Bursa, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, that for many in that city ʿAlī was perceived through some degree of analogy or reference to such 'deviant' scripts of sainthood—with both positive and negative reactions. Of a less 'deviant' nature, seclusion, whether of Ebū Ḥāmid's rather Malāmatī variety or the more ermetic practices remembered of Emīr Sulṭān, were clearly prominent features within the Bursan expectations of saints, often in connection to Ulu Dağ, still at the time sometimes known by its older name, Keşiş Dağ, 'Monk Mountain.'[170] At any rate, even as his practices of seclusion, conspicuous

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[169] Ibid., 185.

[170] Ulu Dağ had long been known as a haunt of holy ascetics and monks, such as the one encountered by the solitude-seeking Emīr Sulṭān, who worked miracles for people. He lived as a solitary on the mountain, coming down to Bursa at the end of the year, staying there for one month. The sick and powerless would come to him and receive healing at his touch, particularly those for whom doctors were powerless to heal—like people

non-presence at prayers, and general asceticism, all coupled with outspokenness towards the scholarly and political elite, earned ʿAlī opposition, the same characteristics might also be perceived by others as signs of sainthood. The following account, taken from Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiographic treatment of his shaykh, *Muljī al-ḥuzn*, is indicative of such possible receptions, and also speaks to a vital public in ʿAlī's career in Bursa and, later, in Syria—women:

> And among those who accompanied him with believing allegiance was Mustafa Çelebi, who is now a *mudarris* according to the Hanafi *madhhab* in the town known as Inegöl, near Bursa. This Mustafa Çelebi ibn 'Ali Paşa's father was from among the great and elite of Bursa, and he was of great wealth. Mustafa's mother also entered the *ṭarīqa*, she and her maidservants. The reason for her entry was that she had heard the speech of Sayyidī [ʿAlī ibn Maymūn] in Arabic from behind a wall, while she was Turkish[171] and did not understand Arabic, yet she found in her inmost secret and heart a light (*nūr*) alight because of his discourse. God made it known to her that this was true (*ḥaqq*), so she undertook and followed the *ṭarīqa* and lived in accordance with it.[172]

Two things immediately stand out here: first, while Mustafa Çelebi is noted as a member of the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy—albeit of no great rank, his position in the village of Inegöl hardly an important launching pad for career ambition—and to have been the son of a prominent member of Bursa's elite, it is his *mother* who features here as the more significant follower of the saint and whose story is related in greater detail than her son's. Her recognition of ʿAlī's sainthood

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missing legs or eyes or speech. Then, after one month's time, he would return to the mountain for prayer and devotion. When Emīr Sulṭān learned of this monk, he wished to meet him, and so he went to the mountain and found the monk's hermitage, where he was greeted by him with his proper title, suprising Emīr Sulṭān, who asked him how he knew these things. The answer: 'Your ancestor Muḥammad told me in a dream!' The monk then told the still more surprised Emīr Sulṭān that he had accepted Islam in the presence of 'your ancestor.' But Muḥammad also instructed the monk not to change his habit or way of life at all! So Emīr Sulṭān and the monk discussed spiritual matters; Emīr Sulṭān then entrusted the monk with the hermitage, and the site remaining a holy place 'to the present.' Senāyī, *Menāḳıb-i Emīr Sulṭān* ([Istanbul]: İzzet Efendi Matbaası, 1872), 60-62; for another, quite similar rendition of this story, see Ḥüsāmeddīn, *Menāḳıb*, 63b-64b.

[171] An interesting usage of 'Turk' as an ethnonym, though here primarily with the purpose of pointing out what language she spoke.

[172] ʿAlwān, *Muljī*, 605.

had to overcome two barriers, making it all the more memorable: not only did she not understand (in a linguistic sense at least) the discourse of the shaykh, she heard it ‘from behind a wall,’ which suggests her presence in a room adjacent to the space occupied by the saint, putting her in the proximity of the shaykh but just out of reach (whether or not this separation had anything to do with gendered segregation—the story is not explicit on this point). She recognized nonetheless the presence of ‘light’ in this immigrant shaykh, and she affiliated herself with him and his *ṭarīqa* as a result—something in his speech, his manner of life, his reputation resonating with her understanding of what constituted sainthood. Second, she brought others into the sphere of this saint, namely her maidservants, which further suggests that she was in her own right—and not just as a wife to a wealthy man—a woman of some influence and wealth, as well as piety. It was just such devotees who mattered the most in the economy of sainthood, making women who in cases such as the above could act through their social ties to bring others into relationship with the saint, and to introduce recognition of his sanctity in the upper echelons of society.

That a woman would be a key follower is well in keeping with the pattern of ʿAlī’s activities and attitudes elsewhere as related by Shaykh ʿAlwān, even if such a pattern is not discernible from ʿAlī and Shaykh’s ʿAlwān’s polemical works: ʿAlī’s hagiographer emphasizes (and would himself reproduce) his master’s rigor in maintaining structures of gender segregation, to the point that ʿAlī corrected Shaykh ʿAlwān’s practice of teaching hadith to mixed companies of men and women, instructing him to put up a *ḥijāb*, a curtain or barrier of some sort.[173] ʿAlī himself expressed this concern in, among other places, his *al-Risāla al-mujāza*, in which he complains that the qadi of Bursa ‘buys slave girls and brings men to teach them how to make

[173] On which see Marion Holmes Katz, *Women in the Mosque: A History of Legal Thought and Social Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 163-166.

silk. If only he would bring women to teach women! This is one of the greateset calamities in religion.'[174] As Marion Katz has explored in some detail in her study of women's presence and activity in mosques, Shaykh ʿAlwān intensified his master's emphasis on gender segregation, noting the many breaches in such segregation in mosques and other spaces and enjoining the regulation of women's deportment in these spaces as well as the general regulation of the gaze, male and female.[175]

Yet, upon closer examination, ʿAlī's very emphasis on gender segregation is congruent with the constant presence of women in his saintly career, their presence eliciting the perceived need for gender segregation maintenance. Shaykh ʿAlwān brings out the presence of ʿAlī's female disciples at several points in his *manāqib*: among the people he lists in the work's concluding chapter as important followers of the shaykh (and hence witnesses of his sanctity), three, out of eight, are women, and of the five remaining men, two are mentioned only in passing in order to relationally situate pious women, while one of the followers, ʿAbd al-Nabī al-Mālikī, a mufti, is described as being 'like a humble child' before the shaykh—a somewhat ambiguous gendered reference—and another, the *majdhūb* ʿAlī ibn al-Samīka, as a *majdhūb* does not fall neatly into any clear gender categories in use at the time.[176] Women also featured prominently in

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[174] Simmonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn*, 189.

[175] 'On this issue as well as others of the same kind, Shayh ʿAlwān seems to have had an unusually censorious attitude toward the social and religious practices prevelant in his environment.' Katz, *Women in the Mosque*, 166. It should be noted that while Shaykh ʿAlwān, like 'Alī, wrote vigorous polemic about women's dress, this polemic was part of a wider discourse directed against perceived sumptuary wrong-doing in Syria, especially among the 'ulama, who come under even greater and more sustained criticism than women wearing 'frivolous' clothing and ornamentation. On women he says, '[Women] go out… flaunting their adornments, swaying and sashaying, their heads like the humps of lean camels, with fillets, cockscomb headdresses, and the like.' Cited in Ibid., 164. For similar attitudes towards the clothing and deportment of the 'ulama, see Simmonds, *ʿAlī b. Maymūn*, 201.

[176] ʿAlwān, *Muljī,* 610-611.

ʿAlī's operations upon and in urban space, including the following account from his *manāqib* that reveals a notable concern for the 'invisible labor' of women and a deliberate desire on ʿAlī's part to make inner domestic space a part of his saintly territory:

> One day I was with him in company in a neighborhood when the people of the neighborhood sought his permission to host him, and he gave them permission to honor him in a way that was not troublesome. So the crowd increased and some came with bread and some with other foodstuffs. He said: 'No might or power save in God! The women toil in fetching water and in service—shall I and my companions come and eat the bread that they have kneaded and cooked for themselves and their children?' So then he entrusted the husbands with bringing him into the presence of their wives from behind the veil, and he went about the houses visiting them, and we with them, relieving them for a time from their toil and service.[177]

'Alī, then, not only saw women as deserving of compassion and expressed awareness of the hidden labor of women in their households. In this account he is also shown seeking to alleviate that labor,[178] in the process making visible his own 'socially-conscious' asceticism. At the same time, he is seen passing from the masculine space of the street of the urban quarter into the feminine, 'domestic' inner space of the household. In so doing, the women whose role in the social production of ʿAlī's sainthood—as the sources of labor for the food and drink bestowed by the men of the quarter upon the saint—would otherwise have remained literally out of sight, became a part of ʿAlī's public, as the saint both physically and imaginatively entered into the inner, femininely gendered space of the women themselves. Finally, Shaykh ʿAlwān later integrated these women's lives into the hagiographic memory of his shaykh as vital witnesses to ʿAlī's sanctity. Unlike *majādhīb* saints or analogous deviant dervishes with their shaved facial hair and pierced ears, while ʿAlī embraced some practices that carried a decidedly 'feminine'

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[177] Ibid., 577.

[178] The story comes after Shaykh ʿAlwān has noted ʿAlī's self-stricture in being hosted so as to keep the women of the household from having to work more than usual.

valence—avoidance of prayers in the mosque (at least in Bursa), retreat into the inner space of his home, and a studious awareness of and concern with matters of food and drink preparation, for instance—he remained, in his own understanding and in the perceptions of others, firmly male and so subject to the strictures of the *sharīʿa*. Hence the integration of women into his saintly career and identity, as extensive as it clearly was, always took place—or at least is recorded as such in the hagiography—with some physical object intervening and maintaining gender norms, emphasis on gender segregation, though not exclusion.

Returning to the shaykh's sojourn in Bursa, the career of ʿAlī's most prominent male follower in the city, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣūfī, points to another important context for the articulation of sainthood in the core Ottoman lands, namely, the place of the *ʿilmiye* system as a foil and key point of departure and differentiation in saints' scripting, public performance, and memorialization. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, according to his entry in Ṭaşköprüzāde (d. 1561), started out as a student of *ʿilm* studying under a Molla Mūsā Çelebi in one of the Eight Medreses of Istanbul, but abandoned a further trajectory in the *ʿilmiye*, instead affiliating himself to Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and so 'perfected the Path in little time.' Such a departure from the *ʿilmiye* system in favor of pursuing the sufi way was far from unprecedented.[179] By the turn of the sixteenth century a prominent part of many a would-be saint's life in the core lands would involve leaving (often dramatically) the world of *ʿilmiye* with its *medrese* formation, attachment to patron-scholars, and advancement (or the hope thereof) through a gradated hierarchy of

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[179] The posture of rejection was helped, of course, by a long tradition of such stances in sufism and in saints' lives more generally: the most basic imaginal contours laid down by the distinction between 'exoteric' (*ẓāhir*) and 'esoteric' (*bāṭin*). However, it was the particular form of the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy that gave this imaginal binary and the ensuing break from the '*ẓāhir'* side such power: by comparison, in the Arab provinces, where feeder routes into the *ʿilmiye* flowed at much, much lower rates, stark differentiation and narratives of dramatic rejection were likewise far rarer during out period. Combining the role of sufi saint and, say, mufti, was not uncommon.

positions, and instead embracing the life of a sufi or of some sort of attachment to a renowned saint. For those who did not have a dramatic 'conversion experience' or epiphanial moment of rupture, they might still define themselves against the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy, though the points of contrast varied. To be sure, contrasting the text-centric life of the 'exoteric' 'ulama, their supposed dependence on unjust political power, and so forth, were all tropes—with widely varying degrees of descriptive accuracy no doubt—that had been in circulation in the broader Islamic world for centuries. But it is also true that under the Ottomans, from the fifteenth century forward, the 'ulama's systemization, hierarchical ordering, and integration within the Ottoman *devlet* (in the core lands at least, less so in the Arab provinces) as 'scholar-bureaucrats' were quite exceptional.[180] The uniqueness, and ambiguities and tensions, of the *ʿilmiye* system were widely recognized by participants, as even a cursory look Ṭaşköprüzāde's *ṭabaqāt* reveals, a text that itself seeks to navigate and resolve some of these tensions and anxieties.[181] Not only was the Ottoman *ʿilmiye* hierarchy and related career path unique in many ways, it possessed an order and stability (and anxieties and enforced transcience) that made it an excellent contrasting point for a saint, whether through rupture and change of life, or simply as an external point of reference. We will see this dynamic in much greater depth in a successive chapter—with the life of medrese-student turned sufi şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī in eighteenth century Istanbul—but it was certainly at play in ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's career choice and self-presentation in Bursa.

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[180] On the development of the hierarchy and the accompanying transformations to Islamic jurisprudence, see most recently Abdurrahman Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); and Guy Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[181] For a study of this very aspect of Ṭaşköprüzāde , see Ali Anooshahr, 'Writing, Speech, and History for an Ottoman Biographer,' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 69, no. 1 (2010): 43–62.

While it would be impractical to explore here the full articulation of this constitutive interplay of *ʿilmiye* with sainthood, an example taken from the *ṭabaqāt* of ʿAlī al-Bālī (d. 997/1569), *al-ʿIqd al-manẓūm,* provides a good synopsis of the dynamic I am describing. In his life of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Muʿīdī, who would become one of several Bayrāmiye-affiliated saints (along with a handful of non-Bayrāmiye saints) ʿAlī al-Balī included in his continuation, entries which, unlike that of Ṭaşköprüzāde and indeed most compilers of such texts, amounted to nearly full-fledged hagiographies.[182] ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Muʿīdī was, we are told, originally, like ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's disciple ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, a 'student of *ʿilm*,' eventually becoming a *mülāzım* to two successive medrese professors in Constantinople, an indication of a passable, if hardly stellar, *ʿilmiye* career.[183] His less than ideal trajectory is reflected in Meḥmed Mecdī's (d. 1591) rather perfunctory entry concerning al-Muʿīdī in Mecdī's expanded Ottoman Turkish translation of Ṭaşköprüzāde, wherein he describes ʿAbd al-Raḥīm as an excellent student, 'perfecting *ʿilm-i ẓâhire*' in many iterations, including mastery of Arabic, under the tutelage of two şeyhs, Sinân Paşa and Hôcazade; Mecdī however skips directly from this instruction in *ʿilm* to al-Muʿīdī's entry into sufism, suggesting that the intervening period held nothing of great interest or social register.[184] From ʿAlī al-Bālī's account we learn that at some point during this career he married the daughter of a Bayramī shaykh and saint in his own standing, Muḥyī al-Dīn Iskilibī (d. 1514), whose saintly life features prominently as well in *al-ʿIqd al-manẓūm*—a marriage which in itself points at the permeability of the perceived divide between saints and scholar-bureaucrats (and

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[182] ʿAṭāʾī, another continuator, presents some hagiographic entries of length, though none approach that of Alī al-Bālī, making the latter in fact one of our best sources for sixteenth century hagiography from Rûm.

[183] ʿAlī al-Bālī, *al-ʿIqd al-manẓūm fī dhikr afāḍil al-Rūm*, included in Aḥmed Ṭaşköprüzāde, *al-Shaqāʾiq al-Nuʿmānīya fī ʿulmāʾ al-Dawla al-ʿUthmānīya* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1975), 468.

[184] Meḥmed Mecdī Efendi, *Şeḳāʾiḳ-i numānīye: zümre-i ḳuẓātdan Edirneli [Meḥmed] Mecdī Efendinin tercümesidir* (Istanbul: Tabhâne-i Âmire, 1852), 436-437.

perhaps also al-Muʿīdī's strategic widening of his career possibilities!). His 'conversion' to the sufi path and a 'career' in sainthood was precipitated, the story goes, by his becoming intensely sick, to the point that he believed he was on the verge of death. He cried out to his wife asking her to go to her saintly father and bring him to his bedside, since he feared dying 'bereft of gnosis.' Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn and some of his companions came, and then, after sitting with him for some time and evaluating his earnestness in desiring gnosis, the shaykh had al-Muʿīdī ritually washed, then sat him upright facing the *qibla* with one of his disciples sitting behind him, clutching him closely. Al-Muʿīdī suddenly stood up, cried out, and swooned. When he came to, he was better, and he revealed to Muḥyī al-Dīn the insights that had been manifested to him; from this point on he pursued a career as a Bayramī shaykh, eventually taking up the charge of his own *zāwiya*, leaving off a career ascending the *ʿilmiye* ladder.[185]

Whether or not this story is an entirely objective representation of al-Muʿīdī's career trajectory, one which no doubt involved other factors in what was probably a more gradual disinvestment from the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy (including a turn, before his dramatic conversion, towards asceticism which our hagiographer notes), is somewhat beside the point. What it reveals is the conceptual importance to Ottoman audiences of a dramatic break, a moment of conversion and reorientation, which set a former 'student of *ʿilm'* upon a very different path, even if part of his reason for pursuing such a path was his lackluster prospects in the *ʿilmiye* system. In this story it is literally as if al-Muʿīdī had physically died—his body washed and placed facing the *qibla*—only to be 'resurrected' into the path of gnosis and eventual sainthood. The remainder of ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Muʿīdī's *manāqib* is full of further points of contact between the saint—whose life was full of miracles and unveilings—and members of the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy, the saint's

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[185] Alī al-Bālī, *al-ʿIqd al-manẓūm,* 468-471.

position outside of the hierarchy allowing him a range of interventions in the lives of ʻulama, from helping the imam of Edirne's Sultan Bāyezīd Mosque find some purloined jewels; to delivering a rebuke—conveyed to the saint by Muḥammad himself—to the famed mufti Aḥmed ibn Kemālpaşazāde during a *mevlid* session; to mystically overseeing the career of his niece's husband, the *kāḍīʿasker* of Rumelia, as well as that of none other than Ebū'es-Suʿūd.[186] In all of these encounters not only are the saint's power and position emphasized, but the ʿulama are subtly critiqued for their wordliness and undue concessions to the Ottoman state, both themes common in other works of critique as well, but which here serve not as calls for reform but instead to mark off the saint from the members of the hierarchy, a hierarchy that the saint does not seek to necessarily change or supplant but rather which he himself has power over and which he stands apart from in sharp pious distinction.

Resuming, then, the career of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān in Bursa, we can situate his break with an *ʿilmiye* career within this broader dynamic of saints and the *ʿilmiye*: such a break, followed by affiliation to a saintly shaykh, was, if not yet a canonized item in the saintly script of Rūm, certainly in the process of becoming so established. Dropping out could take on many shapes, not all of them positive to be sure, but regardless it implied a significant reorientation, an act of

[186] Ibid., 469-471. A furthering of the story, by the by, deals with the saint's relations with women and his stance on sexual practices of the time: During the same *mevlid* session, the saint conveyed bad tidings to the *defterdār* Iskander Çelebi, who would soon lose his position. The *defterdār* also had a son, named ʿAbd al-Hādī, who died after a life of dissolution, causing his mother much grief. One day the shaykh came out of his cell, weeping, to meet her, saying, 'Do not weep over the loss of your son and his death, rather, over his punishment in the next world—for I was investigating the chambers of paradise and did not find him. So then I searched the degrees of the sun and moon and could not find him. So I called out to him with a loud voice and he answered me with a voice of sorrow, such that I could gather from his voice that he was in the torment of the people of Lot—was he in his life afflicted with the trial of boys [ie an inclination to pederasty]?' So the shaykh gathered his murids and secluded himself with them for days, striving and struggling in humility and supplication, until he came forth one day from his pious seclusion, laughing, and gave the boy's mother the good news of his forgiveness and coming into satisfaction with God, having been transfered to the ranks of the pious in the chambers of paradise. Ibid., 470.

renunciation and self redefinition.[187] Whether ʿAlī ibn Maymūn himself would have read the situation thus is doubtful: in the late medieval and early modern Maghribi understanding of sainthood it was perfectly normal to combine a saintly career with that of a *faqīh*, with no need for a dramatic break with the ʿulama class (though engaging in trenchant critiques of other ʿulama was very much a part of the established repertoire, an element that both ʿAlī and Shaykh ʿAlwān embraced). Visible in the relationship between ʿAlī and his disciple and eventual *khalīfa* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, then, are two intersecting scripts of sainthood, with rather different potential trajectories, which soon became manifest. In Shaykh ʿAlwān's telling—with details that Ṭaşköprüzāde does not include—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was much more intimate with his shaykh than most other devotees. He accompanied his master back to Hama, from whence he hoped to continue on to Egypt for further ascetic formation, but ʿAlī instead instructed him to return to Bursa, though only after marrying ʿAlī's former pious and ascetic slave Ṣafiyya, whom he himself had manumitted, married, promptly divorced, and endowed with sixty dinars. Dispatching the two back to the Ottoman lands he instructed them to teach 'men and women.' Upon his return to his native city, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān took to wearing the entrails of slaughtered sheep around his neck, along with what Shaykh ʿAlwān describes as the intense practice of pious trust in God (*tawakkul*) and other rigorous ascetic disciplines, including not unbinding his belt for days and nights at a time. Initially ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's saintly performance created friction, including persecution on the part of the ḳāḍī of Bursa (who perhaps remembered ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's critiques of his hiring out practices). ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ignored the persecution, and was eventually accepted by many of the elites of the city. While there were no doubt a range of

[187] The stance here is similar though not identical to that of late medieval and early modern deviant dervishes, whose 'dropping out' took a much more totalizing aspect. The sufi who quit the *ʿilmiye* was less counter-culture radical and more disillusioned ex-academic, we might say.

factors now invisible to us at work, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's use of scripted practices much more familiar to most Rūmīs—from his break with the *ʿilmiye* system to his unconventional dressing with sheep entrails, an obvious allusion to Melāmī practice and even more radical forms of dervishhood—almost certainly contributed to his greater success than that of his Maghribī master in sufism.[188]

As for ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, his final days would be spent in Syria, primarily but not exclusively in Hama—he would in fact die and be buried in the village of Majdal Ma'ūsh on the slopes of Mount Lebanon, while on one of his journeys through the province, working to expand his saintly territory into the rural hinterlands.[189] In Syria his project of sainthood would prove rather more successful (if not spectacularly so) than in Bursa, and would grow more explicit in its claims, some of which took the form of 'auto-*manāqib*s' of a sort that approximated the form and tone, if not the vast scope, of those of ʿAlī's Cairene near-contemporary al-Shaʿrānī.[190] ʿAlī's greater success in Syria was in no small part because of his success in forging relationships with at least some members of the 'ulama, as well as his ability to discern, navigate, and utilize urban and sacred space. Such skill was connected with his cultivation of a public

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[188] ʿAlwān, *Muljī,* 606-607.

[189] Ibid, 603; cf. Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn 'Aṭīya, *Tuḥfat al-ḥabīb fīmā yubhijuhu fī riyāḍ al-shuhūd wa-al-taqrīb* (Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2008), 84-85 on the later power of the saint's tomb, including the death of a janissary who did not respect the sanctity of the precint.

[190] For instance, such an auto-*manāqib* style is very much on display in the following introduction to a theological treatise he wrote after encountering two men from Fes sojourning in Syria, a passage that also points to ʿAlī's own sense of his saintly genealogy: 'I was filled by seeing thse two men and talking with them with some small part of what God granted to me of knowledge of the secrets of the Tablet, whereby the veils were removed from the meanings of the inward aspects of the Qu'ranic ayas and the Prophetic hadith about what is required with respect to both the outward and the inward aspects of the Law, the Shari'a, the tariqa, and the haqiqa. Then when I saw the great distance between us, it entered my innermost heart that I write a treatise about how to follow the Tariqa al-Muḥammadiya which is derived from the secrets of knowledge which is imparted directly by God as He bestowed it upon me at the hands of myeacher, the shaykh, the gnostic of God, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Tabbāsī.' *Risālat al-ikhwān*, fols. 1b-2b, translated in Simmonds, 'ʿAlī ibn Maymūn,' 220.

beyond members of the ʻulama, many (though not all) of whom he deliberately alienated through his zealous attempts to ʻcommand the right and forbid the wrong' even if—especially if—the wrongdoers were prominent members of society.[191] As in Bursa, in Syria ʿAlī would place much stress upon the proper usage of sacred space, forbidding eating and sleeping in mosques, a stance that Shaykh ʿAlwān defended at some length, given that such things are not in fact explicitly prohibited in the *sharīʿa*. Raising and spending charitable funds to improve urban space, then, provided a rather more positive outlet for ʿAlī's political and spatial agenda, ʿAlī making the fabric of urban space, particularly religious space, a key part of his performance of sainthood, as the following account suggests:

> When he arrived in Damascus he found there a mosque in the Ṣālaḥiyya quarter that was trending towards ruin, one of its minarets already destroyed. He said to his companions from among the well-known ʻulamā': ʻWhat would you think about visiting a sick one and reaping the rewards?' They answered, ʻTo hear is to obey!' So he rushed them over to this mosque whose wooden-crowned minaret had collapsed, a mosque known as al-Afram, in which were Lord of lords knows how much dirt and refuse. He said: ʻThis is the sick one whom we will go to pay a visit.' In that very moment he set to work moving the dirt and refuse out, the ʻulamā' also conveying dirt in the folds of their clothes without reticence, in order to glorify and honour [the space]. He also restored the flow of water after it had been cut off, and restored the ablution taps that had been effaced by time in order to make its benefit common to all. He appointed muezzins for it and established a salary for them out of what God had graced him with, not out of *waqf*s and [the revenues of] outlying areas, such that one of the muezzins said to him—and I was present—ʻIf it hadn't been for you this mosque would have been totally ruined!'[192]

Here the mosque itself becomes a part of ʿAlī's public, anthromorphized and then ʻtreated' by his own hands and through his resources—one of several indications, never elaborated upon in any

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[191] One such instance involved a wide cross-spectrum of late Mamluk elite, all the way to the top in fact, and is discussed in detail by Simmonds, who draws primarily upon Ibn al-Ṭulun, whose own attitude towards ʿAlī ibn Maymūn was somewhat cool, probably reflective of many in the upper echelons of the ʿulamain Syria. Simmonds, ʿAlī *b. Maymūn,* 215-216.

[192] ʿAlwān, *Muljī,* 579.

depth, that ʿAlī was able to consistently, in Syria at least, derive some degree of revenue through his saintly authority, which he dispersed in 'urban renewal' projects or in the care and feeding of his *murīd*s. In his healing of the diseased al-Afram Mosque, ʿAlī translated his authority and his preaching into literally substantial form, which his hagiographers, oral and textual, enscribed in memory—this despite his aversion, channeled by Shaykh ʿAlwān, of benefactors' inscriptions upon mosques and madrasas.[193] That the substantial form so affected was an 'everyday mosque' fits with ʿAlī's, and later Shaykh ʿAlwān's, general orientation towards the space of the everyday, of the city quarter and of households and their needs. While the above account indicates the participation of unnamed 'companions from among the well-known 'ulamā',' the focus remains on ʿAlī's embeddedness in everyday milieus, an embedding which often went hand-in-hand with criticism and even hostility towards the majority of other 'ulamā', as well as many of the wider elite.[194]

iii. Shaykh ʿAlwān and practices of self, space, and saintly repertoire:

Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiographic treatment cannot really quite obscure from view that for all of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's localized successes in Syria's landscapes of sanctity he did not achieve

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[193] Among the signs of hypocritical 'eye-service' in a madrasa, he argues in his *al-Amr al-dāris fī al-aḥkām al-mutaʿalliqa bi-l-mudāris*, is the custom of putting the patron's name and accolades above the doorway for all too see in elaborate lettering. This invokes God's anger as it is meant for the pride of the patron. 'Do you see the name of Ibrāhīm inscribed above the door of the Ka'ba?' 'Alī ibn 'Aṭīya Ḥamawī ʿAlwān, *al-Amr al-dāris fī al-aḥkām al-mutaʿalliqah fī al-madāris*, ed. al-Zubayr Mihdād (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2016), 102. On which see also his *Asnā al-maqāṣid fī taʿẓīm al-masājid,* ed. Ṭāriq Fatḥī al-Sayyid and Aḥmad Farīd al-Mazīdī (Beirut: Manshūrāt Muḥammad 'Alī Bayḍūn, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīya, 2003), 11-12.

[194] Torsten Wollina, in his discussion of fifteenth century Damascus, provides a slightly earlier analogue to ʿAlī's spatial interventions: 'Furthermore, the *šayḫ* (Abū al-Faḍl) is depicted as an actor in the change of the physical features of the city. He convinces an emir to tear down the excessive stories of his newly built house, he ordered the *masṭaba* mentioned above to be demolished, he worked on restoring an alley in his neighbourhood, he might even have had a say in the reconstruction of the bridge he and Ibn Ṭawq went to watch.' Torsten Wollina, "A View from Within: Ibn Ṭawq's Personal Topography of 15th Century Damascus," *Bulletin d'études Orientales*, no. Tome LXI (December 1, 2012), 289.

the degree of recognition or social power as he seems to have sought. It would be the name of his chief follower Shaykh ʿAlwān, and not his own, that would become attached to the bundle of genealogical ties and practices known as the ʿAlwāniyya *ṭarīqa*. We have already seen, in the introduction to this chapter, Shaykh ʿAlwān's 'conversion story,' one which points to his work as a preacher in a small neighborhood mosque—a mosque that ʿAlī ibn Maymūn helped to renovate and expand before his journey to Bursa—where he also seems to have taught hadith and engaged in a range of 'religious services,' possessing no especially significant rank among the ʿulama of Hama. Upon affiliating himself to 'Alī, Shaykh ʿAlwān would continue to perform some of these religious services, albeit from a different perspective, while inculcating himself in the standard cursus of *taṣawwuf*. Later he would carry out the duties of a *khalīfa* to his shaykh, eventually taking over ʿAlī's station upon the shaykh's death and carrying his 'way' forward, spreading it further and more deeply than his shakyh had done. Besides a sizeable textual corpus of works ranging from a *sharḥ* on Ibn al-Fāriḍ to a book of advice for rulers and critique of perceived Ottoman errors intended for Sultan Selīm,[195] Shaykh ʿAlwān dispatched his deputies throughout Syria, maintaining contact with them even if the degree of control or supervision he could or would maintain was, as we will see, rather limited. After his death his son Muḥammad took over from his father, though only after an evidently heated dispute with another of Shaykh ʿAlwān's disciples in Hama, Shaykh Zakariya al-Zayn, who instead left for Aleppo and his own, evidently quite successful, career there.[196] Shaykh ʿAlwān's memory as a pivotal saint would remain

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[195] For a helpful and up-to-date list of his writings in both manuscript and published form, see David Larsen, 'al-Ḥamawī, ʿAlwān,' in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*. His letter to Selīm has been edited: *al-Naṣāiʾḥ al-muhimma lil-mulūk wa al-ʿimma*, ed. Nashwa al-ʿAlwānī (Damascus: Dār al-Maktabī, 2000); for a brief introduction and workable translation into English see Abdullah S. Zaid, 'Important counsels to kings and imams by Shaykh 'Alwan ('Ali Ibn 'Attiyyah al-Hamawi); translation, with a historic introduction, the biography of the author and commentaries on the text' (Thesis, Portland State University, 1977).

[196] The sixteenth century chronicler Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (on whom see Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte*, 27–8) reports in his entry on Shaykh Zakariya that after this falling-out, the shaykh set up shop in Aleppo in 1531,

potent in Syria for some time, as we will in fact see further in the following chapter, even if it does not seem to have lasted in strength past the seventeenth century.[197]

This section will begin with a consideration of the most important characteristic practice of the ʿAlwāniyya, the 'spontaneous utterance of passing thoughts' (*shakwāt al-khawāṭir*), along with a brief look at Shaykh ʿAlwān's own approach to the use and contestation of space, followed by examination of the construction of the shaykh's hagiographic memory after his death and concluding with consideration of one of Shaykh ʿAlwān's *khalīfa*s, Shaykh ʿUmar al-Iskāf. To some degree the strategies and self-understandings of ʿAlī and ʿAlwān overlapped: Shaykh ʿAlwān resembled a 'jurist-saint' in many ways, remaining committed to many of the practices of an 'exoteric' scholar, even as he engaged in sharp critiques of exoteric knowledge alone, advancing not just the general techniques of *taṣawwuf* but the specific 'spiritual technologies' that he had inherited from his shaykh as a superior and powerful path over the claims of merely 'exoteric' *fuqahā'*.[198] The central 'technic of sanctity,' *shakwāt al-khawāṭir,*

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began practicing *shakwa al-khawāṭir* among the people, discoursing on them and employing Qur'an and hadith in ungrammatical form (a curious feature we will see again below). He became popular with Ottoman officials (*arbāb al-dawla*), though he also draws Ibn Hanbalī's ire for his frequenting their doors and fawning over them. 'He began saying that he was a descendant of the Friend of God Shaykh 'Ali al-Hītī (d. 1168), an indication, perhaps, that 'spiritual' genealogy from Shaykh ʿAlwān was not sufficient? Raḍi al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥalabī ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al-ḥabab fī tārīkh aʿyān Ḥalab* (Damascus: Manshūrāt Wizārat al-Thaqāfa, 1973), vol. 1, 645-646. His ability to court favor with the Ottoman officials in Aleppo suggests that the disorder and disruption occasioned by the murder of the Ottoman ķāḍī Qarā Qāḍī in 1528 (with consequences spilling into the next year and beyond) had both subsided somewhat and had probably also opened up the social ground for an upstart like Shaykh Zakariya, given the decimation of the local elite, including religious elite: see Timothy J. Fitzgerald, 'Murder in Aleppo: Ottoman Conquest and the Struggle for Justice in the Early Sixteenth Century,' *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 2 (2016), 176-177, and 180-82 for further discussion of Ibn al-Hanbalī.

[197] Simmonds, '*Alī*, 533.

[198] An example of this juxtaposition of *ẓāhir* and *bāṭin*, in the context of two types of 'students': 'As for the difference between the *ṭālib* and the *sālik*, the mount of the *ṭālib* is lessons, books, rational examination, discrimination, and the personal realization of transmitted material through texts and commentaries, while the mount of the *sālik* is *dhikr*, contemplation, struggle, and watchfulness towards his *sirr* and his heart, seeking the divine gifts of grace, the knowledge from the Presence, and the secrets of the Unknown.' ʿAlwān, *al-Amr al-dāris,* 110.

that Shaykh ʿAlwān inherited from ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, and upon which he and his own successors, in Hama and further afield, further elaborated and put 'into circulation,' were distinctive enough within the field of Syrian sufi and devotional practices that they appear again and again in the sources as the identifying mark of the ʿAlwāniyya as a unique sufi 'way.' The technique of *shakwāt al-khawāṭir,* even if it had parallels in similar practices within *taṣawwuf* long predating our period, was associated, first, with ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, whose *ṭarīqa,* according to Ṭaşköprüzāde, was 'built upon the candid expressing of random thoughts (*khawāṭir*), the shaykh discoursing on that thought and how to repel it to the point that such random thoughts were cut off from the *murīd*.'[199] Writing towards the end of the sixteenth century—the period in which the ʿAlwāniyya in Ottoman Syria was at its peak—Ibn al-Ḥanbalī notes in his entry on Shaykh ʿAlwān that the technique was so well known that there was no need for him to describe it. The longest description of which I am aware comes from ʿUmar al-ʿUrdī, writing for an audience in Aleppo in the early seventeenth century, for whom Shaykh ʿAlwān and his distinctive practices were evidently somewhat less familiar, or at least not so universally well-known (we will pick up the story of the ʿAlwāniyya in Aleppo in the last section of this chapter):

> Then [Shaykh Aḥmad] began carrying out *shakwat al-khawāṭir* after the ʿAlwāniyya manner: he would recite the *awrād* of the ʿAlwāniyya on Friday morning at sunrise, practice *dhikr*, then, when the sun had come up a couple of degrees above the horizon, those listening would turn back-to back, the shaykh would bow his head and say: "We ask God's forgiveness," and everyone would individually repeat those words. Then someone would describe what the thoughts passing within him (*mā lāḥa fī ḍamīrihi*), for instance, one would say, 'I find my lower self inclining towards sumptuous food and I am incapable of repelling it,' or, 'Family cares are distracting me from worship of God,' or, 'What is the meaning of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's words "My spirit is your ransom, whether you know or do you not know'?'[200] Another

[199] Taşköprüzad, *Shaqā'iq*, 212.

[200] The second line from a couplet of ibn al-Fāriḍ (the first part of which goes 'My heart keeps telling me that you are my destroyer') which had attracted attention before as seemingly theologically 'problematic,' addressed, for instance, in a *fatwa* collection of Shiāb al-dīn al-Ramlī (d. 1550), in which a questioner asks (as

> would ask, 'What is the meaning of His words, 'He who sent down the *sakīna* into the hearts of believers"?'[201] Then once they were finished with their questions the shaykh would interpret (*yashraḥu*) for them one after another their various passing thoughts, while also making excursuses.[202]

This practice functioned as both an innovative 'technology of self' for participants and as a 'technic' socially generative of sainthood for authorized precepting shaykhs, each function being shaped and invested by the concocation of time, practice, and bodily deportment. The time of the sessions—at sunrise on Friday morning—was charged with significance, and demanded a certain degree of commitment and bodily endurance on the part of participants, creating a ritualized space and time through which participants passed, entering a space of 'spontaneous' self-expression, utterances that have some of the characteristics of practices of confession but which could encompass almost anything occupying the participant's mind and not just moral failings. By placing themselves 'back-to-back' participants directed their attention inwards while remaining—literally—in contact with other members of the group, with everyone under the supervision of the presiding shaykh who maintained the communal cohesion of the ritual-like session.[203] While the shaykh would give the ensuing 'passing thoughts' more substantial form in

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Engels describes it) about 'the poet's intended addressee and whether the verse should be interpreted metaphorically or literally. Ramlī responds that in fact God represents the intended addressee, though the second hemistich should be interpreted metaphorically to mean, "my spirit is your ransom: did you requite this or did you not?"' Matthew Engels, 'Between center and periphery: the development of the Sufi fatwa in late-medieval Egypt,' in *Sufism and Society: Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200-1800,* ed. John J. Curry and Erik Ohlander (London; New York: Routledge, 2012), 155.

[201] Qur'an 48.4. On this concept in the Qur'an and interpretative approaches of later Muslims, see Reuven Firestone, 'Shekhinah,' in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an.*

[202] Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-'Urḍī, *Ma'ādin al-dhahab fī al-a'yān al-musharrafah bi-him Ḥalab* ('Amman: Markaz al-Wathā'iq wa-al-Makhṭūṭāt, al-Jāmi'ah al-Urdunīyah, 1992), 306-307.

[203] There is an interesting tension at work here and in other, similar ritualized encounters (Quaker meetings immediately come to mind here): the space, the process, and the interpretative interventions all carry a strong ritual charge, liturgically structured, chronologically and spatially determined, but the core of the ritual is deliberately unstructured, spontaneous, and random (allowance given to the subtle effects of the ritual structure and social setting, of course, upon the 'spontaneity' of participants).

interpreting them, they did not need to have any sort of predetermined format in the way that a request for a *fatwa*, a report of a dream-vision, or other similar queries to 'religious professionals' might entail. Combining ritual form and setting with the spontaneous—if subtly guided and directed—expression of passing thoughts, of the 'stuff' of the self below the surface, as it were, the *shakwat* sessions brought quite subjective self-expression and formation[204] into a communal, semi-public space in a way that was broadly accessible, for men and, our sources hint, women as well, and which aimed not just at 'self-expression' but at the modification of the self through that expression and the shaykh's interpretive intervention.[205] These sessions might reshape the perceptions of others toward's one's self, and not always in a positive manner, as suggested by an anecdote Ṭaşköprüzāde relates about the aforementioned ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣūfī: one day during a session of *shakwat al-khawāṭir*, 'ʿAbd al-Raḥmān said to Shaykh 'Alī: "Oh sayyidī, I've a thought!" The shaykh said: "Speak it!" ʿAbd al-Rahman replied, "Shaytan forbids me from speaking it because in this *majlis* there is a *mudarris* whom I used to study under and my lower self says 'If you speak this thought then that mudarris will think evil of you!'"' To this Shaykh ʿAlī enjoined his disciple the need to care more about what God thought than anyone else, all the way up to a sultan, a lesson ʿAbd al-Raḥmān evidently took to heart.[206]

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[204] While it can only remain at the level of speculation, it is probably safe to see ʿAlwāniyya practice as one component in the emergent 'subjectivity turn' of the Ottoman world that becomes especially visible in the seventeenth century, a turn that grew in part out of just such public spaces of expression and intellectual activity, 'religious' or otherwise. On this issue in general and in more specific iterations, see the contributions in *Affect, Emotion, and Subjectivity in Early Modern Muslim Empires: New Studies in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Art and Culture*, ed. by Kishwar Rizvi (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

[205] The evidently wide-open nature of the sessions—one did not need to be an initiate of the presiding shaykh, it would seem—must of course be balanced by the timing of the ritual sessions and perhaps also their location, though it is not entirely clear where different preceptors would hold them; Shaykh ʿAlwān had use of a madrasa, for instance, but some of his successors may have occupied even more public spaces in addition to their own *zāwiya*s (which could be very restricted spaces, on which see below in the discussion of ʿUmar al-Iskāf).

[206] Ṭaşköprüzāde , *Shaqā'iq*, 213.

Besides revealing the lingering pull of the *ʿilmiye* even after his break with it, this story indicates how the spontaneity of participants might be constructed and reinforced through the interventions of the preceptor. Finally, as al-ʿUrdī's description indicates, the *shakwat* session also provided space for participants to ask pressing exegetical questions that might otherwise have remained the preserve of 'authorized' scholars ('exoteric' or 'esoteric'). We might see in these sessions then not just a space of self utterance and formation, then, but also as a space of public intellectual activity, of the sort usually found in teaching circles directed by a scholar from among the 'ulama—in short, extremely potent ritualized environments, both in terms of what they did 'internally' and how they might have been perceived 'externally.'[207]

The power of these sessions to function as a technic of sainthood grew out of this multiplicity of expression and possibility present in the utterances and their responses, demanding a wide range of authority and expertise on the part of the precepting shaykh. While Shaykh ʿAlwān and some of his successors would draw upon the conventional Islamic sources of '*ulūm*, such sources were not the primary resource for the extensive knowledge needed to oversee *shakwāt* sessions, and in fact at least one of Shaykh ʿAlwān's prominent successors, ʿUmar al-Iskāf, was illiterate. Rather, as Shaykh ʿAlwān argued in his treatise on madrasas and their uses, *al-Amr al-dāris fī al-aḥkām al-'mutaṭiqa bi-l-mudāris*, the perfected guide (*murshīd*) has 'something special' (*khaṣūṣiyya*) in him that is not in the conventional madrasa teacher (*mudarris*), namely, knowledge of inner secrets from the mystical meanings placed in the human body, which are conveyed through soul, heart, secret, reason, and spirit, and what proceeds from

[207] Ronald Grimes' words on the 'attuning' and 'disattuning' possibilities of ritual are highly apropos here: 'The metaphor implies that bodies (minded, cultured, and gendered) 'vibrate' or 'resonate' with something else: other bodies, environments, whatever is deemed holy. These vibrations may be dissonant, or disattuned. 'Disattune' is an obsolete but useful word….Rituals can attune and disattune simultaneously…. Not only do rituals attune or disattune bodies, rituals stir the emotions and activate the senses just as the arts are supposed to do.' Ronald L. Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 309-310.

these mystical meanings, which become visible in the fleeting thoughts (*khawāṭir*) of various sorts, which the *murshīd* can distinguish and interpret according to their goodness or badness.[208] The origins of some of these thoughts are from Shaytan, some from the lower self; good ones might proceed from an angel, or from the heart directly—the perfected guide will intuitively know these origin points upon hearing the expressed thoughts. The conventional *mudarris* has access only to the vast 'desert' of the body, but no entry into these 'diverse oceans' as is the case for the *murshīd*.[209] With such an understanding operative, then, the practice invests an extremely wide range of authorizations in the presiding shaykh, authorizations that at the very least require saintly transmission if not the possession of *wilāyat* in the shaykh himself, and which could go a long ways towards shaping the image and indeed self-understanding of one who presided over such sessions regularly. The effectiveness of the practice in generating such authority socially is nicely captured in two lines from the biography of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥamāmī, to be treated in detail further along: 'He took up the use of a small throne (*kursī*) on which he would sit on the days of *shakāwī al-khawāṭir*. He would also recite Qur'anic verses and interpret them for the people (*al-nās*). The goods of this world below came to him as well as votive offerings (*nudhūrāt*), and the judges and political elite (*arbāb al-duwal*) paid him visits.'[210] Here the *shakwāt* sessions were viewed by others (from among both 'the people' and the 'elite') as bolstering Aḥmad's authority and prestige, marking him out as one with special knowledge and ability to interpret, knowledge and ability that transcended his rather modest achievements in conventional scholarship.

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[208] ʿAlwān, *al-Amr al-dāris*, 105-107.

[209] Ibid., 108.

[210] Al-ʿUrdī, *Maʾād*in, 309.

For Shaykh ʿAlwān himself, and, through him, for his followers, the practice of *shakwāt* was authoritative in part because it originated within a saintly lineage, into which he himself had entered, and which he sustained through, among other things, his performance of the distinctive practice of *shakwāt*. For this reason, Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiography of his shaykh can also be seen as an act of self-authorization given the degree to which he imitated ʿAlī's 'path,' social identity, and performances, modified somewhat for changing circumstances, particularly the Ottoman conquest.[211] Out of the remainder of Shaykh ʿAlwān's saintly repertoire, his political and social interventions, and his sizeable textual corpus, we will only touch on here his continuation of Shaykh ʿAlī's overall spatial strategy with a few modifications. Like 'Alī, Shaykh ʿAlwān strove to model and to enforce 'proper' attitudes towards and uses of the sacred space of the mosque, to degrees surpassing most of his Shaʿīfī peers. In his little treatise *Taʿẓīm al-masājid* he lays out his critiques, some inherited from 'Alī, some new, of people's mosque behavior in sixteenth century Syria that violated the dignity and purpose of the mosque. Ranging from eating and spitting inside mosques, to the quite new practice of decorating the walls of mosques and *zāwiya*s with pictures of the holy places in the Ḥijāz, either as standalone images or as part of *ḥajj* certificates (which, he argued, were both distracting and displays of prideful

[211] If the tenor of his manual of advice penned for Selīm, *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-muhimma lil-mulūk wa al-ʾimma,* is rather critical, focusing on areas of abuse and overstep, particularly matters of taxes and administration (for a brief overview of its contents and tone, see Zaid, 'Important counsels,' 22-26), there is nonetheless a trace in Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiographic treatment of Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Maymūn of rapproachement with the Ottoman *devlet*, or at least recognition of their divinely ordained status: on their journey back from Bursa to Hama, ʿAlī and his companions—including Shaykh ʿAlwān—passed through the Dulkadir realm, which at the time was an autonomous vassal of the Ottomans, soon to be integrated into the empire entirely by Selīm in response to a failed mobilization against the Safavids. This context of looming Ottoman victory and annexation lies, explicitly in fact, behind the story that Shaykh ʿAlwān tells of their sojourn there, in which an '*amīr'* in Maraş takes by force a copper pot from some 'poor ones' in the company of the saint and his companions. ʿAlī confronts the amir, demanding that he return what he has taken, and telling him that he will soon pay the price for his injustice—implicitly predicting (and, perhaps, endorsing) the coming Ottoman annexation. ʿAlwān, *Mujlī*, 573.

vanity),[212] Shaykh ʿAlwān inveighed against them all and urged a strict program of mosque usage and deportment, even if his ability to enforce such a program was limited to just such textual exercises, particularly given the fact that many of the practices he disliked were, even by his admission, technically permissible.[213]

More concretely, Shaykh ʿAlwān, like ʻAlī, occupied and modified the urban fabric himself, though not without controversy. We learn from the shaykh's aforementioned treatise al-*Amr al-dāris* that a madrasa in Hama, the ʿAṣrūniyya (founded in 1258), had fallen into ruin, almost to the point of destruction.[214] Someone kept the doors locked at all times except for the daily prayers, so as to keep out the riffraff (*ahl al-lahū wa al-la'ib),* all of which, Shaykh ʿAlwān says, was well-known. Then 'we took up quarters there, by permission of the one who had oversight of the place, someone who sought the profitable knowledge of the heart and of *tawhīd* by way of *kashf* and gnosis.' But after this effective conversion of the madrasa into a zawiya, an unnamed someone alleged that knowledge (*al-ʿilm*) is 'only by the movement of tongues and apprehension of books,' and hence that the occupation by Shaykh ʿAlwān and his followers was illegitimate since it contravened the structure's foundation as a place of teaching and learning. The remainder of the treatise is devoted to justifying Shaykh ʿAlwān's new usage of the space as not really being new at all but as in fact more fundamentally congruent with the structure's

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[212] 'Likewise they also return from there pages decorated with the image of the noble and exalted Ka'ba, the noble Hujra, and others, in which are written, after the Hamdulillah what follows such as So-and-So made the minor pilgrimage, or So-and-So made the major pilgrimage, their intention therein—and God knows best—being fame, eye-service, and ear-service…' ʿAlwān, *Taʿẓīm*, 28-29. On these certificates, see Mounia Chekhab-Abudaya, Amélie Couvrat Desvergnes, and David J. Roxburgh, "Sayyid Yusuf's 1433 Pilgrimage Scroll (*Ziyārātnāma*) in the Collection of the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha," *Muqarnas Online* 33, no. 1 (November 14, 2016), 345–407; my forthcoming article in *Religions* on Ottoman devotional materiality will deal with this issue in more depth.

[213] ʿAlwān, *Taʿẓīm*, 11.

[214] ʿAlwān, *al-Amr al-dāris*, 86.

endowment as a place of learning, with the learning taking place now being that of the heart, flowing from Shaykh ʿAlwān's command of inner gnosis, received directly from God. That is not to say that madrasas in their conventional configuration serve no purpose—the treatise also lays down the proper use of and deportment in 'conventional' madrasas as well. In keeping with his formation under a 'jurist-saint' and indeed with many threads of medieval *taṣawwuf*, Shaykh ʿAlwān, for all his criticism of the ʿulama and his elevation of saintly gnosis and practice, does not totally define himself against exoteric scholars but rathers attempts to maintain both identities. His attempts at spatial organization and regulation are a good instance of this ambiguity: on the one hand he strove for strict care in how all sacred spaces were used (strikingly he depends more on Ḥanbalī authorities than on those of his own Sha'ifī *madhhab*), while at the same time he sought to repurpose at least some such spaces, his own saintly authorization the implicit justification for that repurposing. Both efforts were controversial, if in different ways, pointing to a reality faced not just by Shaykh ʿAlwān but many, many others: as much as one's self-presentation and practices might have meshed with existing social repertoires and expectations of sanctity, acceptance was not universal, and the real cementing of one's saintly status was often something that happened after one's physical death. Such would be the case with Shaykh ʿAlwān.

Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiographic afterlife was, like that of so many other saints in Islam and beyond before and after, perpetuated primarily through the labors of others, in ways that might not have always been acceptable to the shaykh in life. To be sure, there is much in Shaykh ʿAlwān's own writings that point to his 'transmission' of sainthood from his master, for, as noted above, in making the case for ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's sainthood he also laid the foundations for his own recognition as a saint. That said, Shaykh ʿAlwān did not engage in the sort of 'auto-

hagiography' that his own shaykh employed, nor certainly anything on the scale of al-Shaʿrānī.[215] Instead, the most important parts of his later hagiographic memory were elaborated textually by his son Muḥammad in his treatise *Tuḥfat al-ḥabīb*, the source for later writers such as al-Ghazzī. After a series of miracle accounts concerning Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and his own saintly shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Tabbāsī,[216] Muḥammad describes miraculous deeds that his father performed, some of which were no doubt in wider circulation as stories, others probably not, such as the following account from Muḥammad's own childhood:

> I was sorely tried in my childhood with poor understanding and memory until reaching puberty, my understanding lagging behind. One night near dawn I was with my father and he was taken by a spiritual state and began reciting something from the discourse of the Folk. When [this condition] passed from him and he returned to his normal condition, he went out from the house and performed ritual ablutions out of a wide copper vessel. When he had finished I took that water and drank it—and from that moment I experienced *baraka* in my understanding and memory…[217]

Besides pointing to fact that his father's very saliva was *baraka*-laden—a marker of sanctity with a very long pedigree in Islamic societies—Muḥammad also here presents his father as undergoing ecstatic 'states,' a practice one would be hard-pressed to derive from Shaykh ʿAlwān's own writings and self-presentation therein, but one which points to his saintly status within widely accepted scripts of sanctity. Muḥammad also records a story of *karāmāt* that manifests Shaykh ʿAlwān as not just a properly 'Ottoman' saint but in fact integral to the empire's military success:

> The shaykh my father was seen [during the siege of Rhodes in 1522] riding upon a gray horse—some say white. An hour or so before the conquest of the

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[215] I should note here that I have not given the various instances of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's 'auto-hagiography,' some of which we have indeed seen, as much attention as I would have preferred for the simple fact that the instances I have mind are at present only accessible to me via Simond's excerpted translations.

[216] Muḥammad ibn 'Alī, *Tuḥfat*, 81-82.

[217] Ibid., 88.

> fortress some people saw the shaykh had gone before them and opened the gate of the city. The man who saw him walked up to him, and reported to one of the sultan's viziers and some of his elite, and soon he and a group from the army came up to the gate and found a key therein, so they entered. When they came to one of the churches they found the shaykh and a group of people with him praying, pronouncing the *Lā ilāh* and the *Allāh akbar*, raising their voices with the word of Islam and blessings upon the Prophet, upon whom be the best of blessings and the most noble of salutations.[218]

When the man went up to Shaykh ʿAlwān, the story continues, the shaykh grew angry and was hidden from his sight. One of the viziers and his retinue also witnessed all this and could attest to its truth. When the man in the story, whose belief in Shaykh ʿAlwān had as a result grown, returned from the campaign he met with the shaykh, who was still alive then, but was ordered not to disclose what he had seen while the shaykh was alive.[219] This story can be read in the context of many similar stories told of saints (at least before the seventeenth century) in the Ottoman core lands whereby a saint intervenes in a battle or siege or other military-connected situation, on behalf of the Ottomans against their enemies. While the basic motifs in these stories are not new, they became more common components of Ottoman hagiography in the sixteenth century, and indicate the complex relationship that prevailed between Ottoman authority and that of the saints and their memory.[220] Here, Shaykh ʿAlwān is seen effectively endorsing and indeed

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[218] Ibd., 86-87.

[219] Ibid., 88

[220] In addition to related stories in the next chapter, the following contemporary to Shaykh ʿAlwān's hagiography account, from ʿAlī al-Bālī: 'Among the miracles (*karāmāt*) of [Şeyh ʿAlāüddīn Cerrāḥzāde/ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Jarrāḥzāda, 1495-1575]': the story that our shaykh Muṣlaḥ al-Dīn [the son of ʿAlā al-Dīn], God be merciful to him, related, saying: "We were sitting outside of the aforementioned zāwiya [of Şücaeddīn, in Edirne] with some of the disciples. Tanners in the city had previosuly been drafted to go on campaign, and a tanner came up and kissed my father's hand, then kissed his feet, and said, 'If it hadn't been for you we wouldn't have taken the fortress!' My father said, 'What is this fortress? I don't know anything at all about it.' The man persisted in his entreaty and humble supplication, but [my father] persisted in his denial. So we asked the man about the story, and he said: 'I went out to war for the Sultan with a detachment of tanners. When we had invested Such-and-Such Fortress, and aimed to seize it, the fighting wore on, and the flame of piercing and striking flared up, so that the fortress was refractory and refused to be conquered. The army was bewildered and despaired of seizing it, until suddenly a shaykh with a banner in his hand appeared, charging at the infidels, scattering them like dust struck by a powerful cold wind. He scalred the fortress and planted the

aiding the Ottoman polity (without a trace of the criticisms he himself undertook in his *al-Naṣāiʾḥ al-muhimma)*, while also arguing that it is the friends of God who ultimately lie behind the empire's success, and not the sanctity of the sultans or other sources—a theme which we will explore in more depth in the following chapter in our discussion of Şemseddīn Aḥmed Sīvāsī and sainthood in Anatolia. In the particular context of mid-sixteenth century Syria, this story has the added significance of arguing for Shaykh ʿAlwān's early acceptance of the Ottoman polity, and not just acceptance but support—the sort of memory that would be most useful for ensuring both the political suitability of the saint's legacy and its long-term survival (particularly once the enduring nature of the Ottoman *devlet* was clearer, as it would have been more so for Muḥammad than his father).[221] This story, which may have circulated independent of its inclusion in Muḥammad's hagiography, worked to write Shaykh ʿAlwān into the still new Ottoman landscape, a landscape that made use of and overlay the much older Syrian Islamic landscape. This memory did not exist only in oral or textual form, however, but was also given physical presence in the built fabric of Hama, through the efforts of one ʿAbd al-Ghaffār al-Āmadī (d. 966), a carpenter turned prominent merchant whom Ibn al-Ḥanbalī describes as blessed with 'pure spiritual tasting' by virtue of Shaykh ʿAlwān's *baraka*:

> He was the one who built a domed structure (*qubba*) over the tomb of Shaykh ʿAlwān, to which he affixed the likeness of a boat, similar to what is atop the *qubba* of Imām Shāfi'ī—God be pleased with him—as an indication of his being a ship of knowledge or a sea of knowledge to which a boat is affixed.

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banner upon it. The soldiers of the Islamic army followed after him, entering the fortress through this spot, its conquest becoming easy because of that man. My companions and I got a close look at the man—it was Shaykh ʿAlā al-Dīn, there being no doubt that he came on military campaign with us, and was present for the conquest of the fortress, yet we marveled that we had never once seen him while on the way there!'" ʿAlī al-Bālī, *al-ʿIqd al-manẓūm,* 466-467.

[221] For the continuing precariousness and 'experimental' nature of Ottoman rule in Syria, see Fitzgerald, 'Murder in Aleppo,' esp. 213-215: 'If there is one message in this, it is that Istanbul had ideas, models, and resources, but not a perfect governing template, and that order would take time to construct. What Leslie Peirce has called the "imperializing phase" of Ottoman rule, which marked the end of transition, had not yet been reached in Aleppo of the late 1520s. It was instead still a time of "rawer forms of control."'

> Some of the people opposed his renovation of [Shaykh ʿAlwān's] tomb with this *qubba* and the boat attached to it…[222]

Given Shaykh ʿAlwān's stated sentiments about 'ornamentation' in mosques and elsewhere, we might well imagine that he would not have approved of the addition to his tomb of either a *qubba* or the even more ostentatious 'likeness of a boat'—a symbol that would have immediate resonance to many viewers, the curious wooden boat perched atop the *qubba* of Imām Shāfiʿīs tomb-shrine being its most distinctive component.[223] This decidedly un-subtle visual cue must surely lie behind some of the controversy that Ibn al-Ḥanbalī notes: al-Āmadī's architectural choice claimed a status for Shaykh ʿAlwān on par with Imām Shāfiʿī, the *madhhab* eponym venerated widely in the late medieval and early modern world not just or even primarily as a jurist but as a powerful and effective Friend of God, the *quṭb* of his time. It is possible as well that by highlighting Shaykh ʿAlwān's Shāfʿī affiliation, the shrine's patron sought to differentiate him from the Ḥanafī-supporting Ottomans, a somewhat different political rendering than that of his son Muḥammad's hagiographic interventions. Regardless of patron intentions, both possibilities could have been 'read' as such by passers-by. And unlike a hagiographic text or body of oral reports, or the genealogical reproduction of the saint's lineage and practices, this sort of architectural 'text' would be visible to any who came to visit the saint's tomb or who simply passed within visual range. It was through a variety of factors then—the work and

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[222] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al-Ḥabab*, 816.

[223] This account in the life of al-Shaʿrānī, for instance, indicates the imaginative charge that the *qubba* and its boat possessed in our period: 'When once [al-Shaʿrānī] was hindered from making a visit to [the tomb of] Imām al-Shāfiʿī, God be pleased with him, he [al-Shāfiʿī] came to him in a dream-vision and said to him: 'O ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, I am censuring you for your paucity in visiting me!' ʿAbd al-Wahhāb replied, 'Tomorrow I'll come and visit you.' But the Imām said to him: 'I won't release you until I go with you to my place.' So he took him by the hand, until he ascended with him upon the back of his dome (*qubba*), underneath the boat (*markab*) that is upon it. He spread out for him a new mat and placed before him a dining-cloth upon which was tender bread, cheese rounds, and split open for him an '*abdallāwī* melon. He said to him: 'Eat, O ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, in this place which kings of the earth now departed desired to eat!'' Al-Malījī, *Tadhkirat*, 78.

reputations of Shaykh ʿAlwān's successors, especially those who laid claim upon sainthood themselves, must also be considered as capillary agents in the long-term process—the shaykh's sanctity was textually, physically, and ultimately socially inscribed, even if controversy remained, ensuring not just the perpetuation of his memory but its spread and, it seems, the eventual subsiding of controversy. By the time al-Ghazzī was writing in the early seventeenth century the traces of controversy had faded away, and Shaykh ʿAlwān's sainthood was firmly established in Ottoman Syria, both through narrative and through architectural argument.

Just as the posthumous social memory of Shaykh ʿAlwān took on forms that might not have been completely congruent with the shaykh's own priorities, in life the saint did not always agree with the directions his followers and successors took. Just as with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān in Bursa, some of Shaykh ʿAlwān's delegates and successors in Syria would draw upon quite different, even seemingly contrary ascetic scripts, repertoires of sainthood, and devotional practice, even as they continued to look to the saint for their authorization, receiving in turn from him both censure and support. For instance, one of Shaykh ʿAlwān's followers, who had previously been a follower of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad al-Kīzawānī (d. 1548), established himself as a shaykh in Aleppo, following—to an extent—Shaykh ʿAlwān's 'way,' and remaining in close contact with him, apart from a two-year period of falling-out shortly after ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's arrival in Aleppo. In 1524, according to Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, ʿAlī al-Kīzawānī ordered his followers to 'go about in the marketplaces' wearing strings of beads (*kharaz*) around their necks, as well as wearing turned inside-out furs and other similarly inverted articles of clothing, some even piercing their noses.[224] As we will see in future chapters, such practices were redolent of—and keyed upon, albeit not in a straightforward manner—the repertoire of

[224] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al-ḥabab*, 909-911.

antinomian dervish practices which had gradually filtered into the Arab lands, shaping the modes and scripts of devotional practice and of sainthood in many ways, perhaps most notably in the life and memory of the 'patron saint' of Aleppo, the *majdhūb* Abū Bakr ibn Abī al-Wafā' (d. 1583).[225] For the first part of his career, Abū Bakr lived an itinerant life within the city, frequenting 'refuse piles, tombs, and ruined places, sleeping upon the dirt without a cushion, not minding heat or cold, nor wind or rain.'[226] He shaved off his beard, pierced his ears, eventually pulled out his teeth, and was usually accompanied by a pack of dogs—all practices associated with deviant dervish groups of the Turko-Persianate world.[227] ʿAlī al-Kīzwānī's shift to a similar modality of practice drew criticism in Aleppo, but he also received support from various ʿulama in the city (as would Abū Bakr a few decades later) as well as, perhaps surprisingly, from Shaykh ʿAlwān, who wrote a *fatwa* arguing for the legitimacy of these practices as means of defeating the lower self (*nafs*) through humiliation in the eyes of others, even if they did not accord with his own regime of practice.[228]

Shaykh ʿAlwān did not always endorse the 'transformations' his followers undertook of the repertoire of practice he passed on to them, however. The most striking aspirant to sainthood connected with Shaykh ʿAlwān was one ʿUmar al-Iskāf, originally of Hama, eventually of Damascus, where he would pursue his saintly career. Besides Shaykh ʿAlwān's own correspondence with him, of which we possess a sampling, al-Ghazzī wrote a hagiographic

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[225] On whom see al-Urḍī, *Ma'ādin*, 43-54; Salaḥ al-Din ibn Muḥammad al-Juranī, *Manāqib al-shaykh Abū Bakr ibn Abī al-Wafā'*, Demirbaş 01131-001, Süleymāniye Kütüphanesi; Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, 'Deviant Dervishes: Space, Gender, and the Construction of Antinomian Piety in Ottoman Aleppo,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 4 (2005): 535–65.

[226] al-Urḍī, *Ma'ādin*, 46.

[227] Ibid. On deviant dervishes, see in general Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994).

[228] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al-ḥabab*, 910.

treatment of ʿUmar, one which contrasts in interesting ways with a rather less enthusiastic—if not overtly hostile—account by ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Nuʿaymī in his compilatory exploration of the madrasas of Damascus, *al-Dāris fī tārīkh al-madāris*. From al-Ghazzī we learn that ʿUmar al-Iskāf was originally a shoemaker, and continued in his craft for some time after becoming the disciple of Shaykh ʿAlwān, 'perfecting his trade, while continuing to practice *dhikr* while working.'[229] Then 'enraptured states overcame him' and he engaged in ascetic struggle, including his ability, hailed by al-Ghazzī as a sign of his sanctity, to resist eating any of the delicious fruits growing in a garden outside of Hama that he tended for its owner for two years. After a period of training and of other ascetic disciplines, Shaykh ʿAlwān sent ʿUmar to Damascus to act as his preceptor there. Despite the fact that 'he was illiterate,' al-Ghazzī says, 'by the grace of his sincerity, God mystically bestowed upon him knowledge of the doctrine of the way of the Folk, and discourse upon the fleeting thoughts which the *fuqarā'* brought before him.'[230] During his career in Damascus, every year he would travel the one hundred and fifty miles or so to visit his shakyh, staying in Hamā for three days, a custom he continued even after Shaykh 'Alwan died, visiting his *qubba*-topped tomb each year.[231]

In al-Ghazzī's short description, we see the effective power that the practice of precepting *shakwāt al-khawāṭir* had in making socially visible claims of sanctity, ʿUmar's ability in carrying out the sessions seen by al-Ghazzī as an indication of his special relationship with God, from whom he received his insights in lieu of formal, textual learning. The role of maintaining a relationship with Shaykh ʿAlwān is also visible in this description: ʿUmar did not set himself as

[229] Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. 2, 227.

[230] Ibid.

[231] Ibid., 230.

entirely independent, but instead recognized a need for continued connection to his saintly shaykh. This relationship was not without its strains, however. Part of ʿUmar's own repertoire of practice was his ungrammatical pronounciation of Qur'an and hadith, noted as distinctive in al-Nuʿaymī's account below. Whether this was simply due to his lack of formal education, or was a deliberate practice on the same spectrum of deviant and radical actions (and ʿUmar did enjoin other such practices upon his followers, as we will see), is hard to tell. Regardless, word of this 'deviation' reached Shaykh ʿAlwān, who wrote a letter to ʿUmar, gently asking him to find ways to work around his apparent inability to properly pronounce the words of the Qu'ran and hadith, suggesting a range of options, including appointing a spokesman to recite such materials, on the model of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's practice 'in the lands of the Turks.'[232] If Shaykh ʿAlwān could not endorse ʿUmar's ungrammatical rendering of sacred texts, his censure was very mild indeed, and did not touch upon other aspects of ʿUmar's saintly performance, a number of which are visible in al-Nuʿaymī's account of ʿUmar's *zāwiya*:

> He built for himself this *zāwiya* and the house in which he lived in the year 1521. He claimed that he instructed *fuqarā'* and ordered them to wear furs turned inside out, to ride canes, and to hang sheep entrails from their necks and to go about the streets of Damascus thus, in order to break the *nafs*, so their shaykh told them. They would cry out *No god but God*, and would only greet members of their *ṭarīqa*. He gained many followers in Damascus and in its hinterlands and elsewhere. Anyone with whom the shaykh grew angry he would expell from the group, until that person came and put his face on the threshold of the *zāwiya* and joined the *fuqāra'* in *dhikr* from without the door. The shaykh was known for his ungrammatical pronounciation of the Qur'ān, likewise his followers. He set up a special burial area northwest of Bāb al-Farādīs for his followers, set off with a wall and an inscription. He however was buried in a *qubba* west of the *zāwiya*, with an iron grill window running the length of the road heading out to Salihiya. He died in 951 and

[232] Simonds, '*Alī*, 228-229: 'Look to one of your companions who is suitable for drilling the fuqarā' from among his brethren who are seekers of knowledge and bearers of hadith, and put him in your place to speak as your deputy. If they need you, you can speak to them concerning what is between you and between them as Sīdī our shaykh did in the land of the Turks when he brought forward a man named ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Miṣrī [as his deputy] until ʿAbd al-Raḥmān received inspiration and he brought him forward because he was more knowledgeable about the language of his people.'

> was buried in his *qubba*; his son Muḥammad eventually took up management of his *zāwiya* after the practice of his father, though the number of disciples was diminished.[233]

On display here—and more subtly in al-Ghazzī's much more hagiographic account, with which we will conclude—is ʿUmar's setting himself up as a saint in his own right in quite unmistakable ways. As has emerged as a theme in the 'third generation' of the *ṭarīqa* of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and Shaykh ʿAlwān, ʿUmar had his disciples embrace a range of practices with Malāmī or even antinomian overtones, practices which they displayed in the streets of Damascus and which reinforced their solidarity and orientation around Shaykh ʿUmar. Such group solidarity was no doubt even further strengthened through, if we accept al-Nuʿaymī's testimony, the strict discipline the aspirant saint enforced, discipline which reinforced the sanctified space of the *zāwiya*, the locus of the saint's powerful presence, and which he himself had built. ʿUmar's other spatial interventions were even more audacious acts of effective self-sanctification: besides ensuring his followers' continued proximity to their shaykh and the rest of the community even after death, ʿUmar evidently planned out the architecture of his veneration himself, working to ensure his continued saintly presence in the decidedly crowded saintly topography of early modern Damascus.[234] Not only did he have a *qubba* built to mark his future tomb, the wall of his tomb was equipped—also presumably by ʿUmar himself—with an iron grill window, a common feature of saints' tombs across the Ottoman world and beyond, meant to allow passers-by to receive the saint's *baraka* without having to enter the shrine directly. As such, like the boat atop Shaykh ʿAlwān's *qubba*, it would have been read as an indicator of the saintly status of the

[233] ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muḥammad al-Nuʿaymī, *al-Dāris fī tārīkh al-madāris* (Damascus: al-Hay'ah al-'Āmmah al-Sūrīyah lil-Kitāb, 2014), vol. 2, 169-170.

[234] On which see Daphna Ephrat and Hatim Mahamid, 'The Creation of Sufi Spheres in Medieval Damascus (Mid-6th/12th to Mid-8th/14th Centuries),' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25, no. 02 (2015): 189–208.

occupant. Finally, it was in the realm of practice that ʿUmar's genealogical, authorizing ties back to Shaykh ʿAlwān are most visible: in addition to al-Ghazzī's opening remarks about ʿUmar's perspacity in *shakwāt al-khawāṭir*, he notes further along that the shaykh evidenced many *karāmāt* through his ability to interpret the *khawāṭir* of others, evidence of his making this distinctive ʿAlwānī practice an integral part of his saintly repertoire. Perhaps it was this very practice that helps to explain the ease with which Shaykh ʿUmar, like ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣūfī, ʿAlī al-Kīzawānī, and others diverged from their initiating shaykh's style and instead experimented with practices and saintly self-presentations that ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and Shaykh ʿAlwān would most likely not have countenanced. Mastery of the *shakwāt* sessions could socially invest the preceptor as authoritative in everything from Qur'an exegesis to solutions to familial strife. The space of the session served as a stage, as it were, for the performance of *kashf*, the revealing of what was hidden—hidden, here, in both the sense of hidden in the paritcipant's hear but also in terms of the preceptor's knowledge, all the more apropos in the case of an illiterate shaykh such as ʿUmar.

Finally, al-Ghazzī's *manāqib*-in-brief inadvertently reveals the process of Shaykh ʿUmar's 'saintification' in wider memory as well as some of the tensions that his antinomian-like stylings elicited in Damascus. For instance, in one of the several stories al-Ghazzī relates in support of ʿUmar sanctity, one of Shaykh ʿUmar's disciples is described as being infatuated with a beardless youth.[235] Upon encountering the shaykh one day while in pursuit of his amorous desires, the man is embarrased and seeks to justify his infatuation by arguing that none other than God was the maker of the marvelous attributes of this youth. Shaykh ʿUmar replies: 'Look rather to a black African (*zanjī*), deeply black, upon his head a conical hat, the people laughing at him

[235] On the background of sexuality and gender lying behind this story, see for instance El-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality*.

and calling him a liar—but why not instead marvel at the atrribute of this black man, marveling at the blackness of his body, and the intense white of his teeth, recognizing the craftsmanship of God in him without there being any disapproval from the *sharīʿa* in such admiration, contrary to your gazing upon this handsome beardless youth?'[236] Shaykh ʿUmar's response does not seek to completely subdue the disciple's gaze, but rather to redirect it (while also critiquing 'racialist' attitudes on the part of Damascenes, in itself an interesting detail).[237] It seems likely that the story's reproduction by al-Ghazzī was meant to absolve Shaykh ʿUmar of any suspicion of endorsing sexual impropriety of the sort associated with antinomian dervishes. A second story in which Shaykh ʿUmar converts a Shiʿi man might well have driven at a similar point: in the story, Shaykh ʿUmar had a disciple who was Shiʿi, but who did not reveal his identity to the shaykh, until one day the two went on a climb up Jabal Qāsiyūn.[238] On the way up the mountain Shaykh ʿUmar flagged and had the disciple carry him, but the secret Shiʿi was unable to pick the saint up, presumably because of his unworthiness in bearing a Sunni while in the state of secret Shiʿiness. Shaykh ʿUmar perceives the man's inner reality and invites him to repent, which he does, and, we learn, became well-known in Damascus for his praise of the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (the surest signs of conversion to Sunnism), remaining a committed disciple of the shaykh.[239] If the 'deviant dervish adjacent' behavior of the shaykh and his followers could arouse

[236] Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. 2, 228.

[237] For one approach to Ottoman attitudes towards 'race' and skin color, see Baki Tezcan's 'Dispelling the Darkness: The Politics of "Race" in the Early Seventeenth Centruy Ottoman Empire in the Light of the Life and Work of Mullah Ali,' in *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz,* ed. Baki Tezcan and Karl K Barbir (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007).

[238] The mountain to the west of Damascus which was dotted with holy sites and tombs, and features in many hagiographies from the city.

[239] Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. 2, 229.

suspicions of sexual impropriety, it might have also elicited fears of either crypto-Shiʿism or of the harboring of sympathies for the Shiʿi, concerns with particularly compelling purchase in the sixteenth century and the ongoing Ottoman struggles with the Safavids (which included the presence, real or imagined, of Safavid 'spies' in Syria).[240] The presence of the Shiʿi man, albeit secretly, in Shaykh ʿUmar's company might well indicate just such proclivities, or at least perceived proclivities, while the miraculous conversion of the man provides a justification for ʿUmar's allowing Shiʿi into his community of followers. Here and elsewhere, of course, hagiographic memory often engaged in no small degree of 'smoothing,' sometimes in quite dramatically revisionary fashion. If al-Ghazzī's effusive treatment is any indication, ʿUmar's 'saintification' was quite successful, at least in terms of later memory (al-Nuʿaymī suggests the specific community ʿUmar cultivated did not do so well, however). The *wilāyat* of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, if envisioned as a sort of 'deposit,' had traveled far indeed by this stage, with (at least) one more wind in the path, with which we will conclude.

iv. Conclusions: what is a ṭarīqa?*:*

We began the story of what would become the ʿAlwāniyya—though what exactly we might mean by the very terms 'ʿAlwāniyya' and indeed '*ṭarīqa,'* both of which have hovered at

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[240] While it is from the seventeenth century, Muḥibbī relates an amusing story of one Akmal al-Dīn al-Ḥanafī, an *adīb* and intitate into the inner precint service of the sultan (the Enderūn) who, after a career in Istanbul, returned to Damascus, became 'melancholic,' and withdrew into his home. One evening he called for a friend of his to come to his house and they sat togther, making merry and singing until midnight. Then Akmal al-Dīn suddenly rose up, and came with a drawn sword, then said that he thought his friend was a spy (*jasūs*) for the shah of Persia. After thinking about the option of fighting him Akmal al-Dīn decided to release his friend if he'd give surety that he'd go back to Persia, tell the Shāh about him, and hence have the Shāh invite him to Persia! Muḥammad Amīn ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-athar fī aʿyān al-qarn al-ḥādī 'ashar* (Beirut: Maktabat Khayyāt, [1966]), vol. 1, 422. On the general situation of Safavid intelligence gathering, see Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence in the 16th Century,' *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 65, no. 1 (2012): 9-11.

the edges of our discourse so far, will become clearer in this final section—with the life of a Maghribi saint, ʿAlī ibn Maymūn, whose saintly script with which he shaped his career in the east proved somewhat uneasy fit in the Ottoman and soon-to-be-Ottoman lands. Our account ends with the life of a saint who conveys us into another city, Aleppo, and into the seventeenth century. Chronicled by the hagiophilic ʿUmar al-ʿUrḍī of Aleppo, Aḥmad ibn ʿUmar al-Ḥamāmī's story exemplifies the further (and, it would appear, close to final) permutations of the ʿAlwānī 'way,' incuding just what '*ṭarīqa'* conveyed in this context, as well as the viscitudes a career in sainthood could take, with the story climaxing with the interplay of his formation and identity as an ʿAlwānī shaykh and his later in life encounter with a resolutely Ottoman repertoire of practice and sainthood in the form of the Khalwatī shaykh Shāh Walī. Our journey along the ʿAlwānī way concludes, not in Syria, but in the transformation of an otherwise unremarkable disciple of Shaykh Aḥmad into a successful saint in Constantinople, to the point of having access to the inner space of the Topkapı Palace itself. As such, the story of the ʿAlwāniyya ends up being an almost ideal snapshot of the progress of 'Ottomanization' at the cultural and social level in Syria and beyond.

Aḥmad ibn ʿUmar al-Ḥamāmī (d. 1608) was, despite his *nisba*, by trade a weaver, and undertook 'the sufi path' under the two sons of Shaykh ʿAlwān, Abū al-Wafā' and then Muḥammad, under whom he also studied the basics of Islamic ʿ*ulūm*. After the death of Muḥammad he moved to Aleppo where he worked as a weaver for a while, then, having 'grown tired of weaving' set himself up in the *masjid* of Shaykh Sham'ūn in the Sawūqiyya quarter as teacher for 'beginners,' to which he added the teaching of *tafsīr* following a period of study under another intitiate into the ʿAlwāniyya, a Shaykh Abū al-Jawād. At some point, and without any indication of dramatic rupture, Aḥmad began holding sessions of *shakwāt al-khawāṭir* 'after

the ʿAlwānī manner,' sessions which al-ʿUrdī himself attended, and in so doing set himself upon a saintly career path, the relative success of which is reflected in the hagiographic rendering al-ʿUrdī gives for the shaykh—a rendering that suggests that his *wilāyat* was manifest even during his tutelage under Abū al-Wafā'. Unlike the other aspirants to sainthood on the ʿAlwānī path that we have seen, the rest of Aḥmad al-Hamāmī's saintly repertoire tracked quite closely to that of the *ṭarīqa's* originators (like Shaykh ʿAlwān, he even wrote a *manāqib*, of the aforementioned Abū Bakr ibn al-Wafā').[241] He was quite rigorously ascetic, especially in dress, to the point of using any new clothes he acquired as a rug, dirtying them before wearing them. His asceticism went even further than that of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn or Shaykh ʿAlwān, to the point that he 'never knew the pleasure of sex,' only marrying—without consummation—an elderly widow late in life in order to be in accordance with the *sunna*. After spending an uneventful night with her, in the morning he paid her the rest of her bridal dowery and divorced her. While he encouraged his disciples not to pursue *ʿilm*, his aversion seems to have been based on a general aversion to things of 'this world below.'[242]

What makes his career of interest to us, beyond serving as evidence of the spread of Shaykh ʿAlwān's memory and legitimizing authority beyond Hama and Damascus, is the transformation that occurred later sometime after setting himself up as an ʿAlwānī shaykh. A Khalwatī shaykh of Turkmen background, Shāh Walī, came to Aleppo and remained there for some time,[243] during which period Shaykh Aḥmad became his disciple and 'took the Khalwatī

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[241] Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat*, 257.

[242] Al-Urḍī, *Ma'ādin*, 309.

[243] Unfortunately, while al-ʿUrdī promised an entry on Shāh Walī, he never brought his biographical project to its conclusion and so never reached the Khalwatī shaykh. Muḥibbī includes an entry on Shāh Walī, but it is extremely perfunctory, composed of little more than stock phrases.

way from him, to the amazement of the people,' dressing his *murīd*s in the Khalwatī *tajj* and practicing *dhikr* in their manner. While 'his disciples increased' as a result of this change, others were not pleased: 'those vigorous in asceticism' (*al-mushaddīn fī al-zuhd*) lamented the change, arguing that the ʿAlwānī *ṭarīqa* was a purer expression of the 'Muḥammadan *sunna*,' while others complained directly to Shāh Walī that Shaykh Aḥmad had 'abandoned the *ṭarīqa* of his forebearers' (even though he does not seem to have given up the practice of *shakwāt* sessions, combining them with distinctly Khalwatī practices instead). After a while, we learn, Shaykh Aḥmad ended his performance of the Khalwatī way, 'returning to the *ṭarīqa* of Shaykh ʿAlwān,' though upon his death he was buried alongside Shāh Walī.[244] His detour through the Khalwatī returns us to the complex relationship 'Rūmī' patterns of *taṣawwuf* and sainthood had with the Arab lands during this period, as the ascetics of Aleppo, like al-Shaʿrānī a few decades before, resisted the perceived intrusion of the Khalwatī manner and its highly public adoption by a local holy man. In their understanding, the ʿAlwānī way was more fitting and more in keeping with adherence to the *sunna*, and, though al-ʿUrdī does not make this explicit, was not the product of the still rather suspicious lands of the 'Turks' and Rūmīs. At the same time, just as was the case in Egypt during this period, the new routes of practice and sanctity coming from Rūm found an audience, not just in Shaykh Aḥmad but in many others who were drawn to him as a result of his conversion. Finally, the perceived coherence of the ʿAlwāniyya as a distinct way is displayed in this story more than in anything we have seen previously: not only did Shaykh Aḥmad fashion his life in fairly close adherence to the example of Shaykh ʿAlwān, he was seen by others as part of a distinct *ṭarīqa* going back to that saint, a genealogical link that was vital and integral, hence

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[244] Al-Urḍī, *Ma'ādin*, 309-310.

the outrage at Shaykh Aḥmad's temporary lapse. We will return to what exactly all this can tell us about the intersection of *ṭarīqa* formation and sanctity shortly.

But first: Aḥmad al-Ḥamāmī's career is not quite the end of this tale. Our narrative ends, instead, with the curious story of Shaykh Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbdallāh (his name suggesting he or his father was a convert to Islam and hence probably of non-Arab background), a sometime delegate for Shaykh Aḥmad. Al-ʿUrḍī tells us that, having married a woman whose family was from 'among the nobility Rūm,' he traveled to Constantinople in order to wrangle over matters of estate, only to be poisoned by his wife's scheming relations, 'wrecking his mind,' and enabling them to force a divorce (and preserve their estate, evidently).[245] He returned to Aleppo, 'ruined of intellect.' After a bout of 'popular' preaching there, he returned to Constantinople, where his condition worsened, 'and he began wearing filthy clothes one day, good clothes another. He would talk with meaningless words, other times with excellent words. The people of Rūm believed in him, and gave him alms,' spreading word of his sainthood and the 'unveilings' he was said to receive. Some grew 'envious' of the money he accumulated through alms, so he placed them as a trust 'before the people,' and forgot about most of the money.[246] He would sometimes pass by the house of the chief mufti, Yaḥyā Efendi, and abuse him with vile language. But the mufti, we are told, did not grow angry with him over this, but rather 'accepted him with satisfaction and belief.' Abū Bakr even entered the Imperial Divān and 'sat amongst them,' during which time he cursed the ḳāḍī of Rumelia with death. In short, Abū Bakr's trajectory, which, in al-ʿUrdī's telling, was not really a conscious choice on his part, resulted in his acclaim

[245] Al-Urḍī, *Ma'ādin*, 70.

[246] When his son came from Aleppo to visit, he only gave him a little out of the money, then sent him back to Aleppo. On the other hand, when stopped in the road by people asking for something, he tossed them his purse and told them to take whatever they wanted.

in the imperial center as a saint of some power and influence, though his connection to the ʿAlwāniyya was no longer in evidence (and, it seems likely, would have had little purchase among the 'people of Rūm' anyway).

While Abū Bakr's 'career' in Constantinople is visible to us only through al-ʿUrdī's perception at a remove, it rings true: other saints with a profile similar to Abū Bakr lived in Constantinople during this period, such as the Nalıncı Dede described by ʿAṭā'ī (and rather later more extensively memorialized by Evliyā Çelebi).[247] These were figures marked by repertoires (deliberate on the part of the saint and attributed through the perceptions of others) of deportment and practice that would coalesce into that of *meczūb* in the course of the seventeenth century, but for this period were not identified under a common heading: ʿAṭā'ī notes of Nalıncı Dede (d. 1593) that he 'manifested divine *cezbe*,' for instance, while in Evliyā Çelebi's recounting—which amounts to a short *menāḳıb* embedded in the first volume of his *Seyahâtnâme,* leading a section of hagiographies of various *meczûp* and *divâne* saints—Nalıncı Dede is described as a *meczūb* akin to the seventeenth century divinely drawn mad saints with whom Evliyā was more intimately familiar (some of whom will appear further along).[248] Both ʿAṭā'ī and Evliyā agree on the strange and erratic behavior of the saint, as well as the degree of his acclaim, to the point that Murād III (1546-1595), well known, to be sure, for his love of the friends of God and his own hagiographic self-fashioning, himself built Nalıncı Dede's *türbe*, potent indication that such a 'style' of sainthood was indeed recognized all the way up to the inner precincts of the Sultan's palace.[249] Abu Bakr fit the expectations for saints that were developing in Rūm and which found

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[247] See chapter four for a discussion of this saint.

[248] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyahâtnâmesi,* (Beyoğlu, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları Ltd. Şti., 1996), vol. 1, bk. ii, 180-181.

[249] Nevʿīzāde ʿAṭā'ī, *Ẕeyl-i Şeḳā'iḳ* (İstānbūl: Tab'hâne-i 'Âmire, 1851), 370.

expression in the life and memory of Nalıncı Dede and similar holy men, expectations which were themselves surely shaped by dynamics at work in the Arab provinces and elsewhere—Abū Bakr's own movement between Aleppo and Constantinople a reminder of the circulatory routes increasingly in place, and not just for members of the Ottoman 'ruling elite.'

Our narrative now having come, as it were, full circle, beginning with a saintly immigrant from the Maghrib and ending with a rather accidental saintly immigrant from Syria four generations later, their relations with the Ottoman center ending up being quite different, we may step back and consider what wider patterns are visible here. First, we can ask, what, then, *was* the ʿAlwāniyya, if anything, and how might the concept and execution of a '*ṭarīqa'* relate to sainthood? Thinking back over all of the people who were in some way affiliated with Shaykh ʿAlwān (only some of whom were explicitly said to belong to something called the ʿAlwāniyya), the sheer diversity of these men and women is perhaps the most striking take-away in the aggregate. In what ways can we see all of these people and saintly careers as having anything in common? Certainly, while Shaykh ʿAlwān did intervene, sometimes forcefully, sometimes not very much so at all, in the actions and careers of his delegates, there is no further sense of an 'institution' or any kind of central organization at work here. Compared to another 'new' Syrian *ṭarīqa*, the Saʿdiyya, whose control was contested far more after its eponym's death, the ʿAlwāniyya quickly lost whatever institutional or 'family dynasty' characteristics it may have had (indication of contestation is visible really only immediately after Shaykh ʿAlwān's death).[250] The cohesion—in practice and in social perception—that allowed contemporary

[250] On the Saʿdiyya and their own process of Ottomanization, see the expansive and very useful article by Barbara von Schlegell, 'Saʿdiyya,' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*[2]. The biography of one member of this *ṭarīqa*, given by al-Ghazzī, provides a sense of its distinctiveness and points of contact with the ʿAlwāniyya: Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Jabāwī ibn Sa'd al-Dīn: He took over the shaykhship of the Banū Saʿd al-Dīn in 1578, and became occupied with the encountering of sufis, visitors, and supplicants. In time, due to the operations of their respective sons, sparring arose between Muḥammad and his brother Ibrāhīm. He 'opened

participants and observers to begin speaking of a discrete ʿAlwāniyya rested on really just two components: one, the 'saintified' memory and continuing presence of Shaykh ʿAlwān himself, with that of his master folded into his own identity and memory. The ensuing authorizing presence was passed along to shaykhs and saints in the ʿAlwānī lineage—the act of transmission from Shaykh ʿAlwān precisely the constituting factor. In this sense the *ṭarīqa* served as route whereby *wilāyat* moved from one claimant to another, genealogically linked and reinforcing, but undergoing new permutations in each successive 'generation.' Besides the ability of a newly minted shaykh to draw upon the 'legitimacy' of Shaykh ʿAlwān, this transmission was effected concretely through the second consistent feature of the ʿAlwāniyya, the *shakwāt al-khawāṭir*, which were evidently accompanied by distinctive devotional litanies (*awrād),* though these did not figure as prominently. As we have seen repeatedly, this technique of self and saint-making was an effective vehicle for aspirants to sainthood. It allowed preceptors to draw upon a wide range of other saintly repertoires and scripts, beyond those which the first two shaykhs of the way embodied. And so we have seen everything from the articulation of women as one's saintly public (with the use of a *ḥijāb*, to be sure!) to the use of 'antinomian-adjacent' practices like nose-rings in the lives of the saints strung along this lineage. It was, ultimately, the local contexts, the particular strategies of individual shaykhs, and the receptiveness or otherwise of their own 'publics' that determined the shape that devotional practice and sainthood would take in the ʿAlwāniyya way. Perhaps this 'way,' oriented around a particular technic, was especially

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the gate of generosity' of the family as it had never been opened before. Visitors to the family *zāwiya* would be treated to coffee, then platters of delicacies, regardless of the time of day. His character in that was the character of a king. His festival feasts stretched for days, 'and no one came but he went away satisfied.' He expanded the family *zāwiya*, in particular its space for guests; attracted lands and property and other sources of material wealth; led litanies and *dhikr* and *ṣalawāt* in the family *zāwiya*; and was asstiduous in attending funerals, of all ranks of people. The people boasted about being in his presence. Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī, *Luṭf al-samar wa-qaṭf al-thamar* (Damascus: Manshūrāt Wizārat al-Thaqāfah wa-al-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1981-1982), vol. 2, 56-61.

well suited to diversification and hence gradual dissipation, but similar stories could be told of other such lineages, stories that can help us to move towards a more realistic and embedded sense of what the concept and practice of '*ṭarīqa'* actually meant in parts of the Ottoman world.[251]

While relatively short-lived, the ʿAlwānī *ṭarīqa* is also an excellent example of *one* of the meanings I have in mind with the phrase 'Ottomanization of sainthood,' a process that, in my usage, began in earnest in the sixteenth century but would continue apace in the decades and indeed centuries to come, reflecting both the dynamisms and continuities of the empire as a whole. The Ottomanization that is on display here is one in which many repertoires and scripts of sainthood, actors and claimants and publics, routes and changes of hagiographic memory, spatial practices and devotional regimes, not only circulated (or, in the case of entities without agency, were circulated by others) within the empire, they met and interpenetrated, clashed, mutated, and transformed in similar ways across the Ottoman lands, to the point that sainthood and saintly practices became broadly mutually intelligible from the Kurdish frontier to Constantinople to the shores of North Africa, in ways that had not been true before the conquests of Selīm and the ensuing cultural, political, and social foment of the sixteenth century. ʿAlī ibn Maymūn entered the empire before this process had really taken off, and as a result, his saintly career at the center

[251] The situation is somewhat different, then, from Nathan Hoffer's description of the Shadhaliyya's formation in medieval Egypt: '[T]here is a dialectical social process at the heart of the formation of a formalised *ṭarīqa*-lineage, in which the *ṭarīqa* structures a social praxis that, as it is stabilised and institutionalized over time, enables subsequent generations to map it eponymously back onto a 'founding figure.' The symbolic identity of the master is thus institutionalised as the retroactive and metonymous idealisation of group identity.' Hoffer, *Popularisation*, 110. In the case of the ʿAlwāniyya, only two elements seem to have really become 'stabilised': the sanctity of Shaykh ʿAlwān (and through him back to ʿAlī ibn Maymūn and his Maghribi context) and the practice of *shakwat al-khawāṭir.* Otherwise, there does not seem to have been a stable 'social praxis' around which the various iterations could orient themselves. The 'deposit' of Shaykh ʿAlwān was well suited for experimentation and local adaptations, but not, it seems, for long-term cohesion and stability. Similar things could be said of the Sa'diyya ṭarīqa and probably many other contemporary forms of *ṭarīqa*/saintly lineage formation. See also Hoffer's remarks on 'failed' ṭ*arīqa*s, aspects of which apply here: Hoffer, *Popularisation*, 183-184.

was not particularly successful—it was not (yet) legible, nor does he seem to have understood or appreciated the ways of sainthood and sufism operative in the Ottoman center at the time.

His experience contrasts sharply with that of Abū Bakr, the 'fourth generation' in the line from 'Alī, and who found—by accident in al-ʿUrdī's rendering—marked success as a saint in the imperial center. This increased commensurability did not entail uniformity, of course: the role of the *ʿilmiye* system vis-à-vis sainthood in the central lands would have little impact on the more removed provinces, in which the gravitational pull of *ʿilmiye*, while present, would remain weak. Thus we see in Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥamāmī's life a rather casual entry into and passage out of a career as a small-time instructor in *ʿilm*, right alongside later ambiguity—but not precisely dramatic rupture—with the teaching and study of 'exoteric' knowledge, very much in accord with Shaykh ʿAlwān's attitudes. Looking from the Arab provinces, the authorizing role of Shaykh ʿAlwān (who supplanted his master ʿAlī ibn Maymūn in later memory), a role dependent upon social knowledge of his sainthood and of his distinctive practices, seems to have been mostly confined to Syria, where, at least, it was widespread. While Ṭaşköprüzāde includes an entry on Shaykh ʿAlwān, and knew of the *shakwāt* sessions, his entry is very brief, and his knowledge of the *shakwāt* technique associated it with ʿAlī ibn Maymūn.

The points of commensurability that the story of the ʿAlwāniyya manifests are rooted, instead, in shared repertoires of practice and shared social expectations of sainthood, expectations that moved about because the people who held them moved about. While antinomian dervish practices and identities had been present in Syria, for instance, for at least a couple of centuries, it is during our period that we see them become operative beyond the confines of explicitly 'deviant dervish' groups, becoming increasingly 'naturalized.'[252] A key

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[252] The life of the aforementioned Abū Bakr the *majdhūb* of Aleppo indicates this process in a succinct manner: close by the saint's *mazār* was another *mazār,* that of one Bābā Bayram, inhabited by Qalandars, but

component of this process, as our sources obliquely indicate, was the presence of Ottoman officals—*arbāb al-dawal* as one source puts it—from the central lands of Rûm, officials who patronized and 'believed in' saints with antinomian-like charateristics, saints who 'looked like' many a holy man familiar from the context of late medieval and early modern Anatolia. The power of such modes of practice meant that they could be found even within the lineage of a 'jurist-saint' such as ʿAlī ibn Maymūn. These points of commensurability were not always smoothly negotiated: antinomian-like practices consistently encountered opposition, while Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥamāmī's 'fusion' of Khalwatī (one the most typically Ottoman 'ways') and ʿAlwānī was rejected by some in Aleppo as not being properly ascetic (ironically almost the exact opposite of al-Shaʿrānī's complaint about the same *ṭarīqa*!). If, then, the overall trajectory of the ʿAlwāniyya as a 'vehicle' for sainthood and as a distinct sufi 'way' is a lesson in the fluidity and flexibility of such a vehicle, the intersection of this 'way' and 'Ottomanization' holds a similar lesson. In no case, in any of the places examined here, was there one single social perception of sainthood, nor did any more or less discrete set of expectations for saints remain unchanging. The cultural and social and other dynamics that Ottoman expansion and integration put into play added to the dynamism and heterogeneity of sainthood's social production and its transmission and reproduction, additions that created environments in which sainthood could 'move' with greater ease and fluidity, the ensuing permutations—which often arrested that fluidity to an extent in spatial interventions and constructions—beyond anyone's ability to guess in advance.

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who feature only obliquely in the hagiography, and are ignored by our other biographical and historical sources as far as the production of holy people goes. They are a tolerated presence, but a marginal one. Abū Bakr took many of the same repertoire components as the Qalandar and transformed them in his particular performance of *majdhūb* sainthood. Al-Juranī, *Manāqib*, 2b; cf. al-Urḍī, *Ma'ādin*, 43, 50, where the *mazār* is mentioned but with no notice of the Qalandar dwelling there (in general, al-Urḍī's *manāqib* of the saint is somewhat more 'toned down' than that of al-Juranī).

Chapter III

In the Wild, Wild Country: Saintly Strategies, Memory Formation, and Transformations of Rural and Semi-Rural Space in the Kurdish Syrian Highlands, Palestine, and Anatolia

i. Introduction: why the rural, and how?:

The night was torn by intense wind and rain as the Bedouin drover hunkered down with his livestock on the steppe-lands east of Damascus, waylaid by the night and storm as he brought them to market in the city. He related what happened next: ‘It was the middle of the night, when a movement spooked the animals and they bolted. I despaired of regathering them, so I cried out, “Yā Abī Muslim! This is your time!”[253] After scarcely the blink of an eye the animals had come together to me from every direction until they were all back together.’ The saint to whom the drover called out was Muḥammad Abū Muslim al-Ṣamādī (d. 1586), himself of rural origin, hailing originally from the village of Ṣamād,[254] and regarded by Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, the

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[253] I only know of this curious phrase (*yā Sayyidī*, *hādhā waqtuka*!) from one other source: the *manāqib* of Shaykh Dajānī, to be treated below, from Ottoman Palestine, also a seventeenth-century production. The idea is clear enough: in this moment that saint must act and so fulfill the sense of mutual obligation prevailing between saint and devotee. The specific phrasing and perhaps details of the concept, however, might well be a unique feature of greater Syrian saintly veneration, and perhaps more specifically rural sainthood. The examples in Shaykh Dajānī’s *manāqib*: Muḥammad ibn Ṣālaḥ al-Dajānī (d. 1071/1660), *Risāla fī dhikr al-Shaykh al-Sayyidī Aḥmad al-Dajānī,* Israeli National Library Ms. Yah. Ar. 760, 78a, 84b, 85b.

[254] It in fact lies at the very interface of steppe and desert, an environment in which the nomadic presence would have been quite strong—perhaps part of the reasons Abū Muslim al-Ṣamādī would have maintained such a ‘clientele’ even upon settling in Damascus, including, perhaps, people originally from or near Ṣamād? On the village, see Muḥammad Adnan Bakhit, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1982), 183.

recorder of this story, as foremost in Damascus' saintly hierarchy.[255] Al-Ghazzī continues the story with some additional details:

> The wife of this 'son of the Arabs' was a holy woman from among the saints of God, who believed in Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ṣamādī and who used to believe in my father as well, frequently visiting him and then me after him. She said: "I went to [Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ṣamādī] Abū Muslim one day, and my husband was absent on that journey. He said to me: 'Yā Umm Fulāna! I am going to tell you something you must not relate until after I have died. Last night your husband's animals fled from him so he cried out to me, seeking my aid. So I picked up a stone and threw it towards him, and his animals came back together. He will come back to you soundly, nothing having happened to him.'"[256]

This story, while set partially within Damascus, is really oriented towards the wide, empty steppe lands east of the city, where the short grasses gradually give way to rocky desert. The anonymous man and woman—who are evidently of Bedouin background, but who seem to have become semi-sedentary—inhabit multiple worlds, both that of the nomadic steppe and that of the

[255] Born in 1505, Muḥammad came to Damascus with the rest of his family and their group (*ṭā'ifa)* of followers in 1520 (the story of their insertion into the Ottoman Damascene fabric makes up the conclusion to this chapter). Al-Ghazzī describes him as being exceptional among the sufis of his age, a composer of poetry about their *ṭarīqa*, though it was 'not without some degree of blame in terms of Arabic' (a suggestion in itself of rural origins perhaps). Al-Ghazzī's father honored him, considering him to be ahead of his peers in *taṣawwuf*, described his life as being marked by sainthood (*wilayāt*), and used to summon him to his place in al-Khalwa al-Ḥalabiyya in the vicinity of the Umayyad Mosque 'every year at least once, sometimes more, settling him there and his *ṭā'ifa*, where they would perform *samā'* at the door of his *khalwa* within the mosque at night, striking their drums.' Al-Ghazzī's father (who was Shaykh al-Islām in Damascus), gave a *fatwa* concerning the permissibility of their drums in the mosque and elsewhere, in analogy with the drums of *jihād* and the *ḥajj*. Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. 3, 15. About his position in the saintly hierarchy, al-Ghazzī writes: 'In my lifetime I have seen four people who excelled all others in sanctity… the eyes beholding them bearing witness to the gaze of God towards them: the foremost was my father, then Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ṣamādī, then Shaykh Muḥammad al-Yatīm al-'Atakī, then a man I saw in Mecca [a hidden saint]…' Ibid., 17. The Ṣamādī family/*ṭarīqa* was itself a 'branch' of the Qādiriyya, having at some point in the past asserted an independent stream of familial sanctity, with Muḥammad Abū Muslim the most successful manifestation thereof. For an overview of the family, their trajectory, and relevant sources, see Quṭb al-Dīn al-Nahrawāl, *Journey to the Sublime Porte: The Arabic Memoir of a Sharifian Agent's Diplomatic Mission to the Ottoman Imperial Court in the Era of Suleyman the Magnificent; the Relevant Text from Quṭb Al-Dīn Al-Nahrawālī's Al-Fawā'id Al-Sanīyah Fī Al-Riḥlah Al-Madanīyah Wa Al-Rūmīyah,* trans. Richard Blackburn (Beirut: Orient-Institut, 2005), 65, n.168.

[256] Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. 3, 15-16.

city.[257] Uniting those two worlds is their devotion to the saint Muḥammad Abū Muslim al-Ṣamādī, who is here shown to have the ability to cast his power beyond the settled pale and out into the lonely steppes when summoned by a humble drover. What are we to make of the drover's wife, the woman who is identified as not just a devotee of the saint, like her husband, but as also being from among the friends of God herself? Her presence in the personal space of the saint appears as unremarkable to al-Ghazzī—who himself, he reports, knew her. Was this on account of the relatively relaxed gender norms that often prevailed among nomadic peoples of the Ottoman lands?[258] This brief account serves well to introduce the topic of this chapter: the intersection of Ottoman forms of rural life with sainthood, both in relation to rural saints themselves and in relation to the interactions between urban religious culture and that of the world of village and countryside.

Thus far our exploration of Ottoman sainthood has been centered on urban spaces, sometimes at the edges of urban spaces, only occasionally stepping into more decidedly rural space. This confinement reflects the typical reality of our sources, produced primarily by authors hailing from and inhabiting the cities of the empire (including those who were born in villages but moved to the city)—even if, as this chapter and others to come will demonstrate, their lives were frequently drawn into the rural worlds around them by various means, from kinship ties to the work of travel to bonds of sanctity, just as the spaces and lives of cities themselves were intimately and intricately bound up with the countryside. As was the case with almost all pre-modern polities, the vast majority of Ottoman subjects did not live in urban areas of any sort but

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[257] The integration of nomad into the empire as a whole, particularly its networks of movement and communication, is of course a central theme of Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), see esp. 21-29.

[258] On the intersection of nomadism, gender roles, and Islam, see for instance Bruno De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*: *The Khatuns, 1206-1335* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 34–64.

instead inhabited the diverse rural spaces beyond the cities, in villages large and small, in temporary settlements, in nomadic encampments, and in lives of transit across mountain and plain.[259] Not only that, but the boundary between city and countryside, between urban space and rural space, was highly porous, whether in terms of land use and ecology or kinship ties and economic networks. In this chapter we step outside of the confines of the major cities and their immediate hinterlands, places to which we have thus far been largely restricted, and to uncover iterations of sainthood in rural spaces and in so doing make manifest patterns and processes of rural Ottoman life more broadly, continuing the larger goal of this study to reveal aspects of the Ottoman world rendered visible under the lens of sainthood.

The cultural and religious dimensions of rural life remain one of the less examined aspects of the early modern Ottoman world. With certain exceptions, such as portions of John Curry's excellent study of a Halvetī sub-branch in Kastamonu,[260] or James Grehan's already discussed problematic exploration of rural religion in Syria and Palestine, rural religious life in the Ottoman world—Islamic, Christian, or Jewish—has been but rarely considered, even as studies of the peasantry from a socio-economic perspective, centered on the vast Ottoman archives, have been central to the field's historical development.[261] Yet this lopsided focus on but

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[259] 'Rural' and 'urban' both are of course not self-evident terms, and my usage here is somewhat impressionistic and heuristic: rural in effect is everything lying outside of cities, that is, urban concentrations of people within a dense built environment and the institutional and legal trappings requisite to a city: a congregational mosque, the appointment of a governor, a major marketplace, the presence of guilds, and so on, with towns a subset as it were. Rural includes the village environment, as well as the fields and uncultivated but still used lands, along with the parts of the landscape primarily occupied by nomads and semi-nomads. 'Rural' and 'urban' as descriptors attaching to, say, particular saints or practices raises further problems, and in fact part of the goal of this chapter is to demonstrate the extent to which the 'rural' could become 'urban' and vice versa.

[260] Curry, *Transformation*, 70-76.

[261] For instance, the detailed survey of nomadic and peasant life and legal-administrative situation in Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 34-41 (on nomads), 103-178; or the approaches to peasant life

certain aspects of rural history need not be the case: other sources exist, as the lines between urban and rural life were not, as noted above, in fact that sharply drawn. Nor was the countryside disconnected from wider currents of literacy and culture—the case of scholars from the Kurdish lands and from the rural Maghrib, most recently examined in detail by El-Rouayheb, exemplifies the sometimes frequent and relatively easy circulation of scholarly and intellectual life between scattered rural locales and imperial urban centers.[262]

Rural sainthood, like rural religion more broadly, was not an isolated, static artefact of past syncretistic process, the repository of an unchanging agrarian system of beliefs and practices, as has so often been argued or simply assumed in modern scholarship.[263] Rural saints (and the communities of veneration and memory oriented around them) were themselves crucial agents of historical dynamism and interconnection, embodying and localizing oecumenical repertoires of sainthood, theological systems, and so forth, within the particular traditions and places of the Ottoman countryside. And vice versa: rural people, saint and non-saint alike, were not themselves static and immobile, as the opening story above reminds us. Wider dynamics of sanctity operated in rural spaces, and the political currents running through the empire frequently had rural manifestations. In fact, rather than a condition of influence from urban to rural, or center to periphery, we are better served by imaging mutual exchange and interchange and interactivity, on many levels and among many types of actors, existing on the level of a 'dialect

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in Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats,* 90-114. Inalcık and Quataert make passing notice of dervish tombs, Barkey of 'itnerant dervishes' (131), otherwise, religious life figures little or not at all.

[262] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[263] To be sure such assumptions sometimes map onto views of Ottoman observers, though the ideological concerns structuring sixteenth century condemnation of Kızılbaş villagers as heretical hicks and those of modern scholars seeing them as repositories of invariable Turkic heterodoxy (be this a positive or negative evaluation!) are obviously quite different if surface-wise similar.

continuum.' The relational orbits of urban saints extended beyond the confines of the city, and rural saints had vital ties of relationship and self-formation with urban places, in the process acting as mediating agents of urban, oecumenical culture for the rural communities in which they were embedded—and vice versa.[264]

To be sure, rurality did make a difference, and rural forms of sainthood were not simply interchangeable with more urban forms, but, the same as prevailed in urban centers, were adapted to particular conditions which varied from one region to the next.[265] We must find ways to parse both aspects: the interchange and the particularity, without excessively privileging one over the other. The relationship between local dialects of sainthood, and of sanctity more generally, on the one hand, and with more oecumenical registers, on the other, will be a central concern here, and in following chapters that touch specifically upon rural iterations of sainthood.

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[264] Natalie Zemon Davis' thoughts on the process of charting the history of 'popular religion' without recourse to static models or two-tiered structures remain apropos: For ourselves, we examine the range of people's relation with the sacred and the supernatural, so as not to fragment those rites, practices, symbols, beliefs, and institutions which to villagers or citydwellers constitute a whole. We consider how all of thse may provide groups and individuals some sense of the ordering of the world, some explanation for baffling events or injustice, and some notion of who and where they are.' Natalie Zemon Davis, "Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion," in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, ed. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 512.

[265] Thomas David DuBois, in examining rural religious life in late imperial and post-imperial north China, suggests a nuanced way of locating rural continuity with metropolitan practices and doctrines, on the one hand, and local rural 'individuations': 'Local expressions of culture are not merely a misunderstanding of high or official culture. Rather, the latter is itself a text, like a template, which local actors can interpret for their own ends. Rather than attempting to copy elite culture, local actors use it as a foundation upon which to "individuate," building consciously unique cults, rituals, and resources. Such a perspective is particularly important in questions of religion, which must consider the interaction between strong cultural centers in terms of governmental and ecclesiastical orthodoxies, and the numerous layers of regional knowledge and tradition seen in local devotion.' Thomas David DuBois, *The Sacred Village: Social Change and Religious Life in Rural North China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 8. The periods of Ottoman history we are considering here, while possessed of 'strong cultural centers' in terms of religio-cultural production and, at times, legal-administrative reach on some headings, did not have the sorts of strong surveillance and control mechanisms directed at local religious life such as prevailed in late Qing and post-Qing China. Otherwise, many of the dynamics that DuBois identifies in his set of villages have parallels with the Ottoman rural religious landscapes under consideration here.

How do we locate a given instance of rural sainthood in both its particular context—of village, nomadic tribe, place, ecology, and the like—while also recognizing its place within a geographically much larger discourse of sainthood and other constitutive relationships and connections? How did these local dialects of sainthood interact with the political and cultural pressures and products generated by the imperial Ottoman center and its provincial analogues? In the following case studies—first, from the Kurdish-dominated hills and mountains west of Aleppo, followed by the life of Aḥmad al-Dajanī in Palestine, then a selection of saints and their contexts from across Ottoman Anatolia, concluding with a return to Muḥammad Abū Muslim al-Ṣamādī from the above story—I look, first, for articulations of local dialects of sainthood, and how those dialects of practice and discourse interacted with and sometimes resisted the establishment of rule from the Ottoman center. I explore the ways in which these rural and semi-rural saints interacted with neighboring urban places, paying particular attention to the routes of transmission of the very sources I am using, sources all produced by city-dwellers, some at considerable distance from their subjects, others far less so. As a result, this chapter is also about how rural saints—and rural life more generally—was imagined by urban scholars, and how those urban scholars themselves were a part of these rural worlds.

Two major themes in terms of common rural distinctiveness emerge over the course of these explorations: one, the expanded social and political role of the rural saint alongside a generally shared rural sense of sainthood in which the saint was a locus of both political order and of generosity, of health, of abundance, needs that while hardly exclusive to rural localities resonated especially strongly among them. Rural life in the Ottoman world, as in any other world, was hardly easy and was often subject to immense insecurity, of various origins depending on the period, from the Ottoman-Safavid conflicts to the yet more widespread

violence and disorder of the Celâlî rebellions to plague and drought and other disasters. The wild country that was the rural Ottoman world helped drive the logic of rural saints both as they offered their holy presences and material management as security to rural people, and as rural holy men had to navigate the threat and presence of violence and insecurity, regardless of its origins. Closely related to this expanded social role—whose particular features we will see manifest in both Anatolia and Syria—was the centrality of visibility and mobility for rural saints of this period and their relationship with the wider Ottoman project. While, as we have already seen to some degree, repertoires of urban sainthood often made extensive use of a logic of limited access and restricted visibility—in a type of play with gender norms and in reference to the personal topographies of Ottoman political power—rural saints usually made themselves highly visible, a visibility which went hand-in-hand with mobility, within rural space and in relation to urban centers. As a result of this visibility and mobility rural saints and the bodies of devotion and memory built around them encountered the claims and machinations of Ottoman expansion and power, including attempts in the part of the sultans and the elite of the center to construct the Ottoman dynasty as possessed of sainthood in the person of the sultans, and to bring local iterations of sainthood into the center's legibility and control. The reactions of rural saints and communities of sainthood to Ottoman expansion and projection of power reveal scripts of cooperation, resistance, and alternative renderings of Ottoman history and memory, with rurality often crucial in providing the distance necessary to maintain distinct trajectories and routes of political stance and cultural memory, even as that distance and its possibilities heightened the anxieties central authorities felt towards rural saints, particularly those with significant and politically potent followings.[266]

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[266] I want to be careful in what I am arguing here: I am not suggesting that rural saints can be perfectly equated with the peasant and nomadic communities that made up their core publics, or that these 'scripts of resistance'

ii. Sainthood in the Kurdish highlands of Ottoman Syria through the life of Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo:

Our selective panorama of rural Ottoman sainthood begins in a corner of the Syrian highlands rising between Antakya and Aleppo, just north of the town of Jisr al-Shughūr, a region known until the early twentieth century as Jabal al-Quṣayr, after the imposing Crusader and later Mamluk fortress of Cursat (known locally today as Koz Kalesı) which stands near the center of the region.[267] Divided today between the Republic of Turkey on one side and a patchwork of Syrian state and rebel controlled zones on the other, the 'mountain' of Quṣayr (an area now administered from the town of Altınözü on the Turkish side of the border) is really a highly dissected karstic plateau, about four hundred square miles in extent, ascending in the east from the Asi River and culminating westward in the soaring prominence of Jabal al-ʿAqrā (known in Turkish as Kel Dağı) above the sea, though the highlands of which the Quṣayr is a part continue south towards the Lebanon.[268] While not especially high in absolute elevation, the northwest Syrian uplands of which al-Quṣayr is a part rise abruptly and steeply along most of their extent

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and of alternative histories and memory constituted overt political resistance of the sort famously described in the works of James C. Scott. The resistance that the saints and communities described in the following pages coincided with acceptance and even support of the Ottoman *devlet* on many levels, as well as the acquiescence and even enthusiastic participation in the hierarchies of power and economy that the *devlet* by turns cultivated and adapted to its ends.

[267] On the physical layout and history of this quite spectacular but today largely forgotten castle, which fell out of usage during Mamluk times, see Max van Berchem, *Voyage en Syrie* (Cairo: Impr. de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1914), 241-51; and D. W. Morray, 'A Rock-Working at Cursat Castle,' *Anatolian Studies* 40 (1990): 199–204. Van Berchem notes, though with little elaboration, that the abandoned castle was best viewed from the shrine of a local saint, Shaykh ʿAlī, which lay on a prominence slightly higher than the castle (providing, in light of my discussion here, an apt symbol of the changed political dynamics of the plateau post-Mamluk), though he unsurprisingly provides no further information about the shrine itself.

[268] For a brief but useful overview of the physical geography of the plateau, see E. Ozsahin and V. Uygur, 'The Effects of Land Use and Land Cover Changes (LULCC) in Kuseyr Plateau of Turkey on Erosion,' in *Turkish Journal of Agriculture and Forestry* 38, no. 4 (2014): 478–480. Jabal al-'Aqrā—Mount Casius in antiquity—has been a site of intense sanctity since Hurrian times, if not earlier.

up from the Amuq and Aleppine plains, enough so to be dramatically marked off from the lowlands and to act as barriers to easy travel over them (while also making excellent refuges for those interested in disrupting traffic flows through the more accessible, but narrow, river passes). The ravines and other dissections that mark the Quṣayr plateau have historically further heightened the relative inaccessibility of the region, with extensive forest cover adding an additional dimension to the challenges lowland-based polities have faced in governing this region, right up to the present.[269] During the sixteenth century this fertile but rugged plateau was home to a heterogeneous patchwork of peoples, with Kurds (themselves divisible into various affiliations, tribes, and other communities) the dominant group, alongside a sizeable nomadic Turkmen presence, some Muslim Arabs, and a scattering of non-Muslims.[270] The Kurds of the region—who today have largely vanished from the Quṣayr plateau, though place-names retain memory of them here and there[271]—included both nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists as well as sedentary (for the most part) peasants, with connections to Kurdish communities to the north in Aleppo, Kilis, and beyond into the core Kurdish regions to the east.[272] While, unlike the

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[269] While I was writing this chapter, units of the Rojava Kurdish Yekîneyên Parastina Gel in the Kurd Dağı north of Quṣayr were attempting to throw the Turkish military out of Afrin, having melted into the highlands from which they have carried out a campaign of attrition. Geography may not quite be destiny but its power and long durée effects ought never be underestimated.

[270] Carlson notes that in 1536 around five percent of the population of Quṣayr was Christian: Thomas A. Carlson, 'Contours of Conversion: The Geography of Islamization in Syria, 600–1500,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 135, no. 4 (2015), 811.

[271] Lacking a scholarly study of the region post-1938, the full 'de-Kurdifaction' of Quṣayr seems to have occurred relatively recently, in conjunction with Turkification and Arabization policies on either side of the border—on which see my discussion of Shaykh Ahmad's contemporary historical afterlife below. In general, Stefan Winter's remarks about the Kurds of Syria during the pre-modern period remains true: 'La place des Kurdes dans la société syrienne reste un sujet obscur et peu étudié.' Stefan Winter, 'Les Kurdes du Nord-Ouest syrien et l'État ottoman, 1690-1750,' in *Sociétés rurales ottomans*, ed. Mohammad Afifi (Cairo: Institut Francais d'Archéologie Orientale, 2005), 244.

[272] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī's brief entry on one Kurdish scholar and local saint, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Abū al-Wafā' al-Bākizī, is a good case in point: his family hailed originally from Amadiyya in Kurdistan proper, he was born in the Quṣayr village of Bākiza, and he at some point moved to Aleppo where he taught

Kurds of the more homogenous Kilis region to the north who made up their own distinct *livâ* (that is, a *sancâk*),[273] the Kurds of Quṣayr had no special administrative designation, they tended to be both politically dominant and semi-autonomous all through our period, Ottoman rule being applied through certain powerful families and notables (one of which, the Ibn ʿArbo clan, controlled the *livā-i Ekrād* of Kilis for a time during the sixteenth century), following a pattern that ultimately went back to the Ayyubid encouragement of Kurdish settlement in Syria.[274] It was in this diverse rural world, which was at once integrated into the larger Ottoman one even as it remained distinct, that the life of our first rural saint, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo al-Quṣayrī al-Kurdī (d. 1570), unfolded. In this section we will first consider the wider Kurdish context, then examine Shaykh Ahmad's familial background, his connections with the urban world of Aleppo, and his particular saintly repertoire and what it can reveal about social and cultural life among the rural population of Quṣayr as well as interconnections with the urban areas in the lowlands and the expansion of Ottoman power around and, to a lesser extent, within the highlands.

Most of what we know about Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo comes from the pen of one of our previous interlocutors and friends of the friends of God, Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-ʿUrdī (1585-1660), a descendant of Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo by way of his mother Ḥalīma. Al-ʿUrdī's rich and fascinating account, shaped in no small part by his closeness to the subject—both in terms of access to stories and reports, and in terms of his unstated but quite evident goal of portraying his saintly relations in an appropriately hagiographic manner—provides an excellent window into

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children and served as an imam, in addition to being known for entering into ecstatic states and giving people clods of dirt which had prophylactic powers as a result. Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 136-137.

[273] Stefan Winter, 'Les Kurdes de Syrie dans les archives ottomanes (XVIIIe s.),' in *Les Kurdes: Écrire l'histoire d'un peuple aux temps pré-modernes*, no. 10 (October 2009) 135-139.

[274] For the long history of Kurds in Syria, including in Jabal Quṣayr, see Winter, 'Les Kurdes du Nord-Ouest,' 244-246.

the dynamics of sainthood in these Kurdish highlands and the many points of contact between the Jabal al-Quṣayr countryside and the urban centers of the lowlands. I have supplemented al-ʿUrdī's hagiographic account with the less extensive but vital material supplied by the earlier Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥanbalī (1502-1563), who also provides a range of biographical profiles of other Kurds from the western Syrian highcountry. The broader socio-political context for this section has been provided primarily by the work of Stefan Winter, one of the very few scholars to turn his attention to the Kurdish communities of Ottoman Syria.[275] As Winter's work reveals, Quṣayr was but one segment in the long and vast Kurdish arc stretching over the highcountry (and in some cases, the more remote steppelands) from the Zagros north and west, which in some places was almost homogenously Kurdish, but in many others, such as in Quṣayr, was 'Kurdish' primarily in the sense that Kurdish groups dominated the landscape alongside the presence of many other groups.

And while there does indeed seem to have been an increasingly conscious and articulated sense of Kurdish identity in the Ottoman lands from the sixteenth century forward,[276] Kurds as a

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[275] Winter's research has been primarily archival in nature and has focused on the political and certain social parameters of the Kurdish communities of the Syrian highlands (primarily in the late seventeenth into eighteenth centuries), but nonetheless remains useful for contextualizing our sixteenth century saints. In addition to other sources cited here, see his 'The Reşwan Kurds and Ottoman Tribal Settlement in Syria, 1683-1741,' *Oriente Moderno,* 97 (2017), 256-269.

[276] This is not the place to tackle as large and contentious a problem as Kurdish 'identity,' but suffice to say my summation is based on factors ranging from Ottoman recognition of (self-styled) Kurdish principalities to the circulation (and rebuttal!) of stereotypes about Kurds to the beginnings of Kurdish 'vernacularization' in the seventeenth century (if not slightly earlier). On the last point, see Michiel Leezenberg, 'Elî Teremaxî and the Vernacularization of Medrese Learning in Kurdistan,' *Iranian Studies* 47, no. 5 (2014): 713–33; for a sketch of medieval issues pertaining to 'Kurdishness,' see Boris James, 'Une ethnographie succincte de « l'entre-deux kurde » au Moyen Âge,' *Études rurales*, no. 186 (2010): 21–42. Ibn Ḥanbalī records a fascinating instance of stereotyping and ethnic humor at the expense of the Kurds that reveals a sense of their distinctiveness both among themselves and among observers: Jibrā'īl ibn Aḥmad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Kurdī was proficient in *fiqh*, penmanship, and *fatwa*s, however another ʿālim, one Badr al-Suyūfī liked to disparage him, as he had the habit of disparaging 'the praiseworthy among the Kurds' in general, saying, 'Drive them off (*akradūhum*) to the mountains!' in allusion to a story about Ẓahhāk of the *Shāhname*: the men who the good vizier would send out into the mountains (instead of being killed so that the snakes could eat their brains) were the ancestors of the Kurds, because of their being driven off into the mountains (in other words, dismissing Kurds as 'backwards

whole were as much marked by their own diversity and heterogeneity as any cohesiveness, ranging from the types of political arrangements they possessed vis-à-vis the Ottoman and Safavid rulers, to ways of life practiced (ranging from transhumance to complete urbanization), to the various religious traditions they espoused, to the numerous regional forms and local dialects of Kurdish they spoke. In the Kurdish highlands of Syria, for instance, our sources describe—with decided ambiguity—'Yazīdī' Kurds, a designation which could simply mean 'bandit' or could carry a more substantial sense of belong to a distinct religious tradition or saintly lineage.[277] With those important qualifications in mind, we may at least provisionally speak of a Kurdish style of sainthood that is visible not just in Sunni communities but across the diverse gambit of often interpenetrating and porously delimitated traditions found among the Kurds, a style or dialect that tracked closely to the relative autonomy that many Kurdish communities enjoyed thanks to both their geographical remoteness and their strategic position astride a long hotly contested borderland. It was just such a position that placed Kurdish claimants to sainthood at the intersection of many repertoires of sainthood, communities, and routes of sanctity. In keeping with the heterogeneity and sheer diversity of the Kurdish territories, this styling of sainthood was neither an ethnically exclusive construction nor one

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mountain people'). Badr al-Suyūfī would also mention other disparaging origin stories about the Kurds, a habit that Ibn al-Ḥanbalī found most distasteful, he having studied to his benefit under various Kurdish teachers, including some from Quṣayr. Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 454.

[277] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī profiles one such 'Yāzīdī,' Shaykh Mend ʿAzz al-Dīn ibn Yusūf al-Kurdī al-'Adawī, *Amīr liwā' al-Akrād* of Aleppo during both the Mamluk and beginning of the Ottoman empires. He was from the '*ṭā'ifa*' ascribed to Shaykh 'Adī ibn Musāfir. They were known as Bayt Shaykh Mend, to whom people who had been bitten by a snake would come, he would make them bread, spit in it, then they would eat it and become better. This attribute apparently passed down, for ʿAzz al-Din was known among the Kurds and believed in, despite his 'addiction to drinking wine' and his use of violence in administration (*siyāsa*), going to the excess of calling him Shaykh ʿAzz al-Din. 'If it was said to one of them, are you from the Kurds of our Lord (*Rabbinā*) or from the Kurds of ʿAzz al-Dīn? They would answer, from the Kurds of ʿAzz al-Dīn!' Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 890-893.

homogenous across time and space, and had much in common with other dialects of rural sanctity elsewhere in the empire.[278]

The life of Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo exemplified the common Kurdish doubly facing aspect of relative autonomy in a rural, usually rather rugged, region, on the one hand, and, on the other, extensive interconnections with the urban centers and holders of power outside of the highlands. Shaykh Aḥmad was born in the village of Khayno into a family already well established, and relatively autonomous, in this region of Kurdish and Turkmen peasants and nomads. His father, Shaykh ʿAbdo, was a respected shaykh, scholar, and venerated saint in his own right who accrued no small measure of wealth (including land that appears to have been held outright in freehold) and—within the sphere of the Quṣayr plateau at least—political clout, with his son continuing, as we will see, to maintain a stock of rural wealth, attending to its generous disbursement as part of his saintly repertoire (and political positioning, including beyond the plateau). Both material wealth and the social capital bound up with the amassing of followers entailed, for Shaykh ʿAbdo and then his son, accumulating numerous disciples from all over the countryside, as well as physically making their way through countryside, village, and nomad encampment, both frequently key aspects of rural sainthood in the wider Ottoman world. Ibn al-Ḥanbalī's entry on Shaykh ʿAbdo provides a striking image of the saint's popularity in the region by way of a report from an anonymous pious visitor to the shaykh, who told Ibn al-Ḥanbalī that

> he went to visit [Shaykh ʿAbdo], and saw innumerable beasts of burden around his home, belonging to people who had come to visit him and to others. The reporter was worried that he would need to purchase fodder since the abundance of other beasts had depleted the natural fodder in the vicinity of

[278] And beyond the Ottoman lands: the Maghrib, for instance, as is relatively well known from other works, was (and is) suffused with rural expressions of sanctity, which have received far more scholarly coverage. It also, like the Kurdish lands, gave rise during out period to important expressions of scholarship both 'exoteric' and 'esoteric': El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History,* 150.

> Shaykh ʿAbdo's home, but, he added, when "'I went up to the shaykh, he said to me unprompted: 'You're afraid your animal will die due to lack of fodder?' And so I knew that it had been revealed to him."[279]

Besides displaying Shaykh ʿAbdo's divinely-bestowed clairvoyance, this anecdote suggests that many of the saint's visitors were nomadic or semi-nomadic, coming, in all probability, from up and down the Kurd-dominated highlands. Ahmad would continue to draw upon both the sedentary and nomadic inhabitants of the Quṣayr in his realization of sainthood.

Shaykh ʿAbdo was an initiate into the Khalwatī *ṭarīqa,* and transmitted his initiation to his son Aḥmad, an affiliation that is entirely congruent with the frequent ties Kurdish shaykhs and saints of this era had to forms of sufism radiating from the Persianate world.[280] Shaykh ʿAbdo's master in *taṣawwuf* was one Shaykh ʿAlī al-Antakī, to whom Shaykh ʿAbdo had recourse when, before Aḥmad's birth, he was suffering from an illness which he feared would cause his death. Going down to Antakya to seek his shaykh's supplications, ʿAlī told him, 'Yā ʿAbdo, you will not die until God has brought forth from your loins the fair-headed saint Aḥmad, who will fill the earth with good and religion!' Shaykh Aḥmad would also venerate ʿAlī al-Antakī, traveling down to his *masjid* every year for his annual forty-day *khalwa* (one of the handful of aspects of his saintly repertoire expressive of his Khalwatī affiliation, which otherwise goes mostly unremarked by al-ʿUrdī and Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, though they do also draw attention to the striking black headgear the shaykhs wore).[281] Along with his initiation into the Khalwatī

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[279] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 875.

[280] The current dominance of Naqshbandī, Qādirī, and Rifāʾī affiliations—in so far as *ṭarīqa* affiliations are taken into account—across the Kurdish world today is a nineteenth century phenomenon it would seem. On this more recent aspect of sainthood and sufism among Syrian Kurds, including sustained (at least before the descent of the country into war) ties of rural and urban akin to those discussed here, see Paulo Pinto, 'Kurdish Sufi Spaces of Rural-Urban Connection in Northern Syria,' *Études rurales*, 186 (2010), 149-168.

[281] Al-ʿUrdī, *Maʿādin*, 279. We see once again ways in which the Turko-Persianate world of sufism and sainthood was being integrated into more southernly contexts, particular practices and genealogical routes being adapted into local situations, alongside other traditions and resource bases. Initiation into the Khalwatī

ṭarīqa at the hands of his father, who also taught him the lineage's distinct litanies (*awrād*), Shaykh Aḥmad studied other Islamic disciplines first in the company of his father and then under 'other Kurdish shaykhs.' Although his scholarly formation evidently took place entirely in Quṣayr among 'Kurdish shaykhs,' and despite, according to Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, having only rudimentary knowledge of formal Arabic grammar, Aḥmad was a student of *fiqh* and conversant with debates current throughout the Islamic world, which should not surprise us given the degree to which rural Kurdish scholars and shaykhs, including some from Quṣayr itself, were integrated into much larger networks of scholarship.[282] In particular, al-ʿUrdī tells us, Aḥmad was for a while opposed to the works of Ibn al-ʿArabī, despite his father's 'believing in him,' only coming around to accept al-Shaykh al-Akbar as a result of divine intervention on the way to Jerusalem.[283] It is perhaps this difference of opinion—to put it mildly—that lay behind Ibn al-Ḥanbalī's rather cryptic report (of an event which al-ʿUrdī does not mention at all) that as a result of a falling-out of an unspecified nature, Shaykh ʿAbdo departed from the family's village of Khayno, leaving his son Aḥmad and settling, along with others from their native village, in 'an abandoned village' on Jabal al-'Āqra' some thirty miles from Khayno, practicing 'seclusion,'

ṭarīqa by these Kurdish shaykhs is also a good indication of the dynamism of rural sainthood, open to new sources of sanctity and identity and flexible with wider transformations.

[282] On which, for a slightly later period, see at various points El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*, but esp. 20-36 (and 264 for a reference to Shakhy Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo).

[283]This, after having prevented his father from visiting the shrine of Ibn al-ʿArabī in Damascus, despite having been met by a mysterious man (Ibn 'Arabī himself, the story suggests) who told him his entry into al-Quds would be blocked. On the history of somewhat earlier—late in the Mamluk period—controversy over Ibn al-ʿArabī in Syria, see Simmonds, 'ʿAlī b. Maymūn,' 159, and 160-169 for ʿAlī ibn Maymūn's 'discovery' and encounters with Ibn 'Arabī—who to him was a great and powerful saint above all else, reflecting the status Ibn al-ʿArabī would soon have under the Ottomans—upon his arrival in the Mashriq. The history of controversy over the Shaykh al-Akbar is of course as old as his oeuvre itself, but for the more proximate context of fifteenth century Egypt and the attacks of al-Biqāʾī (d. 1480), see Aleksandr D. Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1999), 209-223.

until his son came and repented, restoring peace between them.[284] Whatever the role substantial disagreement between the two may have played—about the status of Ibn al-ʿArabī or otherwise—the porous nature of the boundary between sedentary and nomadic is also visible here, with many rural agricultural communities in this world, and not just Kurds and their history of nomadism, abandoning village sites and setting up in another when ecologically or politically expedient.[285]

If Shaykh Aḥmad's father played a significant role in shaping his later saintly performance, particularly in the rural milieu of Quṣayr, Shaykh Aḥmad's connection with the family of Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-ʿUrdī exemplifies the role that connections with people in the urban space of Aleppo played in that saintly performance.[286] Al-ʿUrdī's account of his father's desire for marriage to Shaykh Aḥmad's daughter Ḥalīma points to these interchanges:

> My grandfather Shaykh al-Islam Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-ʿUrdī would visit Shaykh Ahmad every year, and my father sought from my grandfather marriage to one of the shaykh's daughters, but my grandfather forbade him, saying: "I fear the trouble—the shaykh has many followers, and if we become related to him by marriage his followers will constantly be coming to our home, and if we are unable to cope with them the shaykh will grow angry with us, but if we try to give them their due we will not be able to do that since we do not have sufficient wealth.' My father however persisted in his desire, marrying my mother after his father's death.[287]

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[284] Ibn Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 875.

[285] On the Anatolian situation, much of Özel, *The Collapse of Rural Order in Ottoman Anatolia* has to do with just such abandonment and movement, albeit in more spectacular fashion and from a slightly later period; see also for instance İnalcık and Quataert, *Economic and Social History,* 170-171.

[286] Saintly connections between rural and urban operated alongside many other such routes, from those driven by revenue collection to others of a more 'grassroots' level, such as the connection between tribal communities and Janissary recruitment: 'One of the most distinctive features of the Aleppo janissaries… was their frequent tribal origins… Military service was one of the prime attractions that drew tribesmen to the city in the first place, and once there, the corps provided the tribal migrants with a group identity in a new, alien environment, a substitution as it were for the tribal bonds they had left behind.' Bruce Alan Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600-1750* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 46.

[287] Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin*, 284-285.

Our author does not elaborate on how his grandfather first came into Shaykh Aḥmad's orbit, though it is probable that ʿAbd al-Wahhāb met the Kurdish saint during one of his sojourns in Aleppo, where he would periodically visit to preach, lead *dhikr*, and interact with devotees in the city, many of whom, but clearly not all, would have probably been Kurds.[288] The frequent circulation through Aleppo of rural people, Kurdish and otherwise, from Quṣayr—and beyond, including, it seems likely, Kurd Dağı—provides the context for ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's reluctance over his son marrying into the saint's family: in his reasoning, the al-ʿUrdī family would become integrated into Shaykh Aḥmad's network of devotees and disciples, a network made up of numerous people frequently on the move and in which the disbursement of wealth—primarily food—was key. This movement was not just from Quṣayr to Aleppo, however. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb made the journey up into the hills as well, enacting a reciprocity between city and countryside, a reciprocity which the two shaykhs touchingly consummated in a symbolic exchange towards the end of their bodily lives:

> At the end of his life my grandfather Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb met with my grandfather Shaykh Aḥmad and sought a body-shirt (*qamīṣ*) from him in order to be buried in it. So Shaykh Aḥmad took off the very body-shirt he was wearing on his body—it was made of coarse linen—and gave it to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, who gave in substitution his body-shirt which was of Damascus linen. Then they embraced and wept…[289]

This reciprocal exchange is mirrored in another hagiographic memory that al-ʿUrdī records, in which Shaykh Aḥmad was recognized by one of the great urban saints of his age, namely, the Shaykh Aḥmad ʿAlwān featured in the previous chapter, and whose reputation and practices were well known across Syria. As a young man, we are told, Shaykh Aḥmad passed through

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[288] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 270.

[289] Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin,* 285.

Hama while going on the *ḥajj*. Shaykh ʿAlwān was in the midst of a session of *shakwat al-khawāṭir*, when he 'began repeating the verse "I have found the scent of Yusuf!" (Q. 12.93)' When his disciples asked him why he had done this, he replied: '"I smelled the scent of sainthood coming from the district of al-Quṣayr! Stand and search for someone coming from there." They found Shaykh Aḥmad and the two Aḥmads embraced and wept.'[290] The hagiographic message of this interaction is clear: just as ʿAlī al-Antakī foresaw Aḥmad's sainthood even before his conception, one of the great saints of the age—also of urban origin—could smell Aḥmad's sanctity, wafting down from the Quṣayr plateau. In both lived enactment and in later memory, Shaykh Aḥmad's position in particular rural space was integral to his saintly identity, even when interacting with and being verified by urban sources of sanctity and authority.

Indeed, while Shaykh Aḥmad's wider saintly repertoire had many interlocking components, all were focused to some degree on his production of sanctified space and relationships in both the rural highlands and in Aleppo and Antakya. Unlike his father, Shaykh Aḥmad put some stress upon 'exoteric knowledge,' and even built a small written corpus of his own. While I have been unable to locate a surviving copy, according to al-ʿUrdī Shaykh Aḥmad wrote a sufi-inflected *sharh* on *Qaṣidat al-Munfarija*, a poem written by the eleventh century rural Maghribī saint al-Nahwī and reputed to have great prophylactic power.[291] He also authored some unspecified treatises on sufism and a 'famous litany' much in use by the people of the

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[290] Ibid.

[291] Ibid., 286. Numerous commentaries (*shurūḥ*) on this text—which seems to have received no modern scholarly coverage of any substance—exist from across the Islamicate world, including an Ottoman Turkish *şerh* by Ismāʿīl Anḳaravī (d. 1632), who notes he had previously seen 'a couple' of (substandard!) *şerh* in Turkish: Ismāʿīl Anḳaravī, *Türkçe ḳaṣide-yi Münferice şerhi: el-ḥikmet ül-münderice fī şerh il-Münferice* (Istanbul: Uhuvvet Matbaası, 1327 [1909 or 1910]), 5; for the presence of the poem and its *sharḥ* as far abroad as early modern Indonesia, see G. W Drewes, *Directions for travellers on the mystic path: Zakariyya' al-Ansari's Kitab Fath al-Rahman and its Indonesian adaptations* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977), 28.

Quṣayr, the Jazīra (that is, Upper Mesopotamia, a region with significant Kurdish populations), and among the Kurds elsewhere. The production of a popular litany, and his own reputed constancy in *dhikr* and litany performance, are both a piece with what was perhaps the foremost aspect of Shaykh ʿAbdo and his son's social performance of sainthood: expressions of generosity and abundance on a large scale. Both al-ʿUrdī and Ibn al-Ḥanbalī[292] stress the amount of food Shaykh Aḥmad dispersed to his followers and to the poor of Quṣayr in general, food which was made possible by the generosity of the saint's devotees who brought votive offerings, vows, and charitable contributions, and willed over goods to the shaykh before their deaths—these sources in addition to land and perhaps other things that the saint's family held in freehold.[293] If food has long figured prominently in sainthood—Islamic and otherwise—rural sainthood, in the Ottoman context and elsewhere, seems to have been especially bound up with the abundance of food, in obvious reference to the precariousness of food security in rural places in the pre-modern world.[294] Shaykh ʿAbdo and his son both acted as loci of stability and security, with the added

[292] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī describes how he 'spread out an ample table for those who came, great and small. His beneficence was displayed to high and low.' People flocked to him in great numbers, to the point that he would regularly have nearly fifty people at his home on Jabal al-ʿAqra, eating from his table cloth (*simāṭ*), to the point that every day he needed close to a half *makūk* (approximately four hundred dry liters) of wheat. The '*futūḥāt'* (here, divine generosity) 'overflowed upon him,' with bequests of those approaching death multiplying upon him, 'due to the intensity of the belief of the people of al-Quṣayr in him.' Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 270.

[293] A story related to al-ʿUrdī by his father and 'a number of others': a man planted an orchard (with, evidently, grapes and figs) in al-Quṣayr and vowed that he would give the shaykh the entirety of his first crop. So he came with two big basketfuls of grapes and figs. There was a man present with the shaykh wearing a thick 'aba after the manner of peasants, to whom the shaykh said, 'Make use of this!' Then the shaykh entered his house to give the command regarding the food. The peasant ate from the two basketfuls quickly, and the man who had brought the food thought to himself 'This one eats like my black ox!' The peasant grew angry, quit eating, and left. When the shaykh came out an hour later he looked for the peasant but was angry when he could not find him, asking if someone said something mean to the man. Some ten years later the man who had made the vow went on the hajj, and one night slept while on the way and woke to find that the caravan had already set out. He was very upset, until a rider came along who gave him a lift and caught up to the caravan. He then said to the mysterious man, 'By God, I ask, who are you?' He replied, 'I am your black ox!' The man replied, 'Ya sayyidi, I don't understand you.' The man said, 'I am Khiḍr, who came to visit Shaykh Aḥmad and ate from the two basketfuls, and you said what you said.' The man replied, 'Ya Sayyidī, I repent! Yes, I said that, but you are from the folk of forgiveneess after power!' He replied, 'I forgive you.' Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin*, 286.

benefit of the food consumed in their presence being invested with their sanctity. This generous disbursement of food was also tied into another feature typical of sainthood in the Kurdish lands (and which could precipitate suspicion on the part of Ottoman authorities), the amassing of numerous followers within a large usually if not exclusively rural catchment basin, bound to their saintly shaykh through generally exclusive ties.[295] By far the best known, and tragic, exemplar of this modality of sainthood in the pre-modern Ottoman era was Şeyh Maḥmūd of Diyarbakır (d. 1048/1639), whose life and execution—which most commentators agreed to be markedly unjust or at the very least unfortunate—was detailed by the Ottoman chroniclers of the era as well as Evliyā Çelebi, and to which we will have recourse in chapter four. For now, I will only note that it is mostly likely due to the fact that Shaykhs ʿAbdo and Aḥmad maintained the center of their saintly gravity on rural Quṣayr that they did not come under the sort of scrutiny and ultimate punishment experienced by Şeyh Maḥmūd, who established himself in an important frontier urban center even as he maintained his rural Kurdish style of sainthood.

While his generous acts of food disbursement were spatially centered on the saint's home, to which his many devotees traveled to meet him, Shaykh Aḥmad did not confine his person, authority, or acts of generosity to wherever his home happened to be physically located at the time. At the center of his saintly repertoire, and his essential technique for maintaining a large and dispersed community of followers, was the generous projection of his presence and

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[294] On the role of food (particularly the miraculous production thereof) in Islamic sainthood in general, see Renard, *Friends of God*, 102-103, and 57-62 on the relationship of food and asceticism, a context which is little in evidence in these Kurdish saints or in other contexts, in which generosity and provision of food matters far more than fasting or control of appetite: food as a social nexus of performing and distributing sanctity, not food (or the lack thereof) as a means of discipling the *nafs*.

[295] Because of the role Kurdish shaykhs played in late Ottoman and post-Ottoman era revolts, this is one aspect of Kurdish religious life, alongside supposed Kurdish inclinations towards 'heterodoxy,' that has attracted scholarly attention. On which see for instance Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh, and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London ; Zed Books, 1992).

authority across the rural space of Quṣayr and beyond. This spatial work had two main aspects: the movement of the saint himself from place to place, and the dispatching of *khalīfa*s to other rural communities. In terms of his own movement, Shaykh Aḥmad, we are told, traveled extensively, preaching in the rural communities, sedentary and nomadic, up and down the Quṣayr plateau, as well as practicing 'commanding the right and forbidding the wrong (*al-amr bi al-maʿrūf wa al-nahy ʿan al-munkar*).'[296] Sites for preaching ranged from village mosques, where they existed, to a sufficient rise of land functioning as natural *minbar*.[297] The sense is conveyed that Shaykh Aḥmad in many ways served as an all-around religious professional, fulfilling many of the roles more specialized members of the ʿulama would in urban areas (a characteristic we will see again in chapter seven, also in a rural Kurdish context). Alongside his own movement through rural space, Shaykh Aḥmad dispatched many *khalīfa*s who conveyed—or so he hoped—his sanctified presence, linking together otherwise disparate communities and places, within Quṣayr and beyond, in both other rural Kurdish regions and in the urban centers of the lowlands. Shaykh Aḥmad expected intense loyalty from his *khalīfa*s, as illustrated by several accounts al-ʿUrdī reproduces, including one in which a *khalīfa* (Abū al-Wafā' ibn Maʿrūf al-Ḥamawī, another devotee from the lowlands as his name indicates) sojourning in Cairo must be defended, via Aḥmad's saintly power of translocation (and ability to shoot fire from his eyes), from a very aggressive Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bakrī who sought to 'capture' Aḥmad's *khalīfa* for his own *ṭarīqa*.[298]

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[296] For the most part (see below for an exception) we are given little sense of what exactly this venerable practice of moral enforcement looked like in Shaykh Aḥmad's case—the exact parameters (what encouraging or inderdicting practices were enjoined, who was to carry them out, and against whom) varied greatly. Futher discussion of this topic will occur in part two; for a general overview through Islamic history see M. A Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[297] Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin*, 287.

Other potential problems inherent in reliance on dispatched *khalīfa*s are exemplified in the following account (the longest item in al-ʿUrdī's mini-*manāqib* of the saint), an account which also provides a fine view of the diversity of rural life in the Quṣayr as well as the interaction of various aspects of Aḥmad's saintly repertoire. The story opens with Shaykh Aḥmad embroiled in a dispute over water usage rights with the Qalaʿī tribe.[299] A representative of the tribe—referred to only as 'ibn al-Qalaʿī', literally 'son of the Qalaʿī'—heads to Antakya to seek the intervention of the Ottoman *ḳāḍī* there, but along the way he is intercepted by an unnamed *khalīfa* of Shaykh Aḥmad, who convinces the man to return with him to Shaykh Aḥmad and work things out without the *ḳāḍī's* intervention.[300] They turn back towards the shaykh's village, but

> then night overtook them, so they stopped at a Turkmen's tent, and the Turkmen received the *khalīfa* of Shaykh Aḥmad, in honor of the master, and showed him great hospitality. Then the Turkmen left after the evening prayers to tend to his flocks. He had a beautiful wife, and he left the two of them sleeping in the presence of his wife. When the cover of night fell, the *khalīfa* sought to seduce the wife, and she responded and complied with his desire. And ibn al-Qalaʿī perceived that, but the two supposed he was sleeping. When the *khalīfa* consummated what God had decreed for him [i.e. after having sex with her], he settled down and went back to sleep.

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[298] Ibid, 282.

[299] As a karstic plateau with abundant stream capture, water rights would have been especially continuous among the various groups inhabiting the region. Ozsahin and V. Uygur, 'The Effects of Land Use,' 479. As for this specific tribe, I could find no other references—the name suggest a close connection with Quṣayr, meaning, as it does, 'of the castle.'

[300] A salient reminder that as important as *ḳāḍīs* may have become in the resolution of legal problems in the Ottoman lands, roles remained for mediators outside of the official hierarchy, particularly in areas like Jabal Quṣayr where the presence of the Ottoman devlet and its functionaries remained quite light on the ground. The activity of someone like Shaykh Aḥmad resonates particularly well with Hallaq's description of dispute resolution in pre-modern Islamicate societies, while suggesting the importance of factoring in sanctity alongside deployment of 'morality' and *sharīʿa*: 'To put it slightly differently, in pre-modern Islamic societies, disputes were resolved with a minimum of legislative guidance, the determining factors having been informal mediation/arbitration and equally, informal law courts. Furthermore, it appears a consistent pattern that wherever mediation and law are involved in conflict resolution, morality and social ethics are intertwined, as they certainly were in the case of Islam in the pre-industrial era… Morality, especially its religious variety, thus provided a more effective and pervasive mechanism of self-rule and did not require the marked presence of coercive and disciplinarian state agencies…' Wael B. Hallaq, *Sharīʿa: Theory, Practice, Transformations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 159-160.

> Morning came, and ibn al-Qalaʿī and the *khalīfa* set out. Ibn al-Qala'ī said: "Let us perform the morning prayer." The *khalīfa* was silent, and payed ibn al-Qalaʿī no attention, so he stopped at a spring of water, did ablutions, and prayed the morning prayer. When the two reached [Shaykh Aḥmad], the *khalīfa* entered. It was the shaykh's custom to rise to meet him, [which he did]. Then the shaykh looked at him wrathfully, and withdrew his hand from him when the *khalīfa* sought to kiss it, his face reddening. When the two sat down, the shaykh ordered the fetching of [the book] *al-Targhīb wa al-tarhīb* [by ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm ibn ʿAbd al-Qawī al-Mundhirī, d. 1258]. He opened the book and began to read the chapter "Invocation of Fear of Adultery," mentioning the evil of adultery. The *khalīfa* remained silent until he suddenly cried out, and began weeping and wailing openly. The shaykh shouted at him, then stripped him of his ceremonial apron (*mi'zar*), drove him out, and said: "O traitor! A man trusted you with his family and you betrayed him?" Then he passed a long while at the gate of the shaykh, weeping, and was public with his repentance and returning to God, until the shaykh caused him to undergo a forty-day retreat. He then dressed him the clothing of the *fuqarā'*, not of the *khalīfa*s. After two years, when he verified the soundness of his repentance, he returned him to his previous position.[301]

One of the most important insights to be derived from this story lies in its depiction of the relationship between the Turkmen nomads and Shaykh Aḥmad, whom they are shown here holding in high repute.[302] Notably, the fault in the story is laid at the feet of the 'traitorous' *khalīfa*, and not at the Turkmen and their decidedly less rigorous gender segregation norms than practiced by more sedentary and urban people; indeed, the crime is primarily one of betrayal of the nomadic family, a betrayal that also struck at the saint to whom they were devoted and upon whom they placed their social trust. Shaykh Aḥmad's response underlines, on the one hand, his ability to deploy classical sources of textual authority, as embodied *in al-Targhīb wa al-tarhīb*, a standard work of moral edification that by this era had achieved essentially canonical status

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[301] Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin,* 280-281.

[302] If nothing else, this story suggests that Shaykh Aḥmad was not perceived as a solely 'Kurdish' saint, but cultivated a saintly public across the populations of the Quṣayr.

across the Islamicate world.[303] On the other hand, instead of pursuing punitive action of some sort against the guilty parties (whose guilt, it is of course strongly implied, was revealed to him through *kashf*), he puts the adulterous *khalīfa* on a path of reconciliation. The restoration of bonds was paramount, with this story perhaps best seen as a depiction of how, by virtue of his saintly powers and ethics, Shaykh Aḥmad oversaw the maintenance of relationships across his rural territory, bringing about the restoration of social peace when possible. At the same time, the story also implicitly points to the limits of this power: whatever the ultimate resolution of the dispute over water rights (which significantly is redirected, in the hagiographic memory at least, from the Ottoman *ḳāḍī* in Antakya back to Shaykh Aḥmad's village), the memory of the event did not obscure the presence of conflict, of gaps in the saint's coverage of rural space. The possibility of such ruptures within the geographic spread of the saint's authority made the regular extension of his presence all the more imperative. And in the hagiographic memory preserved in the 'Urḍī family the reach of Shaykh Aḥmad and his saintly forefathers' presence extended beyond the confines of physical geography: after ʿUmar al-ʿUrdī married Ḥalīma, their son tells us, the two became angry with one another, ʿUmar having started the row. Upon going to bed together, still angry, ʿUmar saw his saintly in-laws, all wearing the black Khalwatī turbans, in a dream-vision. They admonished him concerning his treatment of Ḥalīma, and when he awoke, chastised by this dream-world projection of authority, he set relations aright with his wife, restoring the internal peace of the family.[304]

[303] On this work, see Waleed Ahmed, 'The Characterstics of Paradise (Ṣifat al-Janna): A Genre of Eschatological Literature in Medieval Islam,' in *Roads to Paradise: Eschatology and Concepts of the Hereafter in Islam,* ed. Sebastian Günther, Todd Lawson, and Christian Mauder (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 840-844.

[304] Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin,* 278-279.

Finally, given that these acts of generosity, of territoriality, and of community creation were all implicitly if not explicitly political, we must consider Shaykh Aḥmad's interactions with Ottoman authority. On the whole such interactions appear to have been largely occasional. While it is almost certain that both Shaykh ʿAbdo and his son would have had to negotiate their evidently locally autonomous status with Ottoman officials in Aleppo, the seat of the *sancak* in which Quṣayr technically lay, and were on occasion drawn into the orbit of the *ḳāḍī* of Antakya, our narrative sources provide evidence of only two specific interactions with Ottoman holders of power. According to Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, in 1556 the saint sought, while on one of his trips to Aleppo, a judgment (*ḥukm*) from Ferhād Paşa, the *amīr al-umarā'* of Aleppo, forbidding the unspecified 'sexual impropriety' being carried out by an otherwise unknown 'group' (*ṭā'ifa*) in Antakya called the Qarjīyya.[305] The pasha did so, and honored the shaykh to boot. While it is hard to descry much about whatever controversy or conflict was occurring between Shaykh Aḥmad and the 'Qarjīyya,' what is important for our purposes is that the shaykh evidently saw an opening to project his authority in Antakya, 'commanding the right and forbidding the wrong' there as was his habit in his rural heartland—but authorization for such a move was necessary. Whatever the historical veracity of this account (which recourse to archival sources might assist in establishing), it points to a recognition on Shaykh Aḥmad's part of Ottoman authority and a desire to negotiate with that authority, as well as cultural memory intent on seeing him legitimized by an Ottoman pasha.

The second account of Ottoman interface with Shaykh Aḥmad is found in al-ʿUrdī in the form of an anonymous report (which suggests an orally and widely transmitted anecdote), and almost certainly reflects developments in the orally transmitted memory of the saint in the more

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[305] Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, 271.

thoroughly Ottomanized world of the early seventeenth century: ‘When Sultan Sulaymān came to Aleppo, he passed by [Lake] al-ʿAmaq and, looking up, saw a lofty mountain, so he asked, “What’s this?” They replied, “Jabal al-Quṣayr.” He recited the *Fātiha* and said, “There is Shaykh Aḥmad al-Quṣayrī,” who at the time was still alive.’[306] In this brief, rather curious anecdote we see in a nutshell Ottomanized memory work already being applied to the saint, but towards a very particular end. It is Süleymān who ‘goes’ to the saint, in a manner of speaking, by gazing at his domain from below, recognizing him as a saint—but not transgressing into that domain. In local hagiographic imagination then Sultan Süleymān carries the recognition of Shaykh Aḥmad with him back to the Ottoman center, even as he respects the saint’s autonomy and power within his own territory. It is also notable that as with the story of Shaykh Aḥmad’s encounter with the great Shaykh ʿAlwān, the Quṣayr is explicitly mentioned and indeed stands front and center, the plateau and the saint cast as almost interchangeable. We find preserved in al-ʿUrdī’s account traces of local, rural identity-in-place, an identity in which the land and the saint complement and construct one another. In both life and in historical after-life, albeit in different ways, Shaykh Aḥmad helped to thread the dissected plateau of Quṣayr together into a holy landscape linked to neighboring urban areas, while coordinating a large, dispersed community oriented towards the saint through physical and symbolic presence, acts of generosity, and the active mapping and reworking of rural space.[307] A result, Quṣayr became, in a manner of speaking, a place such that

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[306] Al-ʿUrdī, *Ma’ādin,* 286. Lake ʿAmaq no longer exists, a victim of twentieth century ‘improvement’ projects.

[307] Karl Schlögel’s remarks on landscape apply quite well here and in the following examples as well: ‘The landscape is the center, the focus of our lives, and so it is also what is most contentious, contested, embattled, and susceptible to mythmaking and ideological construction. There are near-equivalent terms: region, scenery, homeland. The landscape is more important than the political-administrative district; it means more to us than the state, and its meanings reach deeper. People define themselves by the landscape in which they have their roots no less than by the nation whose citizens they are…. We walk or travel through landscapes. Their changing appearances and the distinctions that let us tell them apart reveal the richness of our world. The landscape is the consummate result of human labor and human genuis.’ Karl Schlögel, *In Space We Read*

even Sultan Süleymān Kanūnī could be imagined stopping to turn his eyes upon its stony flanks. The dialect of sanctity that Shaykh ʿAbdo initiated and which his son expanded, then, while it made use of components and connections that ran far afield, from the practices and symbolism of the Khalwatī *ṭarīqa*—sourced, as it were, from the wider Persianate and Turkic worlds to the north and east—to various important urban connectivities, to overlap and reference to wider Kurdish usages and contexts, was primarily shaped by and for the circumstances of rural Quṣayr and its Kurdish and Turkmen inhabitants.

As a postscript to the above, it is evident that the process of memory work begun in connecting Shaykh Aḥmad with Sultan Süleymān has continued apace and into our own day, as part of the continued presence of the saint in his natal highlands. For Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo al-Kurdī continues to be venerated in the Quṣayr hills, though they are no longer known by that name, and his name has been 'Turkified' into Şeyh Aḥmed Kuseyri. His *türbe*, which in some form must date to soon after the saint's death if not before, as al-ʿUrdī mentions it in a short miracle story, is evidently a still quite popular place of *ziyāret* and is well kept up, clearly having been rebuilt and renovated over the years, as is of course usually the case with saints' shrines that remain active.[308] His identity has however been completely refashioned over the last one hundred years: in the various Turkish language sources online that I perused, not so much as a trace of Kurdish identity remains visible. Not only has 'al-Kurdī' been dropped, but Shaykh ʿAbdo has

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Time: On the History of Civilization and Geopolitics, trans. Gerrit Jackson (New York City: Bard Graduate Center, 2016), 235-236.

[308] On the pace of change and transformation everything from the physical structure to the ascribed meaning that a saint's shrine can undergo, see the detailed studies of contemporary saints' shrines in nearby Cilicia: Gisela Procházka-Eisl, *The Plain of Saints and Prophets: The Nusayri-Alawi Community of Cilicia (Southern Turkey) and Its Sacred Places* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), esp. 326-348. For the multiciplity that shrines can contain, an excellent recent treatment is Stephennie F. Mulder, *The Shrines of the ʿAlids in Medieval Syria: Sunnis, Shiʿis and the Architecture of Coexistence* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

become known as 'Abdulrahman,' and a *sayyidī* genealogy (absent from the earlier hagiographic sources) crafted, making Shaykh Aḥmad an Arab settled in Anatolia, a strategy of refashioned cultural memory with a long genealogy in the Turkic lands, albeit for rather different cultural and political reasons.[309] Equally significantly, the rather distant seeming if not exactly adversarial relationship between Aḥmad and the Ottoman center has been smoothed over in the oral tradition (made textual here and there, including now online), with Aḥmad traveling to visit Süleymān in Istanbul to receive authority over Quṣayr. This full-fledged remake of the saint's place in local historical memory and veneration would have most likely taken place in the context of the region's contested nature between Syria and Turkey during the inter-war period.[310] Most remarkable perhaps is the very fact that Shaykh Aḥmad's saintly presence has not only endured but thrived despite the momentous and disruptive changes modernity has wrought in his native hills, Shaykh Aḥmad's *baraka* remaining there alive and potent.

iii. The life and afterlife of Shaykh Ahmad al-Dajani in early Ottoman Palestine:

The saintly career of Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo was centered primarily on the rural and rugged space of Jabal al-Quṣayr, his connections to Aleppo and other urban locales of a rather supplementary nature. The Quṣayr seems to have been something of a blank slate in terms of Islamic sanctity and cultural memory, apart from its eponymous fortress, even if it had been for others the locus of holiness for many centuries before the Ayyubids encouraged Muslim Kurds to

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[309] For a brief example, see: Ahmed Kuseyrî Hazretleri, and a gorgeous 360-degree capture of his türbe exterior and interior, along with a lengthier 'Turkified' contemporary *menāḳıb*; and a number of selfies and other photos taken at his tomb posted to Instagram.

[310] Sarah D. Shields, *Fezzes in the River: Identity Politics and European Diplomacy in the Middle East on the Eve of World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 220-224.

settle there following the expulsion of the Crusaders.[311] Shaykh Aḥmad represents what was certainly a larger process—mostly invisible to us now save in the scattered tomb-shrines still extant here and there—of rendering these highlands into an Islamically sacralized landscape invested with traces of sanctity embedded in both physical sites and in the structuration of cultural memory. The second rural landscape to which we will have recourse was quite different in this regard: the rural Palestine of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Dajānī (d. 1562) was by the sixteenth century dense with holy places of either originally or adapted Islamic pedigrees, from the modest tombs of village shaykhs crowning hilltops to more spectacular constructions honoring a seemingly endless cast of ancient prophets of diverse provenance.[312] Whereas the Quṣayr in the sixteenth century was still dominated by nomadic and semi-nomadic populations, in central Palestine nomadic groups were generally fewer (though still present) and sedentary peasants the norm. At the heart of this landscape was the holy precincts of Jerusalem, *al-Quds*, with its rich array of holiness-drenched places and spatially rendered cultural memories.

The life and hagiographic traces of Shaykh Dajānī reflects a dialect of sainthood at once rooted in the life and landscape of rural Ottoman Palestine while also oriented towards the Holy City, drawing upon the venerable sources of sanctity embedded in the landscape while also

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[311] Beginning, at least, with the Hurrians and then for the Hittites, for both of whom Jabal Aqrā' (known, respectively, as Mount Saban and Mount Ḫazzi) was a subject of myth and (probably) regular cultic center, on which see Ian Rutherford, 'The Song of the Sea (SA A-AB-BA SIR3): Thoughts on KUB 45.63,' in *Akten des IV. International Kongresses für Hethitologie, Würzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999*, ed. G. Wilhelm (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2001), 598-609.

[312] On the history of sufism and earlier Islamic saints in Palestine, see Daphna Ephrat, *Spiritual Wayfarers, Leaders in Piety: Sufis and the Dissemination of Islam in Medieval Palestine* (Cambridge, Mass: Distributed for the Center for Middle Eastern Studies of Harvard University by Harvard University Press, 2008); on shrines themselves, from earliest Islamic constructions to the relative decline in shrine veneration in contemporary Palestina and Israel today, see Andrew Petersen, *Bones of Contention: Muslim Shrines in Palestine*, (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). While obviously now very dated, Tawfīq Kan'ān's work *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* (London: Luzac & Co., 1927), remains usable with care and is by turns quite charming and informative, even if his premise—the recovery of the immemorial religious life of the land of the Bible—tended to determine in advance his interpretations.

distinguishing the saint and his performance of sanctity from them, work that his followers and descendants continued after his physical death. And not only did Shaykh Dajānī have to differentiate himself, as it were, from the many loci of sanctity around him, but he was also confronted with negotiating a new political order under the Ottomans and their exercise of authority and claims to saintly status, with Ottoman rule much more stabilized and pervasive early on than was the case in Jabal al-Quṣayr. In this section we will explore the particular dialect of sanctity manifest in the life of Aḥmad al-Dajānī and his work of sainthood, all within the context of his oscillation between an already sanctity-abundant Palestinian countryside and the holy precincts of Jerusalem (which, it should be recalled, was in this period a large, albeit spectacularly walled, town, with a decidedly rural ambience right up to and even within the walls). Despite being primarily connected in more modern memory with his family's custodianship of the Tomb of David,[313] we will see that earlier routes of memory, as reflected in the *manāqib* of the saint written by his grandson Muḥammad ibn Ṣālaḥ al-Dajānī (d. 1660), recalled Shaykh al-Dajānī to be just as much, if not more a saint of the countryside as of the city, both around Jerusalem and beyond the boundaries of its *sancâk*, his imaginal saintly territory encompassing much of Palestine as it is understood today.[314] In this section I will briefly introduce the life of Shaykh Dajānī, his saintly repertoire and its particular dialect, followed by

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[313] Alone of the saints featured here, not only did al-Dajānī give rise to an important family, it has persisted to this day and even has a website laying out the family history and status within Palestinian society.

[314] I should note that while I am not making or seeking to support any contemporary political claims per se—the realities and concerns of the pre-modern Ottoman period are in many respects quite different from those of today—the story of Shaykh Dajānī has definite implications for how Muslims of Ottoman Palestine imagined themselves and the landscape they inhabited, a reality that runs counter to certain narratives of the period which seek to denigrate or remove entirely any organic connections between present-day Palestinians and Palestinian identity and the deeper history of the land. As with the issue of Kurdish 'ethnic' identity, it was not my intention to wade into some of the most fraught questions of the modern Middle East with this study—they arose and demanded answers organically, as it were.

an examination of some of the ways in which his practice of sainthood tracked onto and dealt with the topography of both rural Palestine and of Jerusalem and its environs, both during his lifetime and, primarily in the context of his tomb-shrine in the Mamilla Cemetery, after his physical death.

While early Ottoman Jerusalem and the surrounding Palestinian countryside have received a considerable share of scholarly attention over the years, with works such as that of Amy Singer proving especially helpful in sketching the social and economic context of Shaykh Dajānī's world, religious life among Muslims in Ottoman Jerusalem and wider Palestine has received comparatively less coverage, with the exception of synthetic works like Kan'ān's classic volume or James Grehan's aforementioned recent study of rural religion in Syria and Palestine.[315] Shaykh Dajānī receives but a single passing mention in Grehan's work. However, Aharon Layish profiled Shaykh Dajānī in his analysis, some years ago, of another Palestinian rural saint, Ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Asadī, based outside of Safad, a discussion to which we will have recourse further along.[316] My primary source for this saint of rural Palestine is Muḥammad al-Dajānī's *manāqib* of his grandfather, a hagiographic treatment closely connected with another

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[315] Most obviously, Amy Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration around Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), while her *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence: An Imperial Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany : State University of New York Press, 2002), deals with certain aspects of the interrelation between rural peasant and an urban charitable institution by means of the waqfs, drawing upon the revenues of designated villages, supporting that institution. While his analysis post-dates the period of Shaykh Dajānī himself, Dror Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012) is helpful in contexualizing Muḥammad ibn Ṣālaḥ al-Dajānī's life within a Jerusalem dominated by Ottomanized local elites. In such a context Muḥammad's text (and related efforts no longer visible to us to promote his ancestor's cultus) can be seen as, among other things, an attempt to raise the stock of the Dajānī family within Jersualem, offering the shaykh as a source of power and stabilization in the fraught period of decentralization and widespread violence so typical fo the first half of the seventeenth century.

[316] Aharon Layish, '"Waqfs" and Ṣūfī Monasteries in the Ottoman Policy of Colonization: Sulṭan Selīm I's "Waqf" of 1516 in Favour of Dayr Al-Asad,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 50, no. 1 (1987): 61–89.

surviving trace of the saint, his much restored tomb-shrine located in what was formerly part of the Mamilla Cemetery in contemporary West Jerusalem.[317] While it is today situated somewhat ingloriously in the corner of a parking lot and maintenance area for Independence Park—Shaykh Dajānī's tomb-shrine and some remnants of Ottoman era tombstones the only surviving traces of this section of Mamilla Cemetery—the shrine is in good condition and has been the main point of veneration for the saint for centuries.[318] As such it forms a significant part of the saint's *manāqib*, a text that appears to have had at least two goals: as Muḥammad al-Dajānī explicitly states in the introductory material, he feared that the oral circulation of accounts of his grandfather's saintly career would ultimately come to an end, and wished to preserve that memory into the distant future. Second, and pointing us towards a major theme of part two of this study, like much seventeenth century hagiographic production Muḥammad seems to have had in mind puritanical attacks on the Friends of God and the need to defend them and particularly their *karāmāt*.[319] That said, Muḥammad's foremost aim was clearly the perpetuation of his saintly forefather's memory and the promotion of his cultus through the textual

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[317] On the contemporary situation of the shrine, as well as a helpful precise of current hagiographic and historical memory concerning Shaykh Dajānī, see Ahmad Mahmoud and Anna Veeder, *Hidden Heritage: A Guide to the Mamilla Cemetery*, Jerusalem (Jerusalem: Emek Shaveh Organization, 2016), 7-8, 10-11; for the current conflict over the cemetery, see Gideon Sulimani and Raz Kletter, 'Bone Considerations: Archaeology, Heritage, and Ethics at Mamilla, Jerusalem,' *International Journal of Cultural Property* 24, no. 3 (August 2017): 321–50.

[318] The current state of the shrine has not always been the case in recent years: according to their website, the Dajānī family had to wrest it back into their control after it was taken over and turned into a bar by an Israeli propriertor who laid claim to the structure, a claim that Dajānīs were able to successfully legally contest.

[319] While we are getting ahead of ourselves somewhat, the defensive posture Muḥammad takes in this text suggests that even during the first half of the seventeenth century—when he would have presumably been writing this text—puritanical discourse and perhaps actions had made their way to Palestine, or at least into the vicinity, enough so that Muḥammad would feel compelled to confront them in preserving his grandfather's memory. As with any hagiography written some time after the subject, we may safely assume the presence of earlier iterations of hagiographic memory—the context of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—as well as the concerns and developments of the hagiographer's own time.

deployment (and almost certainly continued oral recitation, perhaps in the setting of the Mamilla tomb-shrine) of that memory.

After introductory eulogistic praise of Aḥmad al-Dajānī as the '*quṭb* of his age, the *walī* of God' followed by a brief explanation from Muḥammad al-Dajānī of his reason for writing, the *manāqib* commences with a *karāma*-story that reveals some of the intersecting spatialities of the saint's life, aspects of his position vis-à-vis the Ottoman authorities in Jerusalem, and central aspects of his saintly repertoire. This first story opens with mention of Shaykh Dajānī's practice of writing down notes of intercession (*shifʿa*) addressed to the Ottoman security patrol (*sūbāshiyya*)[320] and judges, which were always effective we are assured.[321] However, there was one judge who did not accept Shaykh Dajānī's intercession and in fact wanted to kill him, having discovered the saint's practice while reviewing the *subaşı* (here meaning the head of policing functionaries) of the city, who presented him with a 'sack-full' of intercessionary notes. When the judge asked who they were from, the *sūbāṣī* replied, 'From the venerable Shaykh al-Dajānī—they're intercessions for those I've accosted, and it's not possible for me to contradict him!' Enraged with the revenue-costing shaykh he asked where he could find him. Learning that he was then in the settlement of Ra's Abū Zaytūn, the judge at first wanted to send someone to bring the shaykh in, but was told, 'This is a man from among the saints of God, from the masters

[320] More precisely, the retinue (described as 'patroling,' *dawwār*) of the *sūbāṣī* in charge of Jerusalem and its surroundings. On the history of the position, see J.H. Kramers and C. E. Bosworth, 'Ṣu Ba<u>sh</u>i̊,' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*[2].

[321] While it has as its focus the guild system of the city, Amnon Cohen, *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), deals extensively with interactions between guilds and qāḍīs, illuminating the context of Shaykh Dajānī's reported involvement in th jurisdictional-administrative system. Cohen's interpretation of the power of the guilds vis-à-vis the qadis and other officials strikes a similar note to Shakyh Dajānī's interventions, at least at first: 'the kadi not only honoured the guild's decision as to who should be chosen to conduct its affairs, but would even submit to their decision as to who should be appointed. In the triangular relationship of members, governor and kadi, the latter, who on the face of it had so much regulatory power, actually used it in response to the will of the people, while the services the members rendered to the state apparatus elicited its support for the entire guild system.' Ibid., 113.

of unveiling and gnosis, you won't be able to make him come to you.' Instead, he was told the judge would need to intercept Shaykh Dajānī when he came to al-'Aqṣā for Friday prayers. Here our hagiographer adds that all this was before the shaykh took the Tomb of David 'from the Franks,' and that he was at this time dwelling in a place known as Ra's Abū Zaytūn, which he himself established, building a *masjid* (also functioning as a *zāwiya*) and a *qubba* for his saintly mother who died there.[322] Ra's Abū Zaytūn is about thirty miles from Jerusalem, and seems to have served as Shaykh Dajānī's base of operations before he moved permanently to Jerusalem (a move, as I will discuss below, that curiously figures hardly at all in the saint's recorded *manāqib*), making visits to al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf not prohibitively difficult but not daily affairs either. Instead, the hagiographic record suggests that Shaykh Dajānī divided his time among a range of places, including his *zāwiya* on Ra's Abū Zaytūn, various other rural locales in Palestine, and the Dome of the Rock.[323]

Returning to the story, when Friday came the *ķāḍī* placed a functionary at Bāb Hutta, the main northern entrance of the al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf compound and Shaykh Dajānī's usual point of entry, instructing him to confront the shaykh and to bring him into the *ķāḍī's* presence. Shaykh

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[322] Al-Dajānī, *Risāla fī dhikr,* 74a. This new settlement resembles a *mezra'a*, a place under cultivation but either of a temporary or provisional nature (often in an auxillary or satellite role to established villages), on the way to establishment as a village proper. See İnalcık and Quataert, *An Economic and Social History,* 170-171, dealing primarily with Anatolia but analogous to the situation in sixteenth century Palestine. While based on the available evidence we can only speculate, it seems that Shaykh Dajānī—who probably hailed from the village of Janiya, (probably) formerly known as Dajāniya—sought to establish himself in 'new' territory removed from the confines of the village by establishing himself on a nearby hilltop, perhaps after some conflict or disagreement in the village (as Dajānī family oral tradition today suggests). Unauthorized peasant movements, such as those that might have aided in the establishment of Shaykh Dajānī's settlement (he himself probably fell in an ambigious category), were technically prescribed by Ottoman law, but still took place and was not always strictly enforced, as discussed at both the wider imperial and the specifically sixteenth century Palestinian level in Amy Singer, 'Peasant Migration: Law and Practice in Early Ottoman Palestine; *New Perspectives on Turkey* 8 (1992): 49–65.

[323] Al-Dajānī, *Risāla fī dhikr,* 72b, 75a (Abū Zaytūn, with many others besides), 75b (Majdal Yaba), 76a, 77a-77b (Nablus), 79a (Hebron), 83a (Ramla, Lod).

Dajānī willingly came to the *ḳāḍī* and ate the feast set before him, a feast which had been poisoned, of which the saint was naturally aware. Having eaten, he entered the lavatories alongside al-ʿAqṣā and vomited all of the food he had eaten. At this very moment the stomach of the *ḳāḍī* ballooned out massively, and he began crying out, seeking the succor of the shaykh, sending his retinue out to the shaykh asking for his pardon. When they found the saint, Shaykh Dajānī wrote out something on a piece of paper and told them to scrape the writing into some water and give it to the *ḳāḍī* to drink—'and by the permission of God he will be healed'—and so he was, even repenting and becoming a disciple of the saint. For a while, we learn at the conclusion of the account, Shaykh Dajānī ceased writing his intercessions for those who ran afoul of the Ottoman authorities, but resumed the practice when the Prophet appeared to him in a dream-vision and upbraided him.[324]

There is much that can be gleaned from this story, beginning with the relationship it depicts between Shaykh Dajānī and the Ottoman authorities of Jerusalem. While the *ḳāḍī* ends up, in proper hagiographic fashion, learning his lesson and receiving repentance at the hands of the saint, antagonism otherwise pervades the account. The initial conflict is precipitated by the need on the part of inhabitants (and visitors from the countryside, such as Shaykh Dajānī himself) for intercession to deal with the predations of the Ottoman *sūbāşī*, the saint standing in as not so much counter-power to the Ottomans as an ameliorating presence (with the implication being that at least some in the Ottoman administrative apparatus recognized and respected his status as a *walī Allāh*). But not everyone: Shaykh Dajānī must confront the perfidious *ḳāḍī* and bring him to heel, and so reaffirm his saintly authority within Jerusalem, even in the face of Ottoman power. The spatial trajectory he follows in doing so is one that appears throughout the

[324] Ibid., 74a.

manāqib: Shaykh Dajānī begins from his rural *zāwiya*, from whence he enters into al-'Aqṣā and the Dome of the Rock, moving back and forth between Ra's Abū Zaytūn and al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf, his presence and activities in both locales contributing to his performance of sainthood. In this iteration of Shaykh Dajānī's hagiographic memory he is depicted as a saint of the countryside, inserting himself into Jerusalem's sacred and social fabric, even in the face of opposition from Ottoman officialdom.

An additional element of his saintly repertoire, and one which might be seen as a matter of local saintly dialect, is the centrality of the bodily and even grotesque: several times in the *manāqib* Shaykh Dajānī is depicted removing something from someone's stomach (paralleled in the above story by the shaykh's own vomiting out his stomach's contents) and ingesting it, so healing the person of a disease or, in the case of one of his disciples, extracting a potent spiritual 'state' (*ḥāl*) and protecting it for the Day of Resurrection.[325] While ingestion of substances—such as, in the above story, the scraped off ink of the saint's handwriting—is a consistent theme in hagiography not just in Islam but in other traditions as well that give priority to sacred texts, Shaykh Dajānī's particular practice of inserting his hand into the stomach of another and removing an object—variously described as 'fig-like,' 'shining,' and like 'a shining star'—which the saint then consumes, if not unique to early modern Palestine, is not something I have encountered in other Ottoman local traditions of hagiography.[326] Command of material and otherwise substances figures prominently in Shaykh Dajānī's *karāmāt*: in several stories he

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[325] Ibid., 77b, 79a-79b.

[326] Unfortunately, whatever the case historically, early modern *manāqib* texts or similar accounts such as the one consulted here are rare from Palestine, which makes it difficult to move from identifying the possibility that particular items were indeed a common component in the dialect of sainthood as it was widely understood. The closest analogue to which I have had access are the hagiographic components in ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's *riḥla*s, which however date from the late seventeenth century.

causes money to appear under his prayer rug, a common enough *karāma*, but in each such account the money is still glowing hot, as if just cast, a detail that appears to be unique to this context, though it does allude—intentionally or not is hard to determine—to the frequent closeness of saintly *karāmāt* and the practice of alchemy. And as with most of the other rural saints under consideration here, the disbursement and miraculous generation of food plays a large role in Shaykh Dajānī's *manāqib*, though in this story the details are grotesquely reversed: where the scheming ķāḍī violated hospitality by poisoning the offered feast, Shaykh Dajānī both consumed and voided—literally—the tainted food, then, in answer to the ķāḍī's supplications, gave him sacred sustenance to ingest for healing.

If Shaykh Dajānī's interactions with Ottoman officials can be seen as a means of establishing the saint's authority within Jerusalem, many other instances of territorialization appear in the *manāqib*, with the sum effect of inscribing the saint's authority over particular geographic bounds, namely, rural Palestine as well as the sacred precincts of Jerusalem, where his authority is further underlined through stories of pilgrims coming from elsewhere in the Ottoman world and facing difficulties, difficulties which the saint solves for them.[327] Yet the majority of the *karāmāt* stories take place elsewhere in Palestine, most of all at the saint's *zāwiya* but also in other locations where he was engaged in a range of social activities when not working *karāmāt*, from leading devotional rituals to acting as a saintly mediator among quarreling peasants (and hence offering himself as an alternative to Ottoman legal-administrative justice, insofar as it was available at all in the countryside). Shaykh Dajānī raises a dead girl at the home of man in Nablus who had invited him to perform a *mawlid*; in a mosque in Majdal Yaba, on the coastal plain, a foreign saint appears to him and announces to him that, like ʿAbd al-Qādir al-

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[327] Al-Dajānī, *Risāla fī dhikr,* 77a-77b, 78b.

Jilānī, Shaykh Dajānī's foot was upon the neck of every other male and female saint of his time; every year the saint would hold a *dhikr* circle alongside the tomb of Isaac in al-Khalīl, then spend a month in *khalwa* there. At his death, in addition to villagers from around Jerusalem, residents of the towns of Ramla and Lod on the coastal plain trekked up the hills to attend his funeral procession, requiring, we are told, careful crowd control just to convey everyone through the narrow streets of the city.[328] His saintly authority extended all the way north to the ancient crossing of the Jordan, the Bridge of Jacob: one day while he and his *fuqarā'* were practicing *dhikr* in his little masjid on Ra's Abū Zaytūn, the shaykh gestured with his hand and water splashed on the faces of the disciples. A few days later a muleteer came to visit, explaining that as he was crossing the bridge his mule slipped, so he cried out 'Yā Shaykh Ahmad! Yā Dajānī! This is your time and your aid! If you raise the mule up whole the load is for you!' The muleteer, his mule miraculously being lifted from the Jordan, had come to pay his vow. This story, our hagiographer notes, was in wide circulation in various forms.[329] All of these stories indicate an imaginal holy geography bound by the saint's power and presence, radiating out from his hilltop zāwiya and his sites of presence in Jerusalem. In hagiographic memory, Shaykh Dajānī provided a way to see the Ottoman Palestinian landscape—which in this iteration is not confined to Ottoman administrative boundaries, notably—as a more unitary whole, stitched together by the saint's perambulations and the reach of his holy power.

In the *manāqib*, the genealogy of Shaykh Dajānī's sanctity is portrayed as rooted in the Palestinian landscape and its holy places, with minimal dependence on 'outside' sources. Like Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo, Aḥmad al-Dajānī had ties to Shaykh ʿAlwān of Hama—clearly one

[328] Ibid., 82a-83a.

[329] Ibid., 77b-78a.

of the most important and influential saints of sixteenth century Syria—through the latter's disciple Muḥammad ibn 'Arrāq, and, we are told, reproduced Shaykh ʿAlwān's distinctive *shakawat al-khawāṭir* for a while. But then one day, according to material from Shaykh Naṣīr al-Nābulusī replicated in Muḥammad al-Dajānī's account,[330] 'he said, "Ya *fuqarā'*, we have folded up the *ṭarīqa* [of Shaykh ʿAlwān] and put it on the shelf, so let us practice the remembrance of God!" So they set to *dhikr* in the manner of standing and with singers (*munshīdūn*). Spiritual states and ecstasy (*hāl* and *wajd*) would occur in the midst of the circle through the *baraka* of the shaykh.' Besides pointing to the contingent nature of a *ṭarīqa* as a bundle of sanctifying practices and genealogical ties, both of which might be adapted and modified or even rejected based on particular needs, this account suggests Shaykh Dajānī's sense of independence and his desire to incorporate decidedly local methods, namely, loudly vocal, indeed musical, *dhikr*. The practices of and genealogical link with the great Syrian saint were no longer necessary—and perhaps did not have particularly strong purchase in Shaykh Dajānī's social setting. More central to Shaykh Dajānī's saintly genealogy as it is depicted in the *manāqib* than the linkages in his *silsila* was his mother (his father, by contrast, plays no role in this *manāqib*). She was, we learn, one of the 'great saints,' and was honored by her son with a *qubba* after her death. Early in his career, his grandson tells us, Shaykh Dajānī was seized by the 'men of the forty,'[331] who were looking to replace one of their number who had died. Shaykh Dajānī's mother, however, was able to

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[330] Muḥammad's source for al-Nābulusī's story is a *manāqib*—written in the form of commentary upon a poem, curiously—of Abū Bakr ibn Abī al-Wafā', the majdhūb of Aleppo, by , which is so far as I know the only other early modern hagiographic record of Shaykh Dajānī, resides in a small library in Jerusalem's Old City, al-Khālidiyya, which during my stay in the city I attempted to reach but was repeatedly frustrated in so doing.

[331] That is, the forty saints, unseen by most, who are part of God's hidden government of the world. For an overview of this motif and a fascinating example of its application in a very different part of the empire, see Edith Gülçin Ambros and Jan Schmidt, 'A Cossack Adopted by the Forty Saints; an Original Ottoman Story in the Leiden University Library', in *The Ottoman Empire; Myths, Realities and 'Black Holes', Contributions in Honour of Colin Imber*, ed. by Eugenia Kermeli and Oktay Özel (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2006), 297-324.

miraculously free him from their ranks, saying, ‘My son is going to accomplish a great matter, and is not from among you, rather, he is a *quṭb*!’ Not only, then, did Shaykh Dajānī inherit, as it were, sanctity from his mother (who was almost certainly of peasant background, there being no indication in this early material otherwise), but it is she who ensured that he remained physically in Palestine to pursue his saintly career.[332]

The localization of Shaykh Dajānī’s presence and memory continued apace after his death through his tomb-shrine in Mamillah, which is the focus of a sizeable portion of the *manāqib*, the text probably best seen as a component in the promotion and memory-shaping of this site. Lying outside of the city’s walls, the tomb-shrine serves as an apt symbol of the in-between nature of Shaykh Dajānī’s sainthood, inflected by and formed in both the Palestinian countryside and within the walls of Jerusalem. The miracle tales associated with the tomb replicate, at a different scale, many of the themes of his *karāmāt* performed during his physical life. The following story, besides providing a fascinating snapshot of daily life in early seventeenth century Jerusalem, returns to the question of Ottoman power and presence. One day, the story runs, one of Shaykh Dajānī’s descendants (Muḥammad al-Dajānī himself perhaps?) came to the great water reservoir in Mamilla (which stands a few hundred yards from the saint’s

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[332] Shaykh Dajānī’s mother is not the only female saint to figure into his *manāqib*: One of the disciples related: I was with Shaykh Dajānī one day in the Dome of the Rock and there was a woman in the mihrab praying the canonical prayer. After doing the first bow, she straightened up, did the first prostration, then she sat down for the period between the two prostrations, with her legs stretched out and moving [which would usually invalidate the *ṣalāt*], then made the second prostration, then stood for the second *raka’a*, doing as she had done in the first one. After the giving of the peace, I said to the shaykh, ‘Ya sayyidī, did you see what this woman did in her *ṣalāt*?’ He said, ‘Yes, I saw her.’ I said, ‘Her *ṣalāt* is invalid!’ He smiled at what I said, and himself said to me, ‘If you recognized her spiritual state (*ḥāl*) you would be amazed.’ So I said to him, ‘I ask you, what is her state?’ He replied, ‘This one is from among the saints of God—for love of him she has come on pilgrimage to this mosque from Samarqand, having left her son in his cradle. He started crying while she was in the first prostration, so she moved her leg in order to rock the cradle. She has gone to him after completing her salat, God be pleased with her and with him, and may I and all Muslims be aided by her *baraka* and that of his saints, amen!’ Al-Dajānī, *Risāla fī dhikr,* 78a-78b.

tomb-shrine) [333] in order to learn how to swim.[334] He had just gotten to the bank of the pool when a group of 'Turkmen' from the *jumaʿa al-sanjāk*, that is, soldiers of some sort in local service, came, driving away those who were by the pool. The boy fled to his grandfather's side—that is, the tomb-shrine—and was sitting at the head of his tomb when one of the Turkmen who were driving people from the pool entered the shrine: 'I was frightened by that, so I said, "Ya Sayyidī, this is your time, I am the son of your son! This man wants to do wrong" When he saw me sitting by [the saint's tomb], he said to me: "What are you doing here?" I answered, "I am by my grandfather and in his protection!" He replied, "This fellow is dead and can't help you against me!"' The boy cried out, and went unconscious; when he awoke, the Turkmen was gone, and he never heard tale of him again. As during his bodily life, this story indicates, so after his bodily death Shaykh Dajānī could be a source of reprieve from the often unpredictable machinations of Ottoman power, or, to put it more bluntly, violence carried out under the auspices of Ottoman power. There is as well a sexual undertone to the story—the Turkmen irregular, it is implied, was seeking to violate the boy, and so violated, for a moment, the saint's precinct, an unwise transgression as it turned out.[335] As with the unjust *ḳāḍī*, the Ottoman irregular—explicitly identified as a Turkmen, a foreign presence—we are made to understand did not respect the

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[333] Mostly empty today, this massive open-air (primarily) reservoir, which connects into Jerusalem's extremely old underground water system, is one of the older extant structures in Jerusalem, dating back to at least the early Byzantine period if not before.

[334] Incidentally, this is one of the only, if not the only, reference to recreational swimming from the pre-modern Ottoman world that I have come across; swimming for pleasure and recreation emerged in force as a documented pasttime in early modern England and elsewhere around this time, so if recreational swimming—as very much seems to be on display here—was wider spread in the Ottoman world then it would represent yet another point of mutual development across Eurasia during this period. See Nicholas Orme, *Early British Swimming, 55 BC-AD 1719: With the First Swimming Treatise in English, 1595* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1983), 46.

[335] Al-Dajānī, *Risāla fī dhikr,* 85b.

power and honor of the saints until it was too late.[336] Here and in another story of a descendant of the saint—a *majdhūb* and holy person in his own right—it is possible that currents of Ottoman puritanism are detectable, with Muḥammad's hagiography an expression of pushback against such hagiophobic sentiments.[337]

Finally, as with Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo, because Shaykh Dajānī's memory and, to a lesser degree, veneration has continued into the present, we are fortunately able to see some transformations which will better allow us to contextualize the saint in the Ottoman milieu. In more modern hagiographic memory—sustained today, as in the Ottoman period, by the labor of the Dajānī family in particular—the most salient point of Shaykh Dajānī's life and sanctity was his being invested with the Tomb of David by Sultan Süleymān, an investment which is indeed well documented by archival evidence.[338] This investment—which included extensive, and long-lived, *awqāf* placed in the control of the Dajānī family—was interpreted by Aharon Layish as an

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[336] It is striking that a 'Turkmen' Ottoman auxiliary could at least be imagined as disregarding a local saint, presumably—though the story does not make this explicit—by virtue of the saint being local and hence unknown and unworthy of respect.

[337] The account begins with an unnamed man, though known to Abū al-Fataḥ, had been trying to get an adze from a descendant of al-Dajānī through one of his daughters, a man named Shaykh Yusūf, who was known in Jerusalem as a '*majdhūb*, immersed in his *jadhb*.'[337] The man treated Shaykh Yusūf 'roughly,' and later admitted to the author that his behavior with the *majdhūb* was simply out of a desire for jest and amusement, and did not reflect any actual need for the *majdhūb's* implement. After one such unkind bout with the saint, the man went to sleep at night and had a vivid dream-vision, in which he beheld the domed tomb of al-Dajānī festooned with banners, and a great crowd of people surrounding it, as if for a *mawlid* celebration. He tried to get to where he could see what or who the crowd is gathered around, being first interrupted by a figure guarding the precints and demanding to know his intentions. When he finally reached the vicinity of the shrine, none other than Aḥmad al-Dajānī confronted him, a glowing hot lance in hand, with which he proceeded to strike the man. The man cried out for succor from the saint, but dream-al-Dajānī only continued to treat him 'roughly,' in reward for how he had treated Shaykh Yusūf. The man awoke in the midst of this treatment, shivering like a fever patient, and when morning broke he went to the *majdhūb*, kissed his hand, and—somewhat unexpectedly from the story's course, but perhaps as way of verification of his dream-vision—once again asks for the adze. The saint replied, 'Did what you saw not suffice you?' At this the man once again kissed the saint's hand and 'turned to God' in repentance. Al-Dajānī, *Risāla fī dhikr,* 85a-85b.

[338] *Sijillāt maḥkāmat al-Quds al-shar'īyya*, *sijil* 40, 16th of Rajab, 968-969 AH, cited in Mahmoud and Veeder, *Guide*, 23, n. 20.

example of Ottoman Islamization like that carried out under the auspices of Shaykh Ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Asadī in the Galilee, and on the face of it such an explanation seems plausible.[339] However, the astute reader will notice that we have scarcely mentioned Shaykh Dajānī's occupation and control of the venerable Franciscan convent on Mount Zion. The reason is quite simple: the earlier iterations of hagiographic memory we have, from the pen of Shaykh Dajānī's grandson (as well as, some years later, from ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's visit to the saint's tomb and his discussion of the saint and his saintly *majdhūb* descendant), makes but passing reference to this occupation and investment. Muḥammad al-Dajānī notes the connection in passing at two points in his account, while for al-Nābulusī Dajānī's significance lay in his sainthood as perpetuated in his tomb-shrine in Mamilla. As we have seen, the spatial framework of Shaykh Dajānī's sainthood, as it was recalled by his grandson, was oriented around Ra's Abū Zaytūn, al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf, and various places elsewhere in Palestine. And far from painting a glowing picture of Ottoman authority, Shaykh Dajānī appears in the *manāqib* as a protector against the violence of that authority as it was expressed in and around Jerusalem.

How should we explain the apparent disjunction visible here? I suggest that far from representing an instance of Islamization (with the implicit analogy of 'missionary' or 'colonizer' dervishes earlier in Ottoman history, itself a problematic concept), Ottoman recognition of both Shaykh Dajānī and of the saintly rural Shaykh Ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Asadī, along with whatever degree of legal or otherwise intervention (which is somewhat opaque in both cases) and material investment (more evident) the authorities bestowed, ought to be seen as an attempt to capture and manage the sanctity of these two Palestinian saints, sanctity that, as Shaykh Dajānī's *karāmāt* tales make clear, was known to have political charge and potency. It is useful here to think of

[339] Layish, 'Waqf,' 74-75.

sanctity as a resource or a shared field of discourse, practice, and value, a resource invested in but not irrevocably tied to any one individual or community, and that can be deployed for a whole range of ends from narrowly political measure to the elevation of one's spiritual state to the preservation of bodies and property. The resource of sanctity, in turn, is constantly being contested, modified, and employed by different actors. Shaykh Dajānī accumulated the resource of sanctity in himself and in those extensions of himself that would live on after his bodily life, rendered in congruence with local dialects and topologies of sanctity and sainthood. In his case and many others Ottoman sultans and members of the wider Ottoman ruling elite sought to channel and control that resource, ensuring both its perpetuation and that it remain relatively harmless; by tying Shaykh Dajānī to a particular site, one which could be fully secured only through the intervention of the Sultan himself, his sanctity could be contained within social space under Ottoman government ambit and purview. Such a strategy might be of especial use in supporting the project of presenting Ottoman sultans as possessors of sanctity and sainthood in their own right and as deserving of subordinate respect and affiliation on the part of other holy people, a project we will return to in greater depth below. And while his early modern hagiography is muted in its discussion of this process—precisely, I suspect, out of recognition for what was really going on—it is equally clear that Shaykh Dajānī himself made strategic use of this Ottoman strategy, employing the Tomb of David as his new base of operations for the remainder of his bodily life. At the end of his bodily life, however, he would come to once again occupy his own space, without the walls, in a move that must be understood as strategically directed against Ottoman attempts at control and monopolization. Muḥammad's *manāqib* represented, in its turn, a local intervention in the making of Ottoman history, his arguments as potent in what he left out as what he included: there is no explicit discussion of the conquest of

Selīm or of the presentation of Selīm and Süleymān as saintly figures.[340] Instead, it is in the selective appearance of Ottoman authorities and the strategic silences that Muḥammad reworks historical memory so as to situate his saintly ancestor, not the Ottoman sultans and their functionaries, at the center of the story and at the center of the contested land- and city-scape of early Ottoman Palestine.

The spatial trajectory, then, of Shaykh Dajānī as traced in his *manāqib* is one that largely confronts or skirts the Ottoman administrative and ideological order. The outstanding question that arises then is the degree to which the relative invisibility of the Ottoman authorities is a matter of later, seventeenth century hagiographic memory, or whether it reflects the realities of the saint's life and his immediate historical afterlife among those who knew him and continued to venerate him as a powerful friend of God. While it is clearly the case, based, if on nothing more than the off-handed nature of Muḥammad al-Dajānī's references, that Shaykh Dajānī's occupation and use of the Tomb of David at the behest of Süleymān (who, notably, is not named in the *manāqib*) was well-known in Jerusalem, and may not have required extensive textual elaboration as a result, it seems likely that any hagiographic-tinted stories or records connected with the Tomb of David would not have made their way into Muḥammad's account had they existed (unless our author himself had an explicit but unstated agenda in suppressing any such accounts). As with Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo, within the stream of oral tradition the saint became adapted for later conditions, in particular the increasingly central and powerful role of the Dajānī

[340] That the process of memory making and of identity making—including renderings of Selīm and Süleymān as saintly—took place at the 'local' level can be seen in, for instance, in the existence in the Khālidiyya of an anonymous manuscript entitled *Risālat fī madḥ al-Sulṭān Salīm wa dhamm al-Jarākis al-mumālīk*, al-Khālidiyya 1716. While we will examine further the production of 'alternative' cultural memory of the House of Osman (as it relates to sainthood, at least) in the provinces further along, 'pro-sultanic' memory construction in the Arabophone lies outside of the scope of this work even though it was evidently underway during our period.

family: a saint who was originally of the countryside, his *zāwiya* perched atop one of the seemingly endless rocky hilltops of Palestine, and whose relationship with Ottoman power was ambiguous at best, a careful and sometimes adversarial dance, was in time transformed into a thoroughly urban saint tied into the mainstream of respectable Ottoman history. Both images are very much the work of the communities that gradually forged them and the social and political conditions in which those communities existed. They remind us of just how socially contingent sainthood, especially in the short or long historical afterlife of the saint, truly is.

iv. Between rural and imperial spaces in sixteenth century rural Anatolian sainthood:

The vast countryside of Anatolia—the eastern half of the historic core of the Ottoman Empire—was a region in which, by our period, Turkish dialects were dominant (alongside, of course, forms of Kurdish, Armenian, Greek, and so on), and in which was a wide range of saintly dialects and resources found expression, intertwined with those of other regions and centers of the empire and beyond. If our discussion of Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo and Shaykh Dajānī allowed us to focus in some depth on places with relatively narrow geographic confines, this final section approaches several saints across a wide and heterogenous range of territory, from the near hinterlands of Istanbul in the west to the rugged and frequently war-torn country in the east closer to the Safavid frontier. While the several saints profiled here inhabited different points across this landscape, certain geographical features were broadly consistent across the sweep of Anatolia: as a high plateau marked in many places by frequent eruptions of more vertical terrain, movement was, and is, oriented through the relatively level portions of the plateau lying among sections of more rugged terrain, with proper mountain ranges running along the northern and southern bounds of the plateau, each rising and curving towards convergence in

the highly mountainous east. The interchange between steppe lands and highlands has been a vital factor in the history of Anatolia for much of its human history, and figures into the story of early modern sainthood as well, the physical topography mapping onto the political and cultural topographies, just as we have seen for Jabal al-Quṣayr and Palestine.

While the relative accessibility of the flatter steppe lands facilitated the movement of Ottoman instruments of rule—in particular Ottoman military power—that accessibility also facilitated the movement of many other people as well, from merchants to nomads to roaming bands of rebels, bandits, and unhappily demobilized soldiers, with Ottoman power itself emerging out of this flow of people and other entities.[341] And while Ottoman Anatolia as a whole was markedly heterogenous in terms of ethnicity, languages, and religious traditions, it became more so as one went east, coinciding with both the increasingly rugged terrain and increased proximity to the Persianate world, a heterogeneity that proved of much importance in the history of sainthood—Islamic and otherwise—in this region. Unlike Jabal Quṣayr (or larger Kurdistan) or Ottoman Palestine, this broad region did not constitute a recognized 'place,' with local identity tending to fall within smaller units of what we can heuristically, and at risk of anachronism, call 'Anatolia.'[342] Historiographically, Anatolia has been the focus of especially socio-economic investigation for as long as there has been a field of Ottoman history, with

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[341] 'There was always movement of people, goods, and ideas, not to mention armed groups, that cut across internal divides as well as the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, both the imperial center and the modern state that emerged from it were deeply embedded in local practices, making it impossible to talk about centralization as having clear starting and end points.' Kasaba, *A moveable empire,* 8.

[342] As with the Kurdistan and Palestine, toponyms are deeply bound up with modern political constructions and tensions; needless to say there is a long history of 'Anatolianism' in the modern Turkish state, an attempt to create a cohesive and coherent (and Turkish) 'Anatolia' that overlaps with the political boundaries of the Turkish Republic. While it is not the place here to go into detail, perhaps the best way to think of Anatolia in this period is one, as made up of connected and similar sets of landscapes with local identities nesting within them, and, two, landscapes and identities that emerged through their orientation towards another place beyond the high plateau: towards Constantinople, towards the Jāzira, or the Cilician plain, or into Iranian Azerbaijan, and so forth.

attention paid to issues of land use, the conditions of the peasantry, the role of nomads, and so on, the question of the Ottoman state vis-à-vis the land (or the absence or failure of the state) being consistently paramount. The religious history of Ottoman Anatolia has been the object of various debates, some of which will figure into my analysis here, debates concerning the nature of the original Ottoman polity, the shape and importance of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict, and the background and origin stories of the ʿAlevis, the Bektāşīs, and other 'heterodox' groups—debates that have often been related to ongoing political struggles in modern Turkey and its neighbors.

The saints whose lives I have arranged here as case studies of Anatolian sainthood—Aḥmed Dede Çavdārlı, Ḥüsāmeddīn Anḳaravī, and Şemseddīn Aḥmed Sīvāsī, their dates of activity spanning from the mid-sixteenth century to the first decades of the seventeenth—hardly exhaust the vast range of sainthoods present in Anatolia before and during our period. Ultimately these various saints in their particular locales can only really be representative of themselves—the same as for Kurdish sainthood or any other regional or empire level classification we might employ. Yet even though the saints analyzed here each represent very different ways of dealing with Ottoman power and authority (as well as the limitations of that power and authority) and different sorts of saintly repertoires and renderings of space and territorialization, there are certain commonalities that emerge. In particular are shared concepts of sainthood and of saintly authority, even if the particulars of who was to possess that authority and so define and wield sainthood were sharply contested among local saints and representatives of the Ottoman and Safavid rulers, rulers suffused with the aura of sanctity down through the sixteenth century. Expressions of Ottoman power (and attempts at the projection of Safavid power), bound up with arguments for the sanctity and status of sultan and shah, ebbed and flowed across Anatolia

during this period, ultimately leading up to the late sixteenth century explosion of rural and semi-rural violence in Anatolia and beyond, accompanied by the increased decentralization of provincial power.

Our traverse of the terrain of Anatolian sainthood begins with a rural saint of the Süleymānic age and its very immediate postscript, Şeyh Aḥmed Dede (to give but one of his monikers), who died in 1570, whose life introduces us to several factors of recurrent importance among the Muslim saints of early modern Anatolia. The following treatment of his life, which comes from ʿAṭāʾī 's continuation (*zeyl*), in Ottoman Turkish, of Ṭaşköprüzāde's biographical dictionary[343] seems to reflect local hagiographic memory, albeit reproduced in ʿAṭāʾī 's ornate prose, the flavor of which I have tried to capture in my rendering:

> He came into the world in a village named Gırbalcı, near the town of Kütahya. Among the common people he was known as Kalburci Şeyhi as well as Mihmandār and Çavdārlı after the rye grain. From the ʿulama of his native place he obtained learning and, being from birth ordained and whetted for taking "mystical letters and meanings," he joined the service of Şeyh Sinān Karamānī, then inclined towards beholding the divinely graced ʿAbdüllaṭīf Efendi. It is related that one day he [Aḥmed Dede] was present at a lesson with two companions when, while the aforementioned şeyh was in the time of his spiritual brightness and openness [to God], each one made supplication concerning the desire that was implanted within him. The aforesaid şeyh's arrow of supplication having been shot and hitting God's giving of answer, one of them became, in accord with his heart's desire, an officer in the army, while another, in concordance with his soul's inclination, became part of the folk of knowledge—but the subject of this account obtained the grace that he, like the basin and table of Ibrāhīm, would not have his licit wealth (*māl-i halāl*) become exhausted. Afterwards, coming to Istanbul, in the service of the pole of the sphere of divine reality Merkez Efendi he perfected his spiritual wayfaring. After being authorized in giving guidance he became eminent through the gracious oversight of Kastamonulu Şabān Efendi. Ultimately he returned to his village and set up in his well-known *zâviye*, feeding travelers and giving perfect honor to passers-by. In this manner through the months and days he gave praise to God, this one who honored

[343] On ʿAṭāʾī in general, see Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives*, a study useful as an introduction to ʿAṭāʾī and aspects of his milieu, even as it suffers from a rather narrow focus and little sense of the wider discourse and practice of sainthood and hagiographic production that underlies much of ʿAṭāʾī 's work.

> guests of the house of Islam dying in the year 1570—to his spirit be divine mercy!
>
> […] For his entire life he would not accept charity, donation, salary, or gift—he lived off of what he grew. It was his custom that from his own cultivated grains he would apportion bread and comfort for travelers and barley for beasts of burden. Among his manifest miraculous gifts of grace was that his wheat seeds and his grains of barley, that is, rye (*çavdār*) barley, brought forth grain crops without compare. This is why he became known about as Çavdār Şeyhi. Putting his barley in a granary, its door was hidden and what was in its lower part flowed forth from a channel. That storehouse was never seen to remain empty nor did he know need of out-of-season grain stores. He acted kindly towards every guest at his departure, outfitting him with provision for the way and food the morrow, giving thanks to God and saying, 'The *bereket* of the supplication of my şeyh ʿAbdüllaṭīf Efendi is everywhere!' Sultan Selīm the Mild [Selīm II],[344] while he was still a prince (*şehzāde*), made a pious visit to him and sought supplication and spiritual direction from him, building a beautiful small mosque near his *zāviye* which is standing today and is a place of visitation for all.[345]

Despite this account's brevity, we learn a great deal about this saint, including suggestions of how he was received and memorialized in and around his native village. At least two distinct if interrelated repertoires of sainthood, each embedded in a particular route of cultural memory, can be identified in this account: on the one hand, Aḥmed Dede received some degree of education and literacy at home, such that he was able to travel to Istanbul where he entered into, not the gradated *ʿilmiye* hierarchy that was the aspiration of so many educated young men from the provinces, but a sort of parallel hierarchy of saints, from whom Aḥmed Dede received initiation and the genealogical foundations of his sainthood. While each of the şeyhs whom he served was affiliated with a *ṭarīḳat*, ʿAṭā'ī did not find it worthwhile to mention

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[344] While still a prince, Selīm II was appointed *sancāk beği* of Konya in 1542, so it would have most likely been during this appointment that he first visited Aḥmed Dede. Despite his reputation as Selim the Sot, this son of Süleymān was known for his veneration of holy people and places and ensuing patronage, making his construction work here very much in character. Christina Woodward, 'Selīm II,' in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*[2].

[345] ʿAṭā'ī, *Ẕeyl-i Şaḳā'iḳ*, 203.

those affiliations, and made no indication that Aḥmed Dede was particularly identified with one *ṭarīḳat* over another. Instead, it was his personal connections with a range of saints in the imperial core that mattered, and which authorized him in turn upon his return to Gırbalcı. Unlike our Kurdish saints and more akin to Shaykh Dajānī, Aḥmed Dede seems to have drawn upon multiple iterations of sanctity and lineage, with that of one Abdüllatîf Efendi pre-imminent, making creative use of the various resources he had encountered. How much did this successive inculcation among the saints of Süleymān's Constantinople matter upon his return to his native Gırbalcı? For ʿAṭā'ī and his likely audience genealogy and gradated movement—the norm for scholars, of course—were clearly core features of anyone's social significance, the primary way that one could be imaginatively and meaningfully socially situated. Similarly, for the people of Gırbalcı, his ability to reproduce certain expected practices, and his claim to be situated in various saintly lineages probably registered in local consciousness and helped to establish him as a Friend of God. The story of his desiring inexhaustible 'licit wealth' through the supplication of his first and foremost şeyh points to how this aspect of his saintly career was probably remembered among his primary audience of peasants and wayfarers: whatever the details of his formation and spiritual reception in the saint-rich city, Aḥmed Dede channeled those things into the realization of powers suitable for his return to the countryside.

His association with prodigious food stocks, food which he grew himself with the assistance of his saintly *bereket* and which he distributed generously, was mostly clearly engrained in local memory and made its way even into his popular moniker. Here his saintly repertoire is firmly rooted in the rural milieu, and probably points us towards local expectations of saints, expectations which would have shaped Aḥmed Dede's actual practices as well as the way he was perceived and remembered (traces of which are visible in ʿAṭā'ī 's account): saints

ought to enhance the fertility of crops and act as points of collection and distribution, of both literal food and of the potent *bereket* that was present within them. Aḥmed Dede also seems to have made ample use of his spatial location as an aspect of his work of sanctity. His *zāviye*, and later tomb, is situated at a point almost exactly half-way between Kütahya and Eskişehir, on a route whose usage probably long predates the Ottomans, and which in fact continues to be an artery of transportation. By providing hospitality to those passing through the region, Aḥmed Dede became not just a local saint but a saint potentially known much further abroad (even, ultimately, to the saint-loving Selīm II), a repute which in turn could have reinforced the social reception and reality of his sainthood closer to home. Aḥmed Dede both situated himself (and was situated by others) within local expectations and practices of sanctity through his work of farming and his reputation for *bereket*-infused grain, and was integrated into a larger frame of relationships and affiliations through his initial sojourn in Istanbul and then through his sustained practice of hospitality for people (including at least one *şehzāde*!) coming from elsewhere. This double aspect of his sainthood was physically and spatially realized by the location he chose for his *zâviye*, a place both rural and tied into imperial routes of movement and circulation. This spatial strategy on Aḥmed Dede's part explains why he appears in ʿAṭā'ī 's compilation at all, which is primarily focused on urban subjects, most of whom could somehow be tied back to ʿAṭā'ī and his milieu.[346]

Yet while Aḥmed Dede benefited from his connections to the wider Ottoman world and his relative visibility astride the Kütahya-Eskişehir route, such connections, visibility, and situation within Ottoman projections of power could be a liability. A saintly şeyh with a following, especially a geographically broadly distributed following, represented at least a

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[346] Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives,*19-20.

potential challenge to power at the center, whether or not the şeyh in question actually had such aspirations being somewhat immaterial. The axial Melāmī-Bayrāmī saint Ḥüsāmeddīn Anḳaravī, whose lifespan was almost exactly chronologically concurrent with Aḥmed Dede, provides a good example of how the performance of a very similar repertoire of sainthood, *mutatis mutandis*, could end in persecution and death during this period. Unlike Aḥmed Dede, the life of Ḥüsāmeddīn Anḳaravī (d. 1566/7), because of his reception in the widely dispersed and long-lived Melāmī-Bayrāmī milieu, can be approached through several sources: hagiographic accounts by Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh (d. 1660), Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's great-grandson Lā'līzāde ʿAbdülbākī (d. 1746), and a brief mention by ʿAṭā'ī , as well as two short reports registered in the *mühimme defter*s, giving us a multifaceted view of this saint, who appears by turns as an unjustly martyred saint or a 'heretic' bent on social corruption and insurrection.[347]

Ḥüsāmeddīn was from a village, Kutluhan, in the *sancāk* of Haymana, about sixty miles south of Ankara. Nestled in a small valley among stony hills, the village lies west of a flat agriculturally productive valley that stretches north towards Ankara and south towards the Konya plain, facilitating relatively easy movement and putting the little village in contact with the wider world. It is likely given his *nisbet* and the patterns known from Ankara's hinterlands that Ḥüsāmeddīn himself would have spent time living and working in Ankara. None of our sources give us any indication of Ḥüsāmeddīn's life or occupation before he was initiated into the Melāmī *ṭarīḳat* by the previous *kuṭb* of the lineage, Aḥmed Sārbān, himself of humble station, working as a cameleer in the Ottoman military, work which probably explains how Ahmed, who was from a village west of Edirne, came into contact with Ḥüsāmeddīn in central Anatolia,

[347] For an introduction to his life and an overview of the relevant sources, see Mehmet Emin Yılmaz, 'Hüsâmeddîn Ankaravî Câmii ve Türbesi,' in *II. Uluslararası Ḥācī Bayram-ı Velī Sempozyumu: 03-04 Mayıs 201: bildiriler kitabı* (Ankara: Kalem Neşriyat, 2017), 502-504.

Ahmed having accompanied Süleymān on his campaign against Baghdad, and so necessarily passing through Anatolia. However he began his career as a primarily rural şeyh, Ḥüsāmeddīn evidently built up no small following, some of it of local origin, drawn, we may speculate, to his embodying local expectations of sainthood, expectations that included the interface of saintly and political action and power, Safavid success in recruiting Anatolian peasants and nomads in no small part due to their recognition of and allowances made towards these expectations of saintly identity, power, and patronage.[348] It was not just local peasants and nomads, but others from further afield affiliated themselves to him due, perhaps, to his identity as a successor to Aḥmed Sārbān and his ensuing role as the axial Melāmī saint of his age.[349] Though the results are in evidence, the processes that brought them about are quite obscure, which perhaps ought not surprise us given the often fraught relationship between the Melāmī *ṭarīḳat* and the Ottoman state. At any rate, by some point in his life Ḥüsāmeddīn had built a sufficient following and

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[348] On the Melāmī, the classic if quite dated Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Melâmîlik ve Melâmîler* (Istanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2015 [or. 1931]) remains important. More recent but of frankly also more limited use is Paul Ballanfat, *Unité et spiritualité: le courant Melāmī-Hamzevî dans l'Empire ottoman* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013). On the Safavid 'penetration' of Ottoman territory during this period, see for a recent overview Ebru Boyar, 'Ottoman expansion in the east,' in Suraiya Faroqhi and Kate Fleet, *The Cambridge History of Turkey Volume 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 100-104; for a useful example of Ottoman reactions 'at the center,' see Vladimir Minorsky, 'Shaykh Bālī-Efendi on the Safavids,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 20, 1–3 (1957), 437–50.

[349] There is a story related by Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh about Ahmed Sârbân that points to this process of local recognition and sense of what constitutes a saint: Ahmed's wife was not enthusiastic about her husband's becoming the Melāmī axial saint and would regularly turn away visitors seeking his *bereket* and would chide and mock him (all in keeping, it should be noted, with the 'path of blame' of course, underlining Ahmed's saintly status from the perspective of Melāmī hagiographic memory, and perhaps helping to deal with the fact that he was not martyred like so many others in his lineage). As he was dying, however, he dictacted an oral 'amulet' formula to his wife for repelling fever. After Ahmed died, his wife entered he employ of a lady who eventually came down with fever. So she asked Ahmed's wife: 'O *hātūn*! Your husband was a saint—don't you know an amulet (*nuskha*) for fever?' Remmebering her late saintly husband's instructions she uses his amulet to successfully treat the fever, and ends up making her living as a local healer in this way, finally recognizing her husband's sainthood, visiting his tomb weeping and lamenting over her failure to do so until after his death. Embedded in this story is the sense of at least part of what constituted a saint in the anonymous lady's eyes: the ability to treat illness, and to pass that ability on to others, all of which entailed—despite any Melāmī theoretical strictures to the contrary—social recognition (just not perhaps on the part of one's wife). Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh, *S̱emerātü'l-fu'ād*, 253-255.

resource base to embark on a substantial building project, a mosque (which still stands, *sans* roof) situated a mile and a half east of Kutluhan and thus accessible to other villages in the valley.[350] Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh, writing some decades later, continues the story: The local voivode, 'the Zāl of the Ankara province,' took a dislike to Ḥüsāmeddīn over the matter of a horse the voivode sought from Ḥüsāmeddīn.[351] The voivode went on to accuse, against the truth of the matter Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh assures us, Şeyh Ḥüsāmeddīn of drawing off workers—carpenters and day-laborers—from the sultan's army as well as collecting followers such that 'it is possible that they will undertake seditious disorder (*fesād*).' As a result, Şeyh Ḥüsāmeddīn was imprisoned in the Ankara citadel, where he would eventually die: 'while being imprisoned he drank the dram of journey from the cup of destiny, rising from the prison-house of passing-away, lying down to sleep in the house of subsisting, God be merciful to him with his expansive mercy.'[352]

Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's great-grandson Lā'līzāde, writing in the early eighteenth century, by which time Melāmī affiliation had become relatively unremarkable and lost its association with 'sedition' (in no small part due to the failure of the sultanic project of sanctity, as I will argue further along), adds a story which had evidently been passed down through his family and which had not been included in Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's hagiographic compilation, as it concerned Bālī Ḥamza

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[350] On this small complex, as well as for a good overview of the relevant sources, see Yılmaz, 'Ḥüsāmeddīn Ankaravî,' 505-511; for pictures and plans, see ibid., 515-519.

[351] Faroqhi describes a parallel case from an urban setting in which it seems that local disputes, wider questions of politics and 'ideological' discourse, and accusations of 'heterodoxy' converged: 'One such case concerns the zaviye of the Haydari dervishes in Istanbul. If the information presented in an official rescript of 1584 is at all reliable, the members of this convent were accused of heterodoxy and contacts with Iran…. However, in the opinion of respected citizens living in the town quarter where the zaviye was located, the real reason for the accusation was that certain people wanted to use the land on which the lodge had been erected for construction purposes.' Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 31.

[352] Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh, *S̱emerātü'l-fu'ād,* 256.

Bosnavī (d. 1561/2), also martyred, and whose memory was evidently still very politically volatile in Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's day, he devoting only a couple of lines to the saint. Lā'līzāde however included a tale recounting the completion of Ḥüsāmeddīn's mosque, at which point the saint wrote to his followers in various places summoning them to the inaugural prayers. Bālī Ağa, as he is initially named, was in Istanbul and did not come with the others from that city, only to appear—miraculously, it is implied—at the last minute, the story continuing to elaborate the sanctity of Bālī Ağa, upon whom Ḥüsāmeddīn bestows the name Bālī Ḥamza.[353] Finally, from a very different evaluation, we have two *mühimme defteri* entries which deal with the aftermath of Şeyh Ḥüsāmeddīn's execution. Though they have little to say of Şeyh Ḥüsāmeddīn's identity or the charges leveled against him, beyond referring to him as 'without religion,' they do point to how extensive his resource accumulation had become (which Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's account hints at as well—owning a horse was not cheap).[354] Both entries contain orders to local officials to confiscate goods that had belonged to the şeyh, with follow-up orders instructing them to search out material hidden among his local followers. While mostly quotidian—clothing, headgear, shoes, carpets, tents—furs, money, and weapons are also included in the inventory of goods believed to have been possessed by the şeyh and his

[353] Lā'līzāde ʿAbdülbākī, *Ṭarīḳat-ı ʿāliye-i Bayrāmiye'den ṭa'ife-i Melāmiye'nin anʿane-yi irādetleri [Sergüzesht]* (Istanbul: [n.p.], 1900), 34-35. On the later trajectory of the 'Hamzeviye,' if flawed by an overreliance on ideas of 'heterodoxy' and 'orthodoxy,' see Hamid Algar, 'The Hamzeviye: A Deviant Movement in Bosnian Sufism,' in *Islamic Studies* 36, no. 2/3 (1997): 243–61.

[354] The first relevant entry runs, 'We ordered the bey and *ḳāḍī* of Ankara' to confiscate the various goods—clothings, furs, goods, and carpets, as well as things that might have ended up among his companions, and been hidden such as hats, shoes, money, weapons, and tents, known to be entrusted to his chief *halīfe* who was known as both Mahmut and Kızıl Ali. The *ḳāḍī* is commanded then to seek out these goods and items wherever they might be hidden and confiscate them, to imprison those concealing these goods, and to make a record of everything, accompanied by standard injunctions to follow the *şerʿīat* and not entangle the innocent. Reproduced in transliteration in Ahmet Refik and Mehmet Yaman, *Onaltıncı asırda Râfizîlik ve Bektâşîlik: onaltıncı asırda Türkiye'de Râfizîlik ve Bektâşîlik'e dair Hazîne-i Evrak belgelerini içerir* (İstanbul: M. Yaman, 1994), 70-71' Belge 26, ibid., 72, reiterates the above while noting the death of Şeyh Hüsam. On the logistics of owning a horse, see Faroqhi, *Towns and*, 49-50.

followers, suggesting, at least in official imagination, some degree of wealth as well as patterns of disbursement.

What are we to make of Şeyh Ḥüsāmeddīn's story? Unlike, it seems, Aḥmed Dede, Ḥüsāmeddīn continuously enacted at least two registers of sainthood, both of which converged in the project and physical site that later memory deemed most central to his identity, the building and use of the mosque outside of his village of Kutluhan. On the one hand in this construction Ḥüsāmeddīn made his sainthood highly visible to local people, in an act of generosity and place-making not unlike that of Aḥmed Dede. Whatever other elements Ḥüsāmeddīn might have had in his saintly repertoire, place-making was a crucial component, and was probably—if the *mühimme defteri* accounts are any indication—accompanied by the accumulation and redistribution of other physical resources. Concurrently—and more ominously to Ottoman officials concerned about rural uprisings—Ḥüsāmeddīn used his country mosque as a spatial center for his far-flung network of Melāmī devotees, tapping into routes of circulation with long histories of multiple usages, including for uprisings, some of which, such as that of Şāhkulu some decades before, remained fresh in the memory of the Ottoman center, to say nothing of the ongoing tensions with the Safavids and their Kızılbaş devotees, particularly further east.[355] Does this mean that Ḥüsāmeddīn was in fact plotting a bid for some form of political power? We cannot say based on the sources available to us, though for our purposes it is enough that he was at least imagined by some in the Ottoman center to have had a more expansive political agenda than that usually allowed an aspiring saint. It is also likely that Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh's account concerning Ḥüsāmeddīn's running afoul of the voivode is not just an attempt within the hagiographic memory to excuse Ḥüsāmeddīn's actual aspirations, but reflects the failure on

[355] Çipa, *The Making of Selim,* 43-48.

Ḥüsāmeddīn's part to cultivate effective ties with local elites, and to instead overstep the bounds of what was acceptable to local Ottoman power-holders and to their superiors in the imperial center.

Both Aḥmed Dede and Ḥüsāmeddīn Anḳaravī sought to both spatially fix their sainthood through building projects within rural space, while also projecting that sainthood by means of routes of movement that allowed their interaction with urban centers. Aḥmed Dede's *zāviye* served travelers on the Kütahya to Eskişehir passage, while Ḥüsāmeddīn Anḳaravī's mosque was able to serve as both a sort of catchment point (and a weapons depot if the *mühimme defter* entries are to be trusted) for the surrounding countryside as well as a practical and imaginative locus for followers elsewhere in the Ottoman world. Both structures were relatively distant from cities, yet were in dialogue with them, just as the sainthoods of each figure drew upon more urban or oecumenical exemplars even as they were attendant to, by necessity, the needs and expectations of local people from among the peasantry and nomadic tribesmen.[356] Aḥmed Dede's very specific performance of sanctity—one that rested on the provision of abundance—was probably key in keeping him from facing charges of *zındık*, since, unlike others we have seen, he does not seem to have accumulated followers or sent *halife*s abroad, even as he too accumulated resources through his public manifestation and deployment of sainthood. And while it may not have been the decisive factor—despite the rhetorical stylings often attached to policies carried out against 'seditious' şeyhs—Ḥüsāmeddīn's participation in the Melāmī *ṭarīḳat* raised the stakes from the outset on his public enactment of sanctity given the reputation the *ṭarīḳat* had accumulated for being politically dangerous over the preceding years. Both şeyhs, however,

[356] For this visual dialogue of architectural form between urban and rural structures, see the examples and discussion in Yılmaz, 'Ḥüsāmeddīn,' 519-521.

despite the divergent treatments they received from Ottoman authorities in life, would see long historical afterlives in which their sainthood was sustained in memory and veneration, down to the present, undergoing a sort of rehabilitation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

At first glance, the penultimate and most historically prominent saint that we will consider for this section, Şemseddīn Aḥmed Sīvāsī, would seem to have relatively little in common with the other figures profiled here.[357] Best known for accompanying Sultan Meḥmed III on his successful campaign against the Hungarian fortress town of Egre in 1597, and possessor, eventually, of a *zāviye* in Sivas that had been sponsored by the local *vēli*, Şemseddīn was in many ways deeply integrated into Ottoman structures of power and discourse, a feature often pointed to as typical of the Halvetī *ṭarīḳat* to which he was affiliated, and circulated among towns of some size as well as maintaining a substantial presence in much more rural locales.[358] Yet even though he seemed to be on good terms with Ottoman authorities, he maintained, and was remembered as having kept, his own distinctive profile vis-à-vis Ottoman power and projects of sultanic sanctity, his own work and the work of memory centered on him offering alternative scripts to Ottoman expansion and the meaning and scope of sultanic power. I will restrict my analysis of this important figure and his hagiographic memory to three key points: Şemseddīn's path into a saintly career, his use of movement and engagement with rural communities in eastern Anatolia in establishing his saintly persona, and his ambiguous but ultimately beneficial relationship with Ottoman holders of power. Born in the town of Zile in 1519, Şemseddīn's first saintly encounter came, as he related it to his disciple Receb Efendî

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[357] For overviews of his life and legacy, see Nathalie Clayer, 'Shamsiyya,' in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition; Ḥasan Aksoy, 'Şemseddîn Sîvâsî,' in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*.

[358] As described in, among others, Nathalie Clayer, *Mystiques, Etat et société: les Halvetis dans l'aire balkanique de la fin du XVe siècle à nos jours* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1994).

(who composed a *menāḳıb* of the saint very soon after his death, which Meḥmed Naẓmī Efendi integrated into his *Hediyyetü'l-iḥvān*), came when he was seven years old. His father, Ebû'l-Berekat, resolved one day, despite it being the middle of winter, to take his son to visit his saintly master, Şeyh Ḥacī Hızır, in Amasya, some thirty-five miles from Zile. With Şemseddīn on a donkey, his father on foot, they made their way to the presence of the saint, who, after expressing his amazement at their devotion in coming to visit him in the midst of the winter, blessed the boy with a powerful and moving prayer, an experience that would long stay with Şemseddīn and to which he attributed his later path in life.[359] After his return home he began serious studies in *ʿilm*, first in Zile, then, after exhausting the limited educational resources of the little town, in Tokat, where he lived with his two brothers who had moved there previously for other purposes. Despite his beginning to have dream-visions which, upon interpretation, indicated his destiny as a great saint, like so many other young men of middling means and scholarly aspirations from the provinces, Şemseddīn made his way to Istanbul and began working his way up the *ʿilmiye* ladder. However, he relates, one day in a social *meclis* of other members of the *ʿilmiye* system he had an intense sensation of the sordidness of it all, got up, and ran to the Sultan Meḥmed Mosque where he cried out to God 'to take me out from their midst and to bring me into the exalted community of the sufis!'[360] Afterwards he made the hajj then returned to Zile where he taught and began pursuing the sufi path in earnest, seeking out the company and guidance of a series of saintly şeyhs.

Şemseddīn's return to the Anatolian world of towns and countryside from the highly urban and institutional world of *ʿilmiye* in Constantinople points us to a crucial difference

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[359] Şeyh Mehmet Naẓmī, *Osmanlılarda Tasavvufî Hayat: Halvetîlik Örneği: Hediyyetü'l-ihvân*, ed. Osman. Türe (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2005), 319.

[360] Ibid., 320. This juxtaposition of *ʿilmiye* and sainthood will of course be recalled from the previous chapter.

between a career marked by ʿ*ilm* and one marked by *vilāyet*: within the core provinces, and to some degree even beyond, a career as a scholar of 'exoteric' knowledge was imaginatively and practically oriented towards Istanbul and proximity to the *Bāb-i ʿaliyye*. While one could begin one's education and career almost anywhere, even outside of the well-protected domains, the goal was the imperial center, from whence, to be sure, one might return back into the provinces, but with Istanbul very much at the center of things. Yet while a career in sainthood might well have entailed movement towards Istanbul as well it could imaginatively and practically be realized anywhere, including in rural places far out in the provinces. Şemseddīn continued his trajectory in 'esoteric' knowledge and practice by seeking out a series of saintly masters, beginning with his father's master, Ḥacī Hızır, but that şeyh soon died, and Şemseddīn had to seek a new guide. He tells us that there were two '*şeyh-i kāmil*' in Tokat, but one was illiterate and in his prejudice at the time prevented him from seeking him out. Instead he went to one Muṣṭafā-yı Kirbāsī, but that şeyh was already quite aged, and, after an hour of contemplation with his '*hırḳa* drawn over his head,' he told Şemseddīn that the one he was looking for would be coming to Tokat in a few months and that he ought to await his arrival. And indeed it was not long before Şeyh ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd-i Şirvānī, a wandering Halvetī saint from Shirvan, whose own saintly career went from ʿ*ilm* to ascetic seclusion to instruction under a saintly master.[361] Under his tutelage Şemseddīn quickly advanced in ascetic discipline and sufistic doctrine until he

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[361] Ibid., 321-324. In a pattern which we will explore further along, there is a marked difference between the conversion moment as it is described occurring for Şirvānī and that of his most famous disciple: 'In the beginning of my state I was in the town of Şemāhī within the confines of Şirvān, in the service of teaching, benefiting students and seeking benefit in particular through ascetic struggle (*mücāhed*). I was continuously occupied with love of exoteric knowledge and the increase of my desire for its realization, such that most nights I stayed awake reading books. Suddenly, one blessed night the book that I was reading, lying on my lap, began to move and to speak! It said, "Yā ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd, am I not your Lord such that night and day you see me? Get up and go to encounter the Lord, this encounter He will accomplish." My clothes also began crying out with a voice, and in the moment I cast aside my book and pulled off my clothing, remaining senseless, reasonless, and naked!' Ibid., 296-297.

achieved a spiritual state on par with his master, and was so able to begin his own proper career and accumulate disciples and followers of his own.

In the presentation of the above I have but briefly mentioned the nearly constant role of dream-visions in Şemseddīn's trajectory of instruction and conversion, but it is really through accounts of dreams that Receb Efendi's *menāḳıb* conveys the looming reality of Şemseddīn's sainthood, both through the dream-visions themselves and in their interpretation, which Şemseddīn always sought out even if the meaning seemed rather obvious, reinforcing his own destined saintly status through relationships with others possessed of *berekat* and divinely revealed knowledge. Interpretative mastery, of canonical texts but also and more importantly of people's inner conditions and, eventually, their dream-visions, formed a key component of Şemseddīn's saintly register: in one telling anecdote, a disciple dreamed that he was bleeding, which greatly troubled him because he had read in 'one of the dream-interpretations books, "One who sees bleeding [in a dream] will die."' But when the man goes to listen to the saint's preaching later in the day, Şemseddīn's sermon directly addresses the man's fears and assuages them, the saint superseding the merely textual knowledge of the dream-interpretation book.[362]

While Şemseddīn's saintly repertoire was multifaceted, reflecting his background in *ʿilm*, his extensive use of textuality, and the range of practices and teachings associated with his

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[362] Ibid., 360. On Halvetīs and dreams in general, including interpretation, see Aslı Niyazioğlu, 'Dreams, Ottoman Biography Writing, and the Halveti-Sünbüli Şeyhs of 16th-Century Istanbul,' in Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse, eds., *Many Ways of Speaking about the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010). Even after death, we learn, Şemseddīn descried the inner states of others and sought to comfort them: his *türbedār*, a Meḥmed Dede, found himself, despite himself, constantly asking, 'I wonder if the saint knows at all of my service on behalf of his *türbe*? And do those who come and go in *ziyāret* know?' Şemseddīn comes to him in a dream-vision and, handing him a silver *guruş* as a token, tells him that someone from the saint's family will soon come to him with comfort, which soon transpires in the form of one of Şemseddīn's female relations, poor Meḥmed Dede no longer having to worry over whether anyone noticed him or not. Naẓmī, *Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān,* 364-365.

particular branch of the Halvetī *ṭarīḳat*, all of which would have had their most resonance in the context of towns like Tokat and Sivas tied into the wider Turko-Persiante worlds beyond, the accounts in Receb Efendî's *menāḳıb* place especial emphasis on Şemseddīn's movement through and actions within rural space, movement that was replicated by his *halīfe*s, such as his nephew and eventual ultimate successor ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd-i Sīvāsī, who is described, before his move to Istanbul, as going 'from town to town, village to village, tent to tent, giving supplications, preaching, giving counsel, and holding sufi dance (*devrān*)*'* in the countryside around Merzifon.[363] Şemseddīn himself traveled a great deal, much as we have seen with rural saints elsewhere in the empire, extending his saintly presence and forging connections both through the dispatch of *halīfe*s and through his own physical presence. We get a sense of Şemseddīn's movement through space and the inscription of his presence and authority—even in conflict with the will of local Ottoman officials—in the following charming but insightful story which I have reproduced in full:

> The people of Karaḥisār-ı Şarḳī [modern Şebinkarahisar] sent messengers to Şems asking him that he honor them with his preaching, counsel, [performance of] *ẕikr*, and his blessed noble beauty. In answer to their supplication he came, and was honored immensely, being given a fine place to stay as well as much feasting and amiable conversation. For some time, he preached, gave counsel, and led *ẕikr*, then announced that he was returning to Sīvās. When the scholars, şeyhs, merchants, notables, and ordinary people of the town all came together to give him a farewell with honor and respect, numerous dogs also came before the saint, and, as if offering complaints, began barking! When Şems asked why they were barking so, the people replied, "Because there has been plague and pestilence in our town, the *ḳāḍī* of our town ordered the killing or banishing of the dogs, so that we killed some and we banished some. These are dogs that we banished."
>
> The saint cried out, "Your *ḳāḍī* was heedless of the hadith which says, *If dogs were not a community* (umma) *from among the communities, only then I would order them killed*." Saying that, he addressed the dogs: "Go safely and soundly back to dwell and be at rest in your former places!" As the townspeople returned from bidding the saint farewell, they saw these words

[363] Ibid., 392.

> fulfilled as the dogs, understanding the command, followed after the people back into town to their usual places—and having done so, by the command of God, the plague was lifted on that very day![364]

While the primary intended purpose of this story is no doubt to demonstrate the saint's authority over dogs and the plague—and has echoes as well of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's interactions with dogs, interactions likely to be known to many in Receb Efendi's reading or listening audience—other important aspects of Şemseddīn's style are on display. In the midst of incorporating the people of this Anatolian town into his orbit, through feasting, preaching, *ẕikr*, and the like, Şemseddīn goes yet further in bringing the space of Karaḥisār-ı Şarḳī into his saintly domain: when he discovers that the dogs of the town have been unjustly displaced, he rebukes the kadi and intervenes miraculously so as to restore the dogs to their rightful places in the town, restoring harmony, as indicated by the lifting of the plague. In returning the dogs to their places Şemseddīn also, at least temporarily, *displaces* the Ottoman *ḳāḍī* from his place, not only nullifying his anti-dog decree but also casting aspersion on the *ḳāḍī's* knowledge of the Prophetic *sunna*, a reminder of Şemseddīn's mastery of both the exoteric and the esoteric, mastery which could shape the very configuration of the places through which he passed, mastery to which even dogs might respond.

The power of the saint to draw rural places into his orbit and to rework local configurations and to act outside of official policies and structures is even more strikingly on display in another story Receb Efendî tells. 'For preaching purposes,' he tells us, 'the saint would be called to various villages and small towns (*ḳurā ve kaṣabaya*). Once he stopped in a certain place for rest, where the villagers were all 'Rāfıżīs.'[365] The şeyh and his companions sought to

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[364] Ibid., 359-360.

[365] A term which we probably ought to read as indicating 'Kızılbaş' identity or something akin to it—something (perceived to be) outside of canonical Sunni Islam, at the most general. Naẓmī, *Hediyyetü'l-iḥvān,* 362. For a common take on these questions in the historiography, see Fariba Zarinebaf-Shāhr, 'Qizilbash

buy food for themselves and their animals, but the villagers refused them and even worse wanted to kill Şemseddīn and his companions! Unfazed, the saint merely renewed his ritual purity and prayed two *rek'ats*, then returned to his donkey. Not more than an hour later the people of the village came with provisions and gifts. Şemseddīn's companions marveled, saying, '"First you wouldn't even bring us food but rather sought to betray us—what is this love and affection?!" They answered, "We didn't know how things stood! Love of this saint (*ʿazīz*) has so come to dwell in our hearts that in order to receive it we have had to expand our souls a great deal!" After this Şemseddīn's companions asked him what they should do now. He brought out his *tesbih* and so they practiced *ẕikr* for a while, until one of the village leaders came to them and told them that his little daughter, his only child, was ill, and that all efforts to help her had come to naught—surely the saint can help? Şemseddīn agreed, and, mounting the seemingly dead girl on a donkey, they brought her before him. He stood before her and said the Fatiha at which the girl made a jump and returned home. The girl fully recovered, and, 'it is related, she grew up to be a wise and noble woman, the affliction never returning to her.' As word of this miracle spread, the villagers left their adherence to 'Rufaz' and became Sunnis, taking sufi initiation from the saint. This village and its neighbors would remain in the orbit, Receb Efendî concludes, of Şemseddīn and his successors, sending votives, alms, and offerings to the *seccāde* şeyh for years to come.[366]

Heresy and Rebellion in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century,' *Anatolia Moderna* 7 (Fall 1997): 1–15.

[366] Naẓmī, *Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān,* 362-363. In a similar story, while passing through the territory of hostile nomads—though Receb Efendi does not indicate what precisely made them hostile, even as we can suspect Kızılbaş identity being intended here—during a rest-stop the nomads pilfed their goods; Şemseddīn remained calm, however, and miraculously summoned sufis from far and wide, who, alongside one of his nervous disiples sent to recover the goods, confronted the nomads and peacefully and effortlessly received their goods back. The saint and his retinue departed, leaving the nomads to wonder at the turn of events.

This encounter of Şemseddīn with the Rāfıżīs could be read as a straightforward instance of Sunni confessionalization in the context of previous Ottoman campaigns against the Kızılbaş, itself a subset of the ongoing Ottoman-Safavid conflict, but in fact is not so straightforward. The story indicates, if somewhat obliquely, two pertinent historical realities at work in the region: One, like much of eastern Anatolia up to the Safavid borders, allegiance to the Ottoman center had historically been quite weak, the villagers and nomadic peoples adhering to what were strategically described as heterodox forms of religious belief and practice, due more than anything else to their having pledged allegiance to the 'wrong' saint-monarch, Shāh Ismāʿīl, and his successors.[367] Beginning with Selīm I the region had been visited with extensive violence, including the alleged massacre of thousands of supporters of Shāh Ismāʿīl—the so-called Kızılbaş (though as Bashir has pointed out a coherent identity under that name only gradually emerged during our period and into the seventeenth century).[368] Two, allegiance to the Safavid shahs took form in and through an already well articulated discursive field of sainthood, one in which allegiance to a powerful (and possibly divine in some manner) saint was paramount, both in religious and in political terms (the distinction being, to no small extent, mostly heuristic from an etic view, strategic in the emic context).

To put it another way, the local dialects of sainthood expressed in different parts of Anatolia and the rest of the northern Ottoman tier existed on a broad continuum of expression, expectation, and common resources, a continuum that in fact ran from the Safavid realm across

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[367] In general see Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, 'Subjects of the Sultan, Disciples of the Shah,' and, forthcoming Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, *Kizilbash-Alevis in Ottoman Anatolia: Sufism, Politics and Community* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).

[368] Shāhzad Bashir, 'The Origins and Rhetorical Evolution of the Term Qizilbāsh in Persianate Literature,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 57, no. 3 (2014): 364–91.

to Istanbul itself. As in much of the rest of the early modern Islamicate world, ʿAlid devotion and genealogies played a major role in everyday religious life all along this 'dialect continuum,' a role that could be integrated into performances of sainthood with relative ease as the Safavids discovered, and which could change in interpretation, based on the exigencies of the viewer, from an expression of ordinary Islamic piety to a dangerous manifestation of Rāfiżī affiliation. Şemseddīn and other Sunni saints also participated in this expansive field of sanctity, as did the Ottoman sultans themselves, for whom the role of saint-monarch was deeply attractive and which they and others from within the ruling elite sought to construct and realize socially throughout the sixteenth century. This sultanic project of sainthood has been perceived by different scholars under different headings: Cornel Fleischer in particular has noted the role of apocalyptic and messianic elements in the making of Süleymān's image and memory, [369] while Yılmaz has described the 'mystical' transformation of the sultanate in terms of political thought and image projection, including the adaptation and deployment of discourses and practices of sainthood.[370] the final portion of Çıpa's recent perceptive study of the 'making of Selīm' in Ottoman historiography and theoretical texts describes in close detail the internal workings of

[369] Cornell H. Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse: Prophecies of Empire in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61, no. 1–2 (2018): 18–90.

[370] The following passage exemplifies Yılmaz's approach, which at times picks up explicitly on the language and use of sainthood and of the hagiographic, at other times putting the stress on 'Sufistic' ideas and discourse: 'The alliance between the beneficent Ottoman ruler and his well-wisher Sufis meant that it was mutually acknowledged, thanks to the endlessly symbolic and flexible language of mysticism, that both parties have their distinct spheres of authority in temporal and spiritual realms. Yet this tacit agreement was not a covenant. The question of where lines of two spheres converge and diverge was never resolved throughout later Ottoman history. Murād II and subsequent Ottoman sultans continued to claim unified authority, conveyed mainly through their self-designation as caliph in the Sufistic sense. But so did almost all other Sufi orders for their own shaykhs. These mutually exclusive visions of authority, however, seldom clashed beyond the rhetoric unless the Sufis expressly turned them into political claims prompted by material disruptions of relationship between the Ottoman establishment and Sufi orders.' Hüseyin Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 131-132.

this project of 'saintification.' While none make extensive use of Ottoman hagiography, their findings intersect well with and supplement those made here.

It is in the context of a many-sided contest for the control and deployment of sainthood on a social and political basis that we can better situate claims of Shiʿism or of conversion to Sunni Islam, and of the role of someone like Şemseddīn—neither a delegate of the Safavid shah nor a functionary or subordinate of the Ottoman sultan—within this situation. While conversion to Sunnism might have been welcomed by Ottoman officials, the actual parameters of this conversion in the case of Şemseddīn's activity point to the problem with using the same language to describe pledging allegiance to the Ottoman sultan as to a Sunni saint. The villagers, in becoming affiliates of Şemseddīn, transferred their allegiance from the person of the sanctified Safavid shah and placed it in a different saint, expressing this new allegiance through annual gifts and votives (echoing one of the charges leveled against Anatolian Kızılbaş as guilty of sending an annual 'tax' to the shah).[371] This was done collectively—all four villages are described as coming into the saint's orbit through their 'conversion' to a Sunni identity, the conversion entailing precisely this change of spiritual and material allegiance and orientation.

The trajectory of Şemseddīn's interactions with the Rāfıżī villagers in the above story provides a good illustration of possible ways that this complex situation of competition for sainthood in rural Anatolia might work out on the ground. That villagers identified as Rāfiżī would be hostile to a perceived Sunni figure would have made sense to contemporary observers, and has a ring of reality to it. The bitter years of Selīm's punitive campaigns were not that far behind, nor were Süleymān's various anti-Safavid actions, memories of which were surely preserved among the affected rural communities whose saintly allegiances had fallen to the

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[371] Zarinebaf-Shāhr, 'Qizilbash,' 12.

wrong side (or had been perceived to have done so, whatever the actual reality). Şemseddīn's reaction to their hostility, and the 'conversion' that he is described effecting, points us however towards his own ambiguous relationship with the Ottoman center, and the shared discourse and economy of sanctity in which everyone involved participated. First, the villagers suddenly—miraculously, perhaps, we are meant to understand—recognize that Şemseddīn is a saint, and begin to feel great love for him. What was supposed to have precipitated their changed understanding is not indicated precisely, and does not really matter for the story's purposes. What matters is that the villagers realized that the man they had initial seen as simply a Sunni was in fact a saint, one who filled the hearts of the villagers with love. In light of this recognition Şemseddīn reciprocates by healing the girl of the village headman. To this point in the story there has been no change in confessional affiliations. It is only as the villagers align themselves with the saint, having believed in him (or, more accurately, expressed their trusting allegiance to him), that they are described as 'becoming Sunni.' We are meant to understand, no doubt, that Şemseddīn had precognizance of all this, and that his foreknowledge shaped his actions with the potentially murderous heretical villagers. Still, it is striking that in neither this tale nor that of the pilfering nomads do we get a sense of punitive action or vindictiveness, even in the service of inducing conversion. Instead, Şemseddīn incorporates the villagers into his saintly community, their 'believing allegiance' physically expressed exactly as they might have expressed allegiance to the Safavid shah, through alms and votives. Where the would-be sultan-saints require campaigns of violence to wrest the believing allegiance of heretical villagers, true saints need only make themselves present to affect such a transformation.

If in his relations to the heretical inhabitants of the eastern Anatolian countryside we see him staking out his own position between the claims of the Safavid shahs and the Ottoman

sultans, implicitly pushing back against sultanic claims of sainthood, there are other signs of subtle critique and deliberate distancing from Ottoman authority and such sultanic claims on the part of Şemseddīn. To be sure, on the whole his relationship with both local and central agents of the Sublime Porte was generally good, even mutually beneficial. While Receb Efendî's *menāḳıb* significantly does not place much stress on it (for reasons no doubt similar to those in the slightly later *manāqib* of Shaykh Dajānī) the saint's home base in Sivas was owed to the town's governor seeking the saint out and materially inducing him and his extended family to move to Sivas and take up residence there. Forging good if not overly close ties with local power-holders was not just beneficial in material terms, of course, but also no doubt went far in ensuring that Şemseddīn, despite his amassing of material wealth and a large, spatially distributed body of followers did not fall under suspicious of instigating *fesād* ('seditious disorder') or propagating *zındıḳ*.[372] Şemseddīn, we might say, maintained a careful balance, a balance that was continued in the crafting of his hagiographic memory.

This balance is on particular display in the extended narrative of his going on campaign with Meḥmed III, which on the face of things appears to be a decidedly pro-Ottoman action, but is in fact more ambiguous. Şemseddīn is shown, between arriving in the vicinity of Istanbul and setting out on the campaign, as having a discussion with the pre-imminent saint of Üsküdar at the time, Meḥmed Hüdayī (1541–1628),[373] in which the latter suggests to Şemseddīn that due to his

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[372] And as the conflicts and violence of the Celâlî revolts, among other risings and rebellions, would suggest, local power holders were not always ironclad in their commitment to the center: to cultivate relations with local officials need not imply accidence to all of the claims and positions of the sultanic center.

[373] Unfortunatley, despite his prominence and the importance of other saints in his lineage, a thorough discussion of Hüdayī was beyond the possibilities of this study. On him and his primary şeyh Üftāde, see Paul Ballanfat and Angela Culme-Seymour, *The Nightingale in the Garden of Love: The Poems of Hazret-i Pīr-i Üftāde* (Oxford: Anqa, 2005). An excerpt from Hüdayī's *Wāqi'at*, translated by Ballanfat, points to a considerably more accommodating stance towards sultanic saintly presentation on the part of the saint of Üsküdar: 'It is recounted that Sultan Selim [I] went to see one of the enraptured saints, who was called Ak Bazli Baba, who said to him: "You will be Sultan, even though you will shed blood." When he conquered

great age he was not under obligation to pursue the 'lesser jihad,' to which Şemseddīn answers that he sought as complete adherence to the example of the Prophet as possible—the story suggesting, in a not overly subtle fashion, the superiority of the provincial Şemseddīn to the centrally-located Hüdayī.[374] Later, in the climatic battle of the campaign, Şemseddīn is seen leading a charge of other saintly şeyhs against the enemy fortress at Eger, after the Ottoman forces had performed quite poorly, even to the point of breaking into retreat. The saints triumph, the fortress falls, and in the aftermath Şemseddīn lectures the sultan about the importance of recognizing and maintaining good relations with the saints of one's age, pointing to the relationship (discussed below) between Meḥmed II and Aḳşemseddīn during the conquest of Constantinople.[375] Upon their return to the imperial capital, the sultan asks Şemseddīn to remain in Istanbul, but the saint refuses—he knows that his life is drawing to a close and he wishes to

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Damascus, he ordered the Arabs to assemble near a rubbish dump which was found in the Salihiyya, and ordered them to empty and clear it. When they had cleaned it up, there appeared the tomb of Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi with the inscription Muḥammad ibn 'Ali, and he had a cupola constructed over it…. One day Sultan Selim said to his master Halim Çelebi: "I saw in a dream that the saints of the Arab regions had gathered, and that Ibn 'Arabi was amongst them. They said: 'We will not give the land to Sultan Selim,' but the Greatest Master opposed them, saying: 'We will give.' They came round to his view, and obeyed him." Then Halim Celebi said: "When you conquer these regions, have them construct a mausoleum and a collection of buildings," which the Sultan promised to do and carried out.' Ibid., 8.

[374] Naẓmī, *Hediyyetü'l-iḥvān*, 366.

[375] Ibid., 367-374. Aḳşemseddīn's story is as follows: Meḥmed consulted with him about pressing the attack on Constantinople, and the saint told him to go ahead with the assault, while the other ʿulamaresisted this appraisal. 'Then ships came from Frengistan. Many troops and supplies came and the infidels celebrated. Then the ʿulamaand the ʿUmara gathered together and said to the Padişah: Through the word of one sufi so many troops will perish and much treasure be wasted! Just now the infidels have received aid from Frengistan, there is no hope of conquest now!' The Şeyh declares they are wrong, and gives the hour of conquest. Sultan Meḥmed wants to see the Şeyh as the hour approaches and the army is attacking, but he has secluded himself within his tent, so the sultan creeps up to the tent, removes his knife, and cuts a slit in the wall, and beholds the Şeyh in a barren tent—only earth below, his prayer-rug stretch out over it—his white hair and beard respelendent like light, his headgear having fallen off and his hair and beard falling over the ground. The sultan returned to the front and looked at the fortress—the army of Islam had entered, and beheld a group of men in white abas entering the fortress, the army of Islam entering behind them. Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī, *Akşemseddin hazretleri ve yakın çevresi: Menāḳıb-ı Âk Şemseddīn: göynüklü kadı Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī*, ed. Metin Çelik (İstanbul: Ark, 2016), 44-46.

return home to be surrounded by his family, friends, and followers.[376] The message throughout is clear enough: while Şemseddīn was on the whole a loyal Ottoman subject, that loyalty existed within certain limits, namely that no matter what degree of legitimacy the Ottoman sultan might have, he was himself *not* a saint, and instead remained in need of the support of the Friends of God within his realm. And far from being restricted to the imperial center or in proximity to the sultan, those Friends of God had as their proper territory places far from Istanbul, off in the rural hinterlands. Much as with Shaykh Dajānī, Şemseddīn was willing to engage in cooperation with Ottoman authority but not at the cost of total cooption or overshadowing by sultanic claims to sainthood.[377]

The allusion to Şeyh Aḳşemseddīn (1390–1459) in the above story points us towards one final source to be considered in the Anatolian context, the mid-sixteenth *menāḳıb* of Aḳşemseddīn, by Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī, a text that allows us to see in especially sharp relief this creative and sometimes fraught tension between Ottoman sultan and rural saint from the perspective of a sixteenth century alternative rendering of one of the most pivotal events in all of Ottoman history, Meḥmed II's conquest of Constantinople and its immediate aftermath. The

[376] Naẓmī, *Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān*, 373-4.

[377] In this he was very much in accord with the views expressed by his primary şeyh in his treatise al-*ʻAdliyya al-Sulaymāniyya*: 'Şirvani provides a prescription for spiritual perfection for the sultan and those who are set to contront the heretics which also entails the recognition of the saintly order of the world. Illustrated by anecdotes drawn from hagiographies of past mystics, *ʻAdliyya* guided the sultan to renew his devotion (*zuhd*) and piety (*taqvā*). While he urged the sultan to follow the Sufi path to attain spiritual perfection as a way of achieving ideal rulership, he also informed the sultan about the real government of the world, which was the order of invisible saints, and advised him to recognize and seek help from the overarching authority of the existing head of this order, the *qutb*, who was also the *ghavs.'* Yıldız, *Caliphate*, 259. Cf. his earlier discussion of this work: 'The ideas propounded in Şirvani's *al-ʻAdliyya al-Sulaymāniyya* and the language used to phrase them were completely intelligible to the Ottomans of the Süleymānic age, regardless of their level of education or kind of affiliation. Şirvani simply alluded to the cosmic order of the invisible saints, commonly known as *rijāl al-ghayb* (men of the unseen) or *rijāl Allāh* (men of God), and exhorted the Ottoman ruler to fit his rule to the all-encompassing government of the pole. To achieve ideal government in the world the ruler had to recognize the superior authority of the invisible saints and seek their assistance in government.' Ibid, 202-203.

menāḳıb's compiler, whom we encountered briefly in the previous chapter, Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī, was himself a resident of Göynük, the small town in Western Anatolia where Şeyh Aḳşemseddīn would eventually settle, die, and be buried in a *türbe* that remains a place of *ziyāret*, the şeyh having previously lived in the town's rural hinterland. As such this text can be read as, among other things, a record of sixteenth century memory of the Ottoman past and as an intervention, through its shaping of memory, in ongoing contemporary tensions between sultanic and saintly authority, as seen from a primarily rural, saintly-oriented vantage point but expressed through the record of a more distant past. It is, in Palmira Brummett's terminology, an 'artefact of expansion' as well as a trace of contested discourse and political power—categories which could be applied, in fact, to every hagiographic work we have considered thus far, particularly if we think of Ottoman expansion as an ongoing, indeed never truly completed, process.[378]

As noted above, Aḳşemseddīn was remembered (by some at least) as being the true source of power behind the fall of Constantinople to Meḥmed II, an account which of itself underscores the tension between saint and sultan as it was understood in the sixteenth century (and perhaps before, given that the project of rendering the Ottoman sultan as a messianic, sainthood-endowed figure arguably began in the fifteenth century itself),[379] a tension that, in the story of Aḳşemseddīn and Meḥmed resolves to the advantage of both parties. The alternative

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[378] 'One critical element of Ottoman expansion is its narration and reception – the ways in which conquering, settling and integrating (or not integrating) were told and visualised. This is an area of study which still requires much elaboration, but there exist a set of what one might call artefacts of expansion that tell, read and translate the process for victors, vanquished and those viewing at a distance. Such artefacts include campaign chronicles and other celebrations of sovereignty, appeals for conversion, treaties, sermons, maps, broadsheets, "news" pamphlets and other ephemera.' Palmira Brummett, 'Ottoman expansion in Europe, ca. 1453–1606,' in Suraiya Faroqhi and Kate Fleet, *The Cambridge History of Turkey Volume 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 68.

[379] Kaya Şahin, 'Constantinople and the End Time: The Ottoman Conquest as a Portent of the Last Hour,' *Journal of Early Modern History* 14, no. 4 (2010), 349-350 for Meḥmed as divinely-supported warrior.

history aspect of the *menāḳıb* vis-à-vis the sultanate and sainthood claims is even more clear in an account that follows immediately upon that of the conquest: the story of the finding of the tomb of Ebū Eyyūb, the 'patron saint' of a newly Islamic Constantinople, a tomb that would soon become integrated into the ritual formation and legitimation of each successive sultan.[380] The following story, which I have reproduced in full, is prefaced by an apologetic note of sorts on behalf of Ebū Eyyūb, who, Islamic tradition described, died in 674 before the walls of Constantinople while fighting under the command of Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya (d. 683), later the killer of Ḥusayn. Ḥüseyin Enīsī wanted to ensure that his readers did not confuse Ebū Eyyūb's participation in the expedition as endorsement of Yazīd, noting that Yazīd had not yet made his turn towards murderous tyranny.[381] With that clarification, yet another reminder of the pervasive and powerful nature of ʿAlid devotion in the Ottoman world, Ḥüseyin Enīsī relates the finding of the Companion's tomb:

> Then Constantinople was conquered. Sultan Muḥammed [Meḥmed Fatih] sought from Aḳşemseddīn the exalted tomb of Ebū Eyyūb. The Şeyh, finding a thicket growing in the midst of the exalted tomb, marked it out by placing his staff to the right side of Ebū Eyyūb's body. But someone took the staff, so that the marker that the staff had provided of the place was hidden, and it was said to the Şeyh, "The marker has gone away, so designate it once again!" So they Şeyh returned to the place. He set up his staff, and they began to dig, and he stood up the hidden markers [under the ground].
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> Aḳşemseddīn then said: "This is the exalted tomb! The evident sign of this is that the night that Ebū Eyyūb was buried, an ascetic monk (*bir ehl-i riyāẓat ruhbān*) saw in a dream the Prophet, upon whom be peace. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, indicated his desire for the monk to become a Muslim, saying: 'One of my companions, Ebū Eyyūb-i Enṣārī is buried in such-and-such place. It ought not remain unmarked in this foreign realm,' he said. The monk awoke,

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[380] Space permitting, it would be useful to place *menāḳıb* literature in general in dialogue with the better known and theorized genre of court historical writing, the subject of multiple recent volumes, such as H. Erdem Çıpa and Emine Fetvaci, *Writing History at the Ottoman Court: Editing the Past, Fashioning the Future*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), and Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

[381] Emīr Ḥüseyin Enīsī, *Akşemseddin,* 51-53.

> his heart filled with the light of faith: '*I bear witness that there is no god but God and I bear witness that Muḥammad is his servant and his messenger*,' he said. He tasted the savor of faith, and with love and purity before morning he went out from the fortifications, and looked for the indicated place. In the place of the exalted tomb he saw a light. Dawn was approaching. This was the exalted tomb. He rubbed his face [upon it]. He built a place of visitation (*mezâr*) over it and digging down close by to the tomb uncovered an *ayazma* (a holy well)."
>
> This being so, Sultan Muḥammad Hân and all the lords of the *devlet* came to the exalted tomb and dug, and clearing away the rubble in accordance with the Şeyh's words uncovered the exalted tomb and the ayazma. Sultan Muhammed Hân then built up the exalted tomb and for the Şeyh built a *hānigāh* and a *tekye*, but the Şeyh did not accept them, and they were made into a medrese later.
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> After having excavated Ebū Eyyūb-i Enṣārī's place of visitation (*mezār)*, in support of the evidence that the Şeyh had adduced a shepherd came forward and said: "This is the exalted tomb! For I was driving my animals along, and upon coming to this place, the sheep would not pass over this exalted place of visitation, but split up to go around it, coming back together afterwards."[382]

At heart this account, and the transformations given to the shrine of Ebū Eyyūb, have to do with the process of Islamizing Constantinople in terms of space, memory, and ritual, the locating of a Companion's tomb just without the walls cementing the city in the deep Islamic past, in a manner similar to processes that had been active elsewhere in Anatolia before the Ottomans. Of more interest to us, however, are the relative roles that the saint and the sultan play: according to this rendering, Meḥmed, already having had his assault on the city saved by the intercessions of the saint, requires the saint's assistance *again* in initiating the Islamizing process of the conquered city's space and memory. Not only is Aḳşemseddīn shown being able to locate the hidden tomb, through divine inspiration we are given to understand, he also has access (how is not at discussed) to the 'true' history of Ebū Eyyūb's tomb, in which the tomb was venerated (in typically Byzantine fashion, with an *ayazma*) by a Christian monk converted to Islam by an encounter with Muḥammad. Armed with this knowledge—none of which is shown being

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[382] Ibid., 54-55.

otherwise available to Meḥmed—Aḳşemseddīn can then direct the sultan and his retinue in clearing away the rubble and restoring the tomb. Their respective roles are quite clear: the saint possesses special knowledge and the authority to dispense it and to direct activity based on that knowledge, the purview of his direction including even the sultan himself! Any claims, explicit or implicit, about the special knowledge and abilities of the sultanic descendants of ʿO̱smān are implicitly undermined by this story: one of the most central shrines to sultanic identity, it argues, was owed to the intervention of a saint, whose divinely-granted knowledge made up for the sultan's epistemic shortcoming.

The final lines of the account argue that while Meḥmed needed Aḳşemseddīn, the reverse was not true. When offered institutional support of a sort that entailed both becoming spatially fixed and operating under the direction and nearby gaze of the sultan, the saint is shown turning it down. The only external support offered to Şeyh Aḳşemseddīn in this account, curiously and significantly enough, comes from the anonymous shepherd (whose presence just without the walls is in fact entirely plausible given the decay of the city's infrastructure and its population decline), or, rather, his sheep, who intuit the presence of the saint. In other words, grazing sheep are closer to the possession of sainthood than an Ottoman sultan! The implicit message of this account of the finding of Ebū Eyyūb is made explicit in the following coda to the story:

> Sulṭān Muḥammad Hān-i Gāzī, after conquering Constantinople, pursued the path of *taṣawwuf*. He said to the venerable Şeyh: "Whatever the judgments of the *ṭarīḳat* be show them to me and so give me guidance!" The Şeyh answered: "It is not suitable in view of the welfare of the believers, as the community of Muḥammad, upon whom be peace, are in aggrieved condition. It is proper to struggle (*cehd eylemek*) for justice—to be just is sainthood and charismata (*vilāyet ve kerāmet*) for a padişāh. In rulership, how can one person raise a thousand millstones?"[383]

[383] Ibid., 56.

This proclamation by the saint is followed up by Aksemseddin fleeing Meḥmed II, literally, even as the sultan follows him with donations and constructions in Göynük, the saint not only rejecting Meḥmed's attempt at sympathetic capture and hence subordination (on the same model as Selīm's efforts in Palestine, discussed above), but leaving the new imperial center for a return to the rural hinterlands.[384] A better and more succinct summary of the sixteenth century's conflict between saint and sultan over the command of *vilāyet ve kerāmet* could hardly be asked for, one in which the realm of the sultan is highly restricted indeed. In this rendering, Meḥmed ought to be content with the presence and aid of the saints, without trying to emulate them or seize from them their proper ground.

Notably, at issue here, as in the other, similar contexts described previously, is not a struggle between 'orthodox' sunnism on the part of the sultanate and 'heterodox' dervish sufism, as much historiography has interpreted the dynamics of religious life and authority during the period. What does appear to some extent from those older historiographic arguments is a tension between the imperial center in Constantinople, on the one hand, and authorities and holders of power in the provinces, particularly in rural and semi-rural areas. Sultans and their supporters were not content with restricting their *vilāyet ve kerāmet* to the conventional duties of fulfilling the circle of justice but rather—like so many early modern sovereigns across Eurasia—aspired to more theologically profound, and socially further-reaching, forms of authority, impugning upon the domain of the saints in the process. But just as in so many other paths of early modern

[384] It must be noted that all I have said about Aḳşemseddīn applies to the sixteenth century rendering of him, and is arguably much more a reflection of mid-sixteenth century realities than the somewhat different dynamics of Meḥmed II's project—and certainly we can also read these accounts as a reworking of the memory of Meḥmed himself, casting him in a rather more conventional light, seeking the support of Muslim saints, and even aspiring (like his descendants would do, but which it does not seem he himself in fact did) to sainthood in his own right.

sovereign aspiration, desire outmatched actual capacity and possibility: here it is not coincidental that rural sainthood, in Anatolia, in Palestine, in the Kurdish lands, or elsewhere, would throw up such strong counter-measures to sultanic claims.[385] It was precisely in the vast rural and semi-rural hinterlands beyond the imperial center, and beyond that center's extensions in various urban loci, that the claims of sainthood could be expressed and practiced most strongly and potentially effectively, even as they often fell between competing monarchical centers of sanctified power and, in the final decades of the sixteenth and into the seventeenth centuries, other entities looking to seize political power for their own ends.

v. Conclusions: reading the life of Abū Muslim al-Ṣamādī within the frame of rurality and of Ottomanization:

We conclude our exploration of Ottoman rural sainthood in the sixteenth century where we began, with the hagiography of Shaykh Muḥammad Abū Muslim al-Ṣamādī, whose life as recorded by al-Ghazzī permits wonderful summations of two of the most central themes of this chapter: first, the inapplicability of the two tier model of religious life and the more complex actual relationship between urban and rural particularities in sainthood and other, related practices; and, two, the tension and mutual give-and-take that prevailed between saints (especially rural ones) and the Ottoman sultans over the course of the sixteenth century. First, the Ṣamādiyya, first under the auspices of Muḥammad Abū Muslim's father and then of Abū

[385] That is not to say that the ʿulama as a whole did not manifest ambiguity and even resistance, as noted by Ali Anoorshah in his discussion of Ṭaşköprüzāde 's *Şeḳāʾiḳ*: 'His was a dynastic history of the House of Osman, one in which the deeds of the sultan and the actions of the Ottoman state as a whole only mattered insofar as they related to the affairs of Muslim scholars, but also vice versa. In this regard, the Şekaik occupies an ambiguous space between dissidence on the one hand and confinement on the other.' Anoorshah, 'Writing, Speech, and History,' 48.

Muslim himself, introduced through their move from their village to Damascus at least one very visible sufi practice more typical of the rural village milieu than of Damascus at the time, namely their loud and very public sufi 'audition' (*samāʿ*) accompanied by the playing of drums.[386] This practice—and perhaps others of a distinctive nature (such as the role of Bedouin in partially making up the Ṣamādiyya public)—was not met with unanimous support, as there were those among the ʿulama (or, according to according to Nuʿaymī, one from among the ʿulama, an imam and preacher named Yunūs al-ʿAythāwī)[387] who rejected it, not as a manifestation of village religion, but as 'innovation (*bidʿa*),' a concept that could be potentially applied to any practice or belief deemed unsuitably novel, not just those from a rural milieu.[388] Yet despite such opposition, first Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī's father, Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, and then Najm al-Dīn himself, supported the Ṣamādiyya and publicly performed their devotion to Abū Muslim as a saint. Badr al-Dīn made use of the *fatwa*, while his son argued for the sanctity of the Ṣamādiyya through hagiography, including, besides the story mentioned earlier, an account in which Najm al-Dīn was healed of a fever through a dream-vision of the saint leading *dhikr* with the Prophet at the center of the circle.[389] For both al-Ghazzīs, the distinctiveness (which to them did not necessarily track as rural) of this *ṭarīqa* and its holy men was a feature of their sanctity,

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[386] Nuʿaymī describes their 'custom' in detail: drum-playing in the streets, at the departure of members on journeys, in their *zāwiya*, in the 'houses of *murīd*s in which they hold *dhikr* according to their custom,' in short, almost everywhere except mosques, 'which they never do.' Nuʿaymī, *al-Dāris,* vol. 2, 172.
[387] Ibid., 171.

[388] This is a point that bears clarification: charges of *bidʿa* did not carry connotations of high or low; no one is likely to imagine, for instance, that Ibn al-ʿArabī's complex theology was seen as village superstition. While pejorative concepts of rusticity were not unknown in the Ottoman world (see Curry, *Transformation*, 75-76, for instances of a sort of such pejorative senses), such concepts do not seem to be in play here, and certainly did not occur to al-Ghazzī, even as a matter worthy of defense.

[389] Najm al-Dīn adds to this story, 'Shaykh Muḥammad loved me a great deal, and prayed for me whenever I visited him. I was present in his circle multiple times, bearing witness to his noble states.' Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, 16.

not an argument against it. And in defending Abū Muslim sanctity and his *ṭā'ifa*'s special *samāʿ*, both drew upon the resources of textual, normative Islam: the *fatwa* and the *ṭabaqāt*, reflective of their own high position in the social and religious hierarchy. It is precisely in personal relationships—facilitated by the shared understandings of sainthood above all, with more specifically sufi practices and understandings subordinate to that discursive and practiced frame—that rural patterns and distinctiveness could become so well integrated into urban, normative contexts, becoming, in effect, normative themselves.[390] Returning to the metaphor of dialect, the dialect of sanctity of the al-Ṣamādīs existed on a shared continuum with that of Damascus, such that it was mutually intelligible, even if its status—as a privileged or non-privileged dialect—was initially challenged, ultimately to be resolved in favor of the holy family from the edge of the basalt desert.[391]

The second account of al-Ghazzī's of interest to us here is set after this holy family's move to Damascus, a move that was itself precipitated by Sultan Selīm's intervention during the conquest, but which is not mentioned in al-Ghazzī's hagiography. The story that he relates concerns Sultan Süleymān[392] having apportioned some revenues from the village of Kanākir,

[390] For a somewhat parallel earlier case to that of the Ṣamādī move to Damascus, see Daniella Talmon Heller, 'The Shaykh and the Community: Popular Hanbalite Islam in 12th-13th Century Jabal Nablus and Jabal Qasyūn,' *Studia Islamica*, no. 79 (1994): 103–20; Heller's focus is on the community before their move to Jabal Qasyūn (effectively a suburb of Damascus), but in their story a similar interaction of sainthood, rurality, emigration, and normativity can be descried (though the Ḥanbalī shaykhs she profiles were not fans of Ṣamādiyya style drumming!).

[391] While there may have been continued opposition to the Ṣamādiyya in Damascus, the report of the outsider Quṭb al-Dīn al-Nahrawāl reinforces al-Ghazzī's estimation: 'Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Shakhy Muḥammad al-Ṣamādī, a resident in the Shāghūrīya [quarter]. Their ritual practice is to beat drums. Shaykh Muḥammad has a teaching circle at the Umayyad Mosque, and Damascus grandees and ʿulamaalike give credence to him.' al-Nahrawāl, *Journey*, 65. Nuʿaymī also notes the resolution of the conflict in favor of the al-Ṣamādīs, giving a long list of assenting authorities in the various *madhhab*s: *al-Dāris,* 171-172.

[392] Other sources say that it was Selīm who precipitated the Ṣamādī's move to Damascus, which seems reasonable, as part of his aforementioned program of bringing local manifestations of sanctity into some degree of legibility and control. However, the fact that it is Süleymān who appears as the orienting Ottoman

southwest of Damascus, for the Ṣamādī family and their *ṭā'ifa*, thanks to a trip to Istanbul undertaken by Abū Muslim and his father Muḥammad. On the return trip Abū Muslim experienced a case of bloody diarrhea due, he would learn, to his 'disclosing a secret in the presence of the denial of the deniers (*munkirūn*).' He was in dire straits when he saw in a dream vision someone who resembled a saintly forefather, and who put his hand on his face and blessed him. In the morning he had been healed. Al-Ghazzī next tells the story of the secret, a story, he says, he heard more than once from Shaykh Muḥammad Abū Muslim himself. When Abū Muslim was in Rūm with his father one of the Ottoman viziers 'tried' them by having put poison in the food he set before them. Abū Muslim's father was about to eat but Abū Muslim knew that the food was bad, and so told his father, and dumped the food on the ground. The vizier was satisfied with his test, and apologized to them, then brought proper food. This 'passing' of the vizier's test by means of special knowledge was the 'secret' which Abu Muslim had revealed and which led to his ailment.[393]

Many of the developments and tensions of sixteenth century sainthood, rural, urban, and, like the Ṣamādīs, somewhere in-between, thread through this story. The journey of Abū Muslim

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figure in this later hagiographic iteration is a reminder of shifts in memory at the Ottoman center, with Süleymān supplanting Selīm's role and status as saintly sultan.

[393] Al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. 3, 19. Just before this account, al-Ghazzī relates another story in a similar vein of ambiguous yet multiply integrated relations with the central *devlet* and its provincial delegates, as well as critique: when he was posted to Damascus, the governor Muṣṭafā Paşa sought from Abū Muslim that he would write something vouching for his upstandingness, but he would not do so. He then went to al-Ghazzī's father, who said he could not write out what the pasha was looking for since he didn't know one way or another the truth of things. So the pasha instead asked for supplication, to which al-Ghazzi's father replied, 'God inspire you with justice! God inspire you with justice!' not adding anything over this. When the pasha returned to Rūm, he was asked, 'What did you find in Syria?' He replied, 'I found nothing in Syria save two men—Shaykh Badr al-Dīn al-Ghazzī and Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ṣamadī.' Ibid. On the day-to-day settings in which such encounters and transmissions of cultural knowledge and expectations took place, see Helen Pfeifer, 'Encounter after the Conquest: Scholarly Gatherings in 16th-Century Ottoman Damascus,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 2 (2015): 219–39.

and his father to Constantinople in order to seek sultanic favor points to one type of Ottomanization, that defined by Karataş as 'subscription to Ottoman networks,' taking 'network' here in a broad sense to include that connecting local groups and individuals to patronage at the center.[394] That Süleymān would (or would be imagined as so doing) apportion revenues suggests the continued program of rationalizing and making legible and more malleable local instances of saintly power, in effect subordinating them to the saintly power of the sultan himself. That Abū Muslim and others in the provinces were not entirely comfortable with such a situation is manifest in the remainder of the story: the Ottoman vizier 'tests' the sainthood of the family, though the entire journey might well be seen as a larger test of their sanctity. Participation in the patronage, politics, and rites of subordination of the center takes on the appearance of betrayal, as Abū Muslim is forced by the exigencies of their situation to reveal his secret, and so earn the rebuke—but also the healing intervention—of, it is implied, his saintly ancestors (the ailment a rather grotesque analogy of his having let his secret flow out of himself). He asserts his own sainthood against the 'denial' of the Ottoman vizier and—it is not too much of a stretch, perhaps—the claims of Sultan Süleymān, too. But that assertion comes at the cost of entering into the system, of betraying the family's secret of sanctity to an undeserving central power.

Yet if tension and ambiguity and even outright resistance—if only on the level of discourse and memory—appear in this story as in many of the others recorded in this chapter, so do the seemingly inevitable processes of Ottoman integration and stabilization of power, including within a saintly family itself undergoing transformation from a rural to an urban milieu. As we leave the sixteenth century and turn to the seventeenth, we will see in even sharper relief many of the same processes: of the interplay of rural and urban, of contested and multiple

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[394] Karataş, 'Ottomanization,' 72.

routes of Ottomanization, of clashing and interpenetrating identities and authorities, even as the practice and discourse of sainthood responded to new and challenging circumstances in an empire itself subject to important and disruptive changes and transformations.

Interlude:

Chapter IV

Evliyā Çelebi and the Heterogeneous Scripts and Contexts of Sainthood in Rûm, 1620-1660

i. Introduction: the story of Şeyh Aḥmed the Mehdī:

In his great compilatory historical work *Rawḍat al-husayn* the Ottoman historian Naʿīmā (1655-1716)[395] records the career of a Şeyh Aḥmed, from a village outside of Eskişehir, who in 1638 presented himself to his followers not just as a saint but as the Mehdī as well. According to Naʿīmā's reading of this event—also recorded earlier in rather different fashion by Kātib Çelebi (1608-1657) in his *Fezleke,* likely at least a partial source for Naʿīmā[396]—Şeyh Aḥmed had laid claim to the saintly heritage of a recently deceased village saint, and had furthermore convinced a handful of the deceased şeyh's dervishes that he, Şeyh Aḥmed, was in fact the Mehdī.[397] He

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[395] For his life and work, see Lewis V. Thomas, *A Study of Naima* (New York: New York University Press, 1972); for a brief discussion of Naʿīmā's exemplary demonstration of seventeenth century Ottomanization, see Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy*, 47; cf. 106-112 for Naʿīmā's use and reworking of Kātib Çelebi.

[396] Kātib Çelebi, *Fezleke: [Osmanlı Tarihi (1000-1065/1591-1655)]*, ed. Zeynep Aycibin (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2016), vol. 2, 792-793.

[397] The study of Islamic apocalypticism and messianism is a large if discontinuous field. While we will return to the broader topic in the conclusion of this study, on Ottoman apocalyptic see for instance Şahin, 'Constantinople and the End Time,' 317–54; and the aforementioned article Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse.' The emergence at a local level of 'mahdism' in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Islamicate world has not yet received the coverage it deserves; for instance, to give but one particularly important manifestation, the Mahdī of Jaunpur, Sayyid Muḥammad Jaunpūrī (d. 1505) and the ensuing Mahdawī community he fostered, has been the subject of precious little scholarship of any kind, save David Emmanuel Singh's, *Sainthood and Revelatory Discourse: An Examination of the Bases for the Authority of Bayan in Mahwi Islam* (Delhi: Regnum International, 2003). Cf. Moin's treatment of the Mughal milieu which focuses primarily on the ruling elite and their circles (with the entirety of his study a good example of analogous contemporary 'projects of saint-making' on the part of and for Islamic sovereigns): A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 130-169.

then allegedly convinced many other ‘dervishes, brethren, and Turks without understanding’ of his divinely elected status, leading to a rise in local political power as his followers multiplied. After a while this village Mehdī was able to carry out a take-over of nearby Eskişehir, supplanting the local *ḳāḍī*, instigating, in Naʿīmā’s words, ‘*fitna,’* and recruiting to his side decommissioned soldiers, including musketeers, with which the Anatolian countryside was still rife even if the great Celālī revolts had largely abated by the 1630s.[398] This local bid for power ultimately drew the attention of the Ottoman *devlet*, and though initial efforts were unsuccessful, under the personal leadership of Murād IV, the rising was put down and the would-be Mehdī was tortured while wearing only a black turban, and then executed. His village was razed, and while some of his followers were also killed, most seem to have simply melted back into the countryside from whence they came, taking advantage of the difficulty that any pre-modern polity had in making rural people legible, much less compliant, outside of certain parameters.[399] If, as Suraiya Faroqhi argued about the same period of Anatolian history, the presence of saints and saints’ tombs could sometimes protect villagers from the endemic violence and official reprisals of the era, the reverse was also true: political gambits built out of sainthood (with or

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[398] Although his central argument regarding the interplay of climate change and developments in the Ottoman world is not especially convincing, Sam White does provide a good overview of the Celâlîs and of existing historiography in his *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). For a convincing demonstration of the long-term effects of the late 16th into 17th century ‘troubles,’ see Oktay Özel, *The Collapse of Rural Order in Ottoman Anatolia: Amasya 1576-1643* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); for an interpretation of the ‘strategies’ used by Anatolian ‘entrepreuners of violence’ vis-à-vis the central *develt*, and the responses and ultimate stabilization emanating from the Ottoman center, see Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994).

[399] Muṣṭafā Naʿīmā, *Tāʾrīhi Naʿīmā: rawḍat al-ḥusayn fi khulāṣat akhbār al-khāfaqayn* (Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Âmire, 1864-1866), vol. 3, 235-238.

without the overt presence of mahdism) could precipitate quite violent reactions from the Ottoman center and its provincial representatives.[400]

Yet striking in Naʿīmā's account is the relative ambiguity that the historian, while himself being very much a product and a part of the Ottoman administrative class,[401] conveys in his treatment of the executed şeyh: he notes that the spectators to the şeyh's torture and execution were amazed at his fortitude, the şeyh urging the executioner to take his time (Kātib Çelebi, by contrast laconically records simply that the şeyh was *siyāsetle ḳatl olundu*).[402] Naʿīmā transmits a reported conversation between Aḥmed and Murād in which the sultan says to the şeyh, "'Look, you said, 'I am ʿIsā,' isn't that right?' [Şeyh Aḥmed] replied, 'God forbid! I am from the community of Muḥammad, while I am from those drawn up towards ʿIsā.'"[403] The sultan's attempt at putting words in the mouth of the would-be saint are conventional enough, situating the militant şeyh in the context of Kızılbaş risings and the early theology of the Safavids. But instead of leaving this rhetoric to be accepted at face-value, our historian also includes Aḥmed's

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[400] Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Sainthood as Means of Defense in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Anatolia,' *Manifestations of Sainthood in Islam,* ed. Grace Martin. Smith and Carl W. Ernst, (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1993), 198-205.

[401] It should be noted that by the seventeenth century the Ottoman elite itself was hardly a unitary body (if indeed it had ever been such in any meaningful sense), but was divided in various ways, even as certain constants emerged: shared cultural formations, for instance, and a shared sense that the Ottoman dynasty was at the center of political life and deserved respect and support, even if individual sultans (to say nothing of lower-ranked individuals!) could be deposed and even executed. For the playing out of this theme in Ottoman (elite) historiography, including in the works of Peçevī and Kātib Çelebi, see Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy,* 91-132.

[402] Kātib Çelebi, *Fezleke,* 793.

[403] There is probably an allusion to Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Fuṣūs al-ḥikma* here, indicating, if an at all accurate report of the actual dialogue, the şeyh-cum-Mehdī's relative knowledge of the Shaykh al-Akbar's canonical works (as they had long been in the Ottoman lands) and his deployment of Akbarian concepts in his own self-defense; if we interpret his reported words as Naʿīmā's own interjection, his crafting of the şeyh's speech defends him from at least some of the charges laid against him and places him alongside other Ottoman interpreters of the Akbarian corpus. For the (probably) relevant portion of the Fuṣūs and one route of interpretation, see ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī, *Sharḥ al-Qāshānī 'alá Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam lil-Imām al-akbar Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Arabī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2007), 261-288.

reply, a reply that refutes the claim or at the very least interprets it very differently, with an interpretation that most Ottoman readers would not have found especially problematic alluding as it does to the theology of Ibn al-ʿArabī. And so where Kātib Çelebi expressed no ambiguity whatsoever about the perfidy of the false şeyh, Naʿīmā is reluctant to totally condemn this *possible* saint, or to give the official account complete acceptance, even if his skepticism regarding the şeyh's alleged claims is manifest in the opening lines of the story. Whatever Naʿīmā's personal evaluation of the account, the ambiguity visible in his recording of the şeyh's '*hurūc*,' as Kātib Çelebi terms it, points to the local register of sainthood which made Şeyh Aḥmed's bid legible, which at least in part contributed to its initial success, and which could shape the memory of the şeyh and his failed rising for decades afterwards.

As this episode from the 1630s reveals in miniature, the first half of the seventeenth century was a momentous one, to put it mildly, for the Ottoman world, continuing disruptive processes begun in the last couple of decades of the sixteenth century. Anatolia saw successive waves of Celâlî revolts (and other iterations of violence), as demobilized military men and disenfranchised young men of other backgrounds, often medrese students and sometimes under the leadership of rebellious members of the Ottoman elite, wreaked havoc in the countryside, resisting repeated efforts by a weakened central authority to rein them in, leading to wide-spread patterns of depopulation and general disruption.[404] During this period many features of classical Ottoman rule either passed into obsolescence or underwent major transformations, to the lament

[404] As Özel notes in discussing his use of the *nasîhatnâme* literature, 'Furthermore, despite their authors' diverse positions, these sources are remarkably indicative of the fact that the Ottoman central bureaucracy and higher-ranking military-administrative apparatus were well aware of the drastic changes taking place in the Anatolian countryside. In this respect, the explosion, on the one hand, of sultanic decrees of the "adelatname" type during the period and, on the other hand, the comments of the risale authors might be seen as two distinct forms and testimonies of the same awareness of the ruling elite.' Özel, *Collapse of Rura Order*, 18.

of many a critic.[405] From the decline of the *devşirme* system and the integration of free-born Muslims into the ranks of the *ḳul* hierarchy, to the increased seclusion of the sultans and their declining fortunes on the battlefield, the empire was at the very least in transition, as much recent historiography, have generally sought to frame this period, resisting older narratives of decline.[406] Regardless, however we choose to interpret this period, whether as one of valuable transformation or of rampant violence and disorder, discourses and practices of sainthood remained vital and dynamic across the empire, even with the concurrent rise of Ottoman puritanism ultimately under the auspices of the so-called Ḳāḍīzādelis, a turn towards puritanical Islam within some elements of Ottoman society that would continue under various guises into the eighteenth century and beyond. While Part Two of this study will explore in depth some of the ramifications of the emergent puritanisms, this chapter takes up the first half of the century and explores factors not directly related to the emergent controversies. In what follows we will explore in decidedly impressionistic fashion certain aspects of sainthood in Constantinople and its hinterland of Anatolia, taking as our primary guide that peerless traveler and Ottoman chronicler of both the strange and the everyday, Evliyā Çelebi (1611 - c. 1682), whose

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[405] Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī is perhaps the best-known representative of these critics, criticism which was manifest in a whole genre of text, the nasîhatnâme, such as Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī, *Mustafā Ali's Counsel for Sultans of 1581: Edition, Translation, Notes*, ed. and trans. by Andreas Tietze (Wien: Verl. d. Österr. Akad. d. Wiss., 1979); on Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī and the rise of such criticism, see Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 95-105; 226-231. Significant for our purposes, the increased willingness on the part of Ottoman elites to criticize the Ottoman 'system' tended towards the undermining among those elite observers and authors of the 'project' of sultanic sanctification.

[406] For a brief overview of the historiographic developments, see the introduction to Baki Tezcan's *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 9-10.

Seyāḥatnāme is an abundantly rich source for saints and practices of sainthood and saint-veneration for the seventeenth century, in Istanbul, Anatolia, Rumelia, and beyond.[407]

I have drawn upon Evliyā Çelebi's writings in order to draw out two important aspects of sainthood during this period, aspects which continued through the seventeenth century and forward, albeit increasingly modified by the polemical situation and struggle over the meaning and place of sainthood in Ottoman society. First, by examining Evliyā's reporting of the martyrdom of the Kurdish Şeyh Maḥmūd of Diyarbakır at the hands of Sultan Murād IV, we can get a sense of how local, provincial manifestations of sainthood could potentially play out socially and politically during the disordered first decades of the seventeenth century, and how such locally powerful saints might be perceived by those at or closely connected with the Ottoman center. Evliyā's account will act as a springboard pointing us toward other distinct instances of hagiophilia among Ottoman elites during the first half of the seventeenth century, a hagiophilia which, it seems likely though difficult to demonstrate conclusively, was already being shaped by the emergence, from the later decades of the sixteenth century forward, of a proto-puritanism and eventually the Kāḍīzādeli movement. Second, Evliyā Çelebi's voluminous writings allow us to see local, non-elite perspectives on and iterations of sainthood, due to the fact that Evliyā felt little need to regularize or otherwise control the sheer diversity and of registers and repertoires of sainthood that he encountered in his peregrinations across the empire. The ensuing diversity manifest in his reports is reflective both of his generally ecumenical stance towards cultural difference as well as his expansive and unambiguously positive embrace of

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[407] The literature on Evliyā is of course vast. For an introduction see Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: the World of Evliyā Çelebi* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

Muslim sainthood in many manifestations.[408] While Evliyā includes a vast body of saints—living and departed—in his work, I have centered upon one thread of sainthood in the *Seyāḥatnāme*, that of 'deviant' saints, figures Ottoman historiography has tended to represent, when representing them at all, as being heterodox in some fashion.[409] By examining Evliyā's encounters with the saints of Istanbul he classifies as the *büdelā ve melāmiyyūn ve mecāzibūn,* and situating these saints and their depictions within Evliyā's encounter with the entombed presence of an early Ottoman Bektāşī saint of Anatolia, Koyun Baba, I seek to uncover the fluid discursive world in which these saintly repertoires and practices of veneration and memory made sense socially, at least for many observers and devotees from up and down social hierarchies. This chapter will conclude with a brief consideration of the continued role of deviant and particularly Bektāşī scripts and repertoires in Rūmī sainthood up into the eighteenth century, a context which will be explored in greater depth in Part Two.

Of course, to get ahead of our story a little, not all Ottoman subjects during the seventeenth century accepted or participated in this heterogeneous milieu to the same degree, and

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[408] It is important ot underline that Evliyā's attitudes—which we can understand as part of, if not perfectly representative of, the lettered, cultured elite of the upper echelons of the Ottoman hierarchy broadly conceived—towards cultural difference is related to but is not precisely conterminous with his approaches to the diversity of saints and forms of piety and devotion. For instance, in describing the town of Gjirokastër in modern Albania, Evliyā records various customs (real and perhaps imagined) which he finds odd, humorous, or troublesome, only to note '*lākin elbette her diyār halkıının birer gūne āyīn-i ḳadīmeleri vardırd*,' or the like. He describes the strong ʿAlid piety of the locals as largely a positive thing ('*yā ʿAlī der oturur ve "yā ʿAlī der kalkar*'), though he notes what he sees as the 'excess' of cursing Muʿāwiya, something, he notes carefully, he had only heard reports of but could not verify. But when it comes to the decidedly 'Alid-centered local saint ʿAlī Dost Dede (quite literally, 'ʿAlī's friend,' the words 'ʿAlī *dost*' found inscribed in red on his chest after his death), Evliyā is unambiguous in marking him as a saint worthy of veneration. Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi in Albania and Adjacent Regions: Kossovo, Montenegro, Ohrid* ed. and trans. Robert Dankoff and Robert Elsie (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 73-85.

[409] For a recent such instance that is typical of much of the historiography, see the language used by Zeynep Yürekli in *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman Empire the Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), such as at p. 23, where she speaks of 'the orthodox procedures of the state,' dervishes and shrine-goers in this rendering both 'dissidents' and 'heterodox;' or at p. 50, where she describes the dervishes at Seyyid Gazi's shrine in Evliyā's time as having become 'orthodox.' Some of the problems and shortcomings of such language will be made clear in the following.

some sought to change it, by force if necessary. Yet Evliyā, while living and writing during the first period of overt Kāḍīzādeli activity under Murād IV and afterwards, Ottoman puritans and the polemical controversies over sainthood are only sporadically visible. Allusions to the Ottoman puritan context (if that is what they are) are often indirect: the well-known story Evliyā tells of the iconoclast's attack on an illumined *Shāh-nāma*, for instance, probably points to a member of the puritan milieu.[410] Despite such moments in which puritans or their practices seem to crop up, unlike the saints and authors that will occupy Part Two, the ensuing polemical context was, it seems, on the whole of decidedly secondary importance, if of importance at all, in shaping Evliyā's perceptions and reactions. Hence, while Evliyā probably and certainly other hagiophiles among his elite contemporaries, such as IbrāhīmPeçevī (whose chronicle will feature below as well), were aware of puritanical currents and that their awareness is visible in the stances they take on the friends of God, the polemical situation was not yet of central importance in shaping their approaches to the saints. The reverberations of Ottoman puritanism were *beginning* to be felt in wider Ottoman society during Evliyā's lifetime, sometimes in momentarily quite dramatic ways. The full impact of the contestation for Ottoman Islam that the Kāḍīzādelis and others represent would only be fully felt with time, as the conflict and its generative effects filtered out from the center, into the provinces, and into society as whole. Ironically, as I will argue in the following chapter, the recurrent political failure of the Kāḍīzādelis encouraged this dissimilatory process, as well as the decentralization and mutation of the movement—a recipe for diminished political power but greater cultural power and visibility, echoing (and perhaps causally linked with) concurrent developments affecting the

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[410] Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis: The Relevant Section of the Seyâhatname,* ed. and trans. Robert Dankoff (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 294-295.

empire as a whole.[411] All of which is to say, Evliyā's vision of sainthood picks up on local registers and particularities as they had developed down to the middle of the seventeenth century, in all of their wild and woolly tangle, the very sort of apparent heterogeneity that so irritated puritanical reformers like Meḥemmed Ḳāḍīzāde.

ii. The case of Şeyh Maḥmūd: sainthood in a time of revolt and danger:

If the signs of the expanding conflict between followers of Kāḍīzāde and his various opponents (which, as the following chapters will stress, did not always form coherent or continuous groups) were as yet only somewhat visible in the provinces, the above story of Şeyh Aḥmed is a reminder that other sorts of conflict and struggle intersected with and indeed could constitute sainthood during this period, in some cases conjuring up the clash between saint and sultan described in the previous chapter. Yet these moments of conflict (and their historiographic traces), upon closer examination, were of a rather different nature, reflecting far more the perilous grasp centralized power had upon the provinces during this period and the fear of self-authorizing actors capable of attracting wide-based support. Perhaps no other saintly career exemplifies the tensions and perils of this period than that of Şeyh Maḥmūd (also known as Şeyh Rūmī) of Diyarbakır.[412] Analysis of the memory of his life and martyrdom also serves to underline changed elite attitudes towards the conflict between saint and sultan and the limitations

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[411] The question of political 'decentralization' and types of recovery will be examined in more depth in what follows; suffice to say, as Wilkins' study of Ottoman Aleppo argues in a manner representative of much other recent historiography, the very fact of Ottoman 'decentralization,' in the sense of apportioning state tasks and responsibilities out to wider society frequently had the effect of integrating political functions with cultural, economic, and wider social functions. State institutions gained their strength by not being exclusively 'state' institutions, but by being constituted in guilds, neighborhoods, and the dispersion of soldiers in wider society. Charles L. Wilkins, *Forging Urban Solidarities: Ottoman Aleppo 1640-1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[412] For an overview of Şeyh Maḥmūd and the relevant sources, see Dina Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandīs in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 75-80.

of sultanic authority during this period of diminished centralized power. Evliyā introduces Şeyh Rūmī, as he refers to him, in no uncertain terms, before launching into the story of his fateful encounters with Sultan Murād:

> Next, also outside the Rūm gate, is the shrine of the protector of reason and law, the knower of the [legal] roots and branches, the şeyh of the religious community and pole of the *devlet*, the mine of divine secrets, the struggler of the lights without end, the venerable Şeyh Rūmī… Because this saint (*ḥażret-i ʿazîz*) was a wealthy and saintly person (*māldār ve ʿazīz kimesne olmagile*), over forty thousand loyal dervises had become strongly attached to him. Due to this abundance of dervishes he increased the fame of the order of the Khwajagan.[413]

This introduction, whose details are reproduced by other observers in similar fashion, points, first of all, to Evliyā's unambiguous recognition of Şeyh Maḥmūd's sainthood, indeed, the truly exalted and central nature of his sainthood, as well as, second, the social power and recognition that Şeyh Maḥmūd had obtained in the years before his martyrdom. That Şeyh Maḥmūd—himself a refuge from Safavid confessionalization policies, having been born in Urmia in Iranian Azerbaijan, eventually settling in the Ottoman realm—would be so successful in the fraught borderlands should not be especially surprising. Not unlike many of the politically powerful sufis of late medieval Inner Asia, Şeyh Maḥmūd could summon up both a powerful deposit of personal sanctity as well as, thanks to the reputation for that sanctity and no small degree of political acumen, material resources, the combination making him a potentially stabilizing socio-political presence in a deeply unsteady world—at least in the eyes of his devotees.[414] What appeared to be a source of stability to his 'forty thousand loyal dervishes' could take on a very

[413] Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi in Diyarbekir: The Relevant Section of the Seyâhatname*, ed. and trans. by Martin van. Bruinessen and Hendrik Boeschoten (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 185.

[414] For this milieu, see for instance Devin DeWeese, 'Yasavī šayhs in the timurid era: Notes on the social and political role of communal sufi affiliations in the 14th and 15th centuries,' *Oriente Moderno,* v. 76 n. 2 (1996): 173-188; Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism,*14-17.

different valence for other observers, of course. Kātib Çelebi's brief recounting of Maḥmūd's life and death (which he passes over swiftly, avoiding the laden term 'martyr') expresses more sympathetically the Ottoman center's rationale than any of our other accounts. While Kātib Çelebi notes Şeyh Maḥmūd's sainthood and his role as a sufi guide, his overriding stress is on the saint's popularity and ability to marshall devotees from a vast geographic catchment basin and from up and down the social scale. So integral was Maḥmūd to life in Diyarbekır, he notes, residents would make oaths by invoking 'the saint,' meaning Şeyh Maḥmūd.[415] Kātib Çelebi next notes that Sultan Murād, having 'made extensive investigation' into the saint during the Yerevan campaign realized the extent of Maḥmūd's saintly public, then determined on his return from Baghdad that the powerful şeyh needed to be removed. Kātib Çelebi puts in Murād's mouth an explanation: many saintly şeyhs of just this sort, the sultan argues, have in the past been responsible for disorder within the 'well-protected domains,' leaving the 'station of guidance' and instead 'placing their foot upon the step of sovereignty (*rütbe-i salṭanat*).' As an example of this dangerous trajectory, Kātib Çelebi has Murād bring to mind the recent case of Şeyh Aḥmed. And so Murād 'removed' the saint. Yet even as Kātib Çelebi foregrounded the sultanic rationale for executing the saint, he noted, however briefly, Maḥmūd's piety and sanctity, preserving some degree of ambiguity about the affair.[416]

Evliyā's account is much longer and more nuanced than that of Kātib Çelebi, beginning with his explanation of how and why Sultan Murād came to notice and suspect Maḥmūd. The concerns the Ottoman center might have had about Şey Rūmī, Evliyā's narrative suggests, were tempered by practical political realities in the eastern borderlands as well as respect for a widely-

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[415] *ʿAzīz başıyçün' diyü and [i.e. ʿahd] içerlerdi*: Kātib Çelebi, *Fezekle*, vol. 2, 819.

[416] Ibid., 818-819.

esteemed friend of God.[417] Evliyā relates that 'intriguers' slandered the şeyh in front of Sultan Murād when, in 1635, he was besieging the fortress of Yerevan, saying, 'Majesty, to all appearances (but God knows best), in Diyarbakır the Shaykh of Urmia might start a great rebellion, claiming to be the Mehdī (*Mehdī gibi ṣāḥib-i hurūc ola gibi*). He has forty thousand disciples, ragged and sun-blackened people, crying out in divine love, strong and violent!' Yet Murād, at this juncture, did not do anything to check the power of the şeyh or his following.[418] Rather, when Murād set out on his campaign to recapture Baghdad in 1638 he was met by Maḥmūd, who predicted for the sultan the conquest of Baghdad, the defeat of the 'Kızılbaş' (that is, the Safavids), as well as Murād's return and subsequent unjust killing of the saint. However, while appreciating the good tidings, Evliyā writes, 'Sultan Murād did not heed the allusions hidden in these words and said: "If God permits, Efendi, I shall after the conquest of Baghdad set out against the island of Malta." The saint immediately retorted: "It would be even better, my lord, if you would from now on study the book *Ṭariqat-i Muḥammadī* and enter upon this religion (*bū dīn—Budīn*)!"' Murād did not understand this allusion (to Meḥmed Birgivī's *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, a massively popular text as we will discuss further along),[419] assuming the saint was referring to Budapest (Budīn). In exchange for these predictions and

[417] Maḥmūd, while operating out of his 'base' in the city of Diyarbakir, itself in close proximity to the political diverse borderlands between Ottoman and Safavid lands, could also draw upon the support of fellow Kurds scattered throughout the semi-autonomous polities that made up much of the Ottoman Kurdish region. While it is not stated explicitly in any of our sources, it was probably this borderland dynamic with already existing tensions of semi-autonomy, possible alternative loyalties, and the like which drove Murād's logic.

[418] Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi in Diyarbekir*, 185-186.

[419] On Birgivī's magnum opus and its 'semi-canonical' status in Ottoman Islam, see Jonathan Parkes Allen, 'Reading Meḥmed Birgivî with ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī: Contested Interpretations of Birgivî*'s al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadīya* in the 17th–18th-Century Ottoman Empire,' in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts)*, ed. by Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 156-157.

(misunderstood!) counsel, 'the sultan made rich presents to the saint, but the latter accepted nothing, requesting instead a reduction in the number of Diyarbekir's levyhouses and of the oppressively heavy poll-tax,' a good indication of Maḥmūd's political skill, such a move, if successful, promising an increase in his local social capital.[420]

Evliyā's narrative continues with Murād's encountering Maḥmūd again upon his return journey from Baghdad. Once again he was impressed by the saint, but was also told that he practiced alchemy, about which he queried the şeyh. Maḥmūd replied that while it was true that sufi şeyhs made use of alchemy, it was for ultimately ascetic purposes, so as to reduce one's degree of food intake.[421] This answer did not entirely satisfy the sultan, who desired proof for himself. It is from here that the story turns towards its violent dénouement: 'In those days… there lived in the *ḥarem* of the saint's residence a daughter of Maʿanoğlu, the widely known chieftain of the Druzes in the province of Syria. She was an accomplished witch…' She made golden alchemical pills which both the saint and the sultan ate, to great effect. However,

> the moment Sultan Murād returned to his pavilion tent he began pondering the fact that the slanderers' claims had proven to be right. He at once sent an ağa to the shaykh's private quarters, and had both the saint and Maʿanoğlu's daughter strangled; they were buried outside the Rūm gate. After that, Sultan Murād returned to Istanbul, but he did not live very long. With the lament "Ah,

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[420] Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi in Diyarbekir*, 188.

[421] A theme that I could have developed but did not is that of the relationship between alchemy and sainthood (and apocalyptic and millenarian trends as well) in the Ottoman lands, particularly though not exclusively in Rûm, a relationship with both 'positive' and 'negative' aspects as well as those of a more neutral imaginative-referential nature. See for instance Ismāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı's discussion of ʿOs̱mān Faẓlī (d. 1691) and his (divinely revealed, Ḥaḳḳı implies) knowledge of alchemy: Ismāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı, *Kitāb-i silsile-i Ismāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı bi-ṭarīḳ-i Halvetī.* ([Istanbul: n.p.], 1291), 95; conversely, slightly later, a disciple of Ḥasan Ünsī (to be discussed in chapter five) is seen being rebuked by the saint, because 'In the beginning, in my taking the *beyʿat* from the Venerable Şeyh I was looking for alchemy, because I had heard that what is called alchemy is something that is among the divine graces in the hand of the saints of God,' a motivation that the saint did not appreciate at all. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Ḥasan Ünsî Halvetî ve Menâkıbnâmesi,* ed. Mustafa Tatcı (Bağcılar, İstanbul: Kırkambar Kitaplığı, 2013), 252. For aspects of alchemy in the Ottoman world in general, see Tuna Artun, '*Hearts of Gold and Silver: The Production of Alchemical Knowledge in the Early Modern Ottoman World,* (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2013).

> Şeyh of Urmia! Ah!" on his lips, he passed away. This humble author has recorded this story (*bu menâkib*) as he heard it from his lord Melek Ahmed Paşa. For the latter was Sultan Murād's sword-bearer in those years, and after the conquest of Baghdad became the governor of Diyarbekir. He believed in the saint and used to visit his grave frequently. God's mercy be upon him! The shaykh lies buried in the Muslim cemetery outside the Rum gate, in a grave without dome or any structure. May God bless us through this saint's miraculous powers! This humble author wrote the following lines on his tombstone:
>
> We came as pilgrims to this station
> Where reposes the great guide, Şeyh Rūmī![422]

Murād, Evliyā notes elsewhere in his account of Diyarbakır, was not himself unmoved by the execution of the saint, and even repented of his evil, though that did not foreclose his ultimate punishment for unjustly slaying the saint.[423] Hostility to the Friends of God, Evliyā argues here and elsewhere, is quite dangerous, even for the scion of the House of ʿOs̱mān.

In broad outlines, Evliyā's account of the şeyh's martyrdom resembles the renderings of others, though the details unsurprisingly vary. For instance, in Naʿīmā's later record of the affair, the Maʿanoğlu daughter's role has grown more central: she is described as slipping away from her family's decaying situation to the south and, disguised as a man, making her way to Şeyh Maḥmūd, bringing her alchemical skills with her, where she tricks the 'pure-hearted' şeyh, who then tells Sultan Murād of her abilities. When the sultan sets up a test of her gold-making abilities, she fails it, leading to her execution and that of the şeyh.[424] Evident in both accounts however, and in that of Ibrāhīm Peçevī, is the Maʿanoğlu daughter's role in making sense of the

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[422] Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi in Diyarbekir*, 189.

[423] 'And it is a verified fact indeed that when Murād Han came to Diyarbekir after the conquest of Baghdad [in 1638] and martyred (*şehīd etdikde*) the saint (*ʿazīz*) the Şeyh of Urmia, the entire basin [of the Balıklı Spring] was filled with blood. When Murād Han came in person and saw the blood in the Balıklı basin he was filled regret (*nādim*) at having killed the şeyh, and had four big fish taken out of the pool and gold and silver earrings pierced through their gills, after which he had them set free again. Until quite recently they were still there.' Ibid., 148-149.

[424] Naʿīmā, *Tāʾrīhi Naʿīmā,* 387-389.

conflict between şeyh and sultan, without impugning the saint while allowing for some lightening of the sultan's culpability (though both Evliyā and Peçevī record what is implied to be divine punishment befalling Murād soon afterwards). Of particular note in Evliyā's account is the rapidity with which Şeyh Maḥmūd came to be venerated as a martyr in Diyarbakır, even if his veneration carried, for a while at least, the possibility of political danger. It is this latter aspect that probably explains the simplicity of his tomb, the erection of a grander structure still politically fraught given the manner of the şeyh's death. Yet Evliyā treated the şeyh's tomb precisely as he would a typical saint's shrine, making pious visitation to it and writing appropriate verses on the tomb marker itself, which, in all probability, was already the site of similar pious writing (probably in charcoal, if extant saints' shrines are a guide, which would have permitted successive writers despite the limited space, the charcoal eventually washing off).

Evliyā Çelebi was not the only member of the Ottoman elite to venerate this Kurdish şeyh of the distant marches. As we have already seen, Kātib Çelebi, while on the whole expressing the logic of the center in his report, nonetheless acknowledged Maḥmūd's sanctity, in which he was followed, with expanded details, by Naʿīmā. Ibrāhīm Peçevī (1574-1649), whose historical chronicle on the whole is far more critical of the center, reflecting the concerns of other factions of the Ottoman elite,[425] devoted several pages to the story of Şeyh Maḥmūd (here also referred to as Şeyh Rūmī), though only a portion is directly concerned with the saint himself. After a description of the events leading up to the saint's martyrdom (*şahādet*) similar to Evliyā's rendering, Peçevī records his own reaction to the şeyh's death: he was at home 'conversing with his intimates' when word of the şeyh's martyrdom reached him. In that moment the martyrdom of Shaykh Majd al-Dīn Baghdadī and the 'states' of his persecutor, Khwarezmshah Sultan

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[425] For a reading of Peçevī as one historiographic voice within a diversity of elite voices with differing stances and political locations, see Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy,* 106-112, 169-170.

Muḥammad, 'came to my mind, and woe that the Sultan would afflict the saint due to evil reports without knowledge! "May God protect the people of Islam from the wages of this blood being unjustly shed!" I said, troubled.'[426] During his career as a *defterdār* Peçevī had spent time in Diyarbakır, he explains, where he often met with the saint, who at one point mentioned to Peçevī the story of Majd al-Dīn and his unjust execution in 1219, saying that it would apply to him, after having had a volume of Jāmī brought forward and the relevant story read. Peçevī reproduces the story, in a condensed, translated form, in which, among other things, Shaykh Majd al-Dīn inadvertently angered Sultan Khwarezmshāh Sultan Muḥammad due to the sultan's mother's devotion to the sufi. When, after executing the shaykh Sultan Muḥammad repents before Najm al-Dīn Kubravī, his response, as given in the Persian account by Jāmī alluded to by Peçevī, is chilling: 'The shaykh answered, "That was written in the Book. His blood price is your entire kingdom, and your head too will go [you will die], along with most of your people, we too sharing in your fate." Sultan Muḥammad returned, hopeless, and soon Chingīz Khān came forth and did what he did.'[427] Peçevī further contextualizes his account of Şeyh Maḥmūd through the extended rendering into Ottoman Turkish of aspects of the *menāḳıb* of the great medieval Baghdadī saint ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, following up the description of Murād's reconquest of that city and coming just before the story of Maḥmūd, included, Peçevi states, in order to draw

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[426] İbrahim Peçevī, *Tarīh-i Peçevıī (*Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Âmire, 1864-1866), vol. 2, 461-462.

[427] Jāmī's full account of Majd al-Dīn, which is only partially reproduced in translated form by Peçevī (perhaps out of a sense of restraint?), includes a most unflattering portrait of the offending sovereign: 'Shaykh Majd al-Dīn preached in Khwarezm, and the mother of Sultan Muḥammad, who was a woman of exceeding beauty, attended the preaching of Shaykh Majd al-Dīn, and would often go on pious visits to him. Slanderers sought occasion until one night the sultan was very drunk, and they claimed to him, 'Your mother is going to end up entering the madhhab of Abū Ḥanīfa by marrying Shaykh Majd al-Dīn!' The sultan became very angry and commanded that the shaykh be cast into the Tigris, so they cast him in.' Mawlānā Abdulraḥmān ibn Aḥmad Jāmī, *Nafaḥat al-uns min ḥaḍarat al-quds* (Calcutta: Maṭba'-i Līsī, 1858), 487-489.

down the *berekat* of the saint upon his historical work.[428] Yet within the narrative flow of the chronicle this triple hagiographic sequence—ʿAbd al-Qādir, Şeyh Maḥmūd Rūmī, and Majd al-Dīn—also places Sultan Murād in a subordinate role, his importance, power, and place in the narrative (of his most important conquest, memorialized in the elaborate Baghdad Kiosk) embedded within the memorialization of three saints, one of whom he martyred![429]

There is much that we can extract from Evliyā, Peçevī, Kātip, and Naʿīmā's accounts of Şeyh Maḥmūd, taking into consideration the status of each author as a member of the elite stratum of the Ottoman world and the transformations and diversity within that stratum. First, despite the apologetic, hagiographic tone and structure that our authors took, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Murād's suspicions concerning Şeyh Maḥmūd were not unfounded—the speech Kātib Çelebi puts in the sultan's mouth is an accurate description of the socio-political realities of the period. Even controlling for numerical inflation, the saint's large following in the Kurdish lands, Ottoman and (according to Naʿīmā) Safavid—a feature, as we saw in the previous chapter, common among Kurdish saints of the early modern period, if not well before—would have in itself been cause for concern. That Şeyh Maḥmūd had positioned himself within an important urban center of the eastern marches, was building up no small amount of personal wealth, had ties of some sort (our informants are quite unsatisfactory in explaining precisely why the Maʿanoğlu daughter was in the şeyh's entourage) with the Maʿanoğlu family, and may well have expressed (or been the object of such expressions) messianic and millenarian claims, were all possible signs of a looming bid for political power or outright autonomy. In Peçevī's account

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[428] Peçevī, *Tarīh-i Peçevī,* 452-458.

[429] A route not taken here but which but one worth exploring is the relationship between the Ottoman sultans and the person and shrine of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlanī. Examining the complex relationship in hagiography, architecture, historiography, and along other fronts vis-à-vis changing conceptions and practices of sultanic and non-sultanic sainthood would no doubt be quite rewarding.

the indications of local discontent with Ottoman actions are noted explicitly, with the saints' followers gathering to put direct pressure on the sultan, while in Evliyā the saint's critique of Murād and his administrators in the region is subtler. Both authors represent political action on the part of the şeyh and his followers, political action which could, in the eyes of Murād and (at least some of) his advisors expand into more serious threats, even as that political clout and organizational ability represented a vital aspect of Şeyh Maḥmūd's sainthood for his followers. While they have an aspect of hagiographic commonplace about them, Evliyā and Peçevī's reports that Maḥmūd prefigured his own martyrdom could well point to his own sense of his political project and the dangers it might entail. Yet despite all of these fairly blatant indications of the political danger Şeyh Maḥmūd posed, our authors absolve him of any blame beyond a certain naivety, noting the immediacy of what is implicitly divine judgment upon Murād for his grave error in having the saint executed (though our authors spread blame to other parties in an attempt not to center it on Murād himself). There is no suggestion, even in Kātib Çelebi's sultan-centered account, of Murād's sanctity. Instead, it is Şeyh Maḥmūd who is shown potentially overstepping his bounds: where in the sixteenth century we saw saints and their supporters work to delimit sultanic authority to the political, here the balance of anxiety lies in the other direction.[430]

This studied absolution of saints took numerous forms elsewhere in these men's writings. To give one further example: Peçevī's account of the 1522 uprising of Ḳalender Çelebi begins by noting Ḳalender's lineage as a descendant of the 'second saint' of the Bektāşīs, Balım Sulṭān,

[430] Of course, Muslim sovereigns, Ottoman and otherwise, had long worried about the political potential of holy men, and sought at times to restrict it; the difference is really one of emphasis. The contestation between sultan and saint in the sixteenth century was not just over the deployment of political power, or rather primarily about political power, but the nature and shape of authority and 'identity.'

whom Peçevī explicitly notes as a saint despite his grandson's perfidy.[431] Next, in order to distance Ḥācī Bektāş himself from Ḳalender's rebellion (which involved dervishes affiliated with the Bektāşīs), he relates a story borrowed (as he notes) from Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī: 'When, during the time of Sultan Bāyezīd [II] Shāh Ismāʿīl rose in rebellion and came to Rûm, he camped in the vicinity of the shrine of Ḥācī Bektāş-i Velī. The saint appeared to him in a dream and said, "Arise and return, son, lest I bite your little dick and cut it off!"' Ismāʿīl awoke and, taking the hint, 'set out to return to Azerbaijan.'[432] Peçevī then returns to the story of Ḳalender Çelebi (whom he notes laid claim to inherited sanctity in marshalling his supporters), having distanced the friends of God Balım Sulṭānn and especially Ḥācī Bektāş from potential 'contagion' on the part of Ḳalender, and in so doing also subtly suggests the power of the saints and the dependence of the Ottoman sultans upon them: it is Ḥācī Bektāş's ribald threat that drives Ismāʿīl back, not the possibility of military action by Sultan Bāyezīd.

The way, then, in which the stories of Şeyh Maḥmūd (and, albeit less dramatically, of his more ambiguous contemporary Şeyh Aḥmed) were recounted suggest that the contest between sultanic claims to sanctity and those of the saint was decided largely in favor of the saint. In the perceptions and constructions of memory erected by Ottoman insiders like Evliyā, Peçevī, and Naʿīmā, perceptions which we may safely take to reflect those of many of their peers, the saints tended to receive the benefit of the doubt in encounters with sultans, even in cases like that of Şeyh Maḥmūd. Sanctity—or at least the possibility of such—rested with the friends of God, if it rested with anyone in 'this world below.' What I cannot answer in any detail here why and precisely how this transformation happened—that would require far more time and space than

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[431] On Balım Sultan, see Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography*, 32-33.

[432] Peçevī, *Tarīh-i Peçevī* vol. 1, 120-121.

the parameters of this already lengthy study permit—two factors can be mentioned, besides the obvious fact that veneration of the friends of God was an effectively unquestioned and central aspect of Islam for anyone, elite or otherwise, during this period, at least before the polemical conflict of the seventeenth century. The ideological conflict between sultan and saint was one of relative subordination and status, not over whether saints continued to be manifest or should be venerated. That said, most important in explaining the change in perceptions of sultanate and sainthood must surely be the changed nature of the Ottoman sultanate, of the empire as a whole, and of ensuing perceptions of the reigning sultan. Simply put, after Süleymān (who, it should be recalled, had his critics, with the imagined 'golden age' of sultanic power not always settling up the period of Süleymān Kanūnī as it has in more recent years) it became harder and harder to imagine a reigning Ottoman sultan as the Mehdī, or even as a friend of God of a less eschatologically-charged sort. The mid-century recovery under the auspices of the Köprülüs hardly provided the terrain for a concurrent recovery of sultanic saintliness; and anyway new currents were active into which sultans might be drawn, through which they might fashion themselves as pious, but not as millenarian saintly redeemers.

The stories of both Şeyh Maḥmūd and Şeyh Aḥmed, to which we might add others such as Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī and (in slightly different but otherwise closely related fashion) Sabbatai Sevi later in the century, reveal that the imagined loci for a Mehdī-saint had shifted all but entirely into the domain of the non-sultan saints of the provinces.[433] The practical reason Murād feared both şeyhs underlines precisely why it had become so hard to imagine a sultan as an eschatological deliverer: the post-Celālī world of Anatolia and beyond had refused the

[433] Both will be mentioned briefly in the following chapters, but on them in general see the still magisterial Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi; the Mystical Messiah, 1626-1676.* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1973), and, on Niyāzī, Derin Terzioğlu's useful and informative if in other respects limited 'Sufi and Dissent in the Ottoman Empire: Niyazî-i Mısrî (1618-1694),' (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 1999).

ameliorating attempts of the descendants of Selīm and Süleymān, with rebellion and other forms of disorder continual problems. From the viewpoint of many ordinary people (and arguably, if not overtly stated, from that of men of the Enderūn as well), if an eschatological or otherwise savior was liable to arise, it would be from the ranks of the friends of God. That same savior could easily be seen from the center as just another manifestation of local disorder and violence, as a threat to the already fragile power of ʿOs̱mān's heir. In short, the transformation in eschatological imagination (which of itself calls out for systematic study, in the Ottoman context and beyond) also meant that it became harder for sultans or their supporters among the elite to project an image and identity of sainthood, particularly superior sainthood. These changed circumstances effectively ceded the ground to the saints in the control of sanctity, provided they did not attempt to challenge the sultan on the ground he continued to claim, however tenuously.[434]

Second, and related to the above, the increased visibility of critics of sainthood (whose ideas, it should be stressed, had existed before the Kāḍīzādelis) and their increasing resonance in Istanbul, and perhaps beyond, if still in relatively limited circles, probably contributed to sultanic reluctance to draw upon sainthood in strategies of self-presentation and authority legitimation. Its social purchase was, at least in parts of Ottoman society, it not more limited then at least contested in ways that had not been true in the sixteenth century. That said, there is no suggestion in any of the accounts of Şeyh Maḥmūd that Murād's earlier interactions with the Kāḍīzādelis had any bearing on his treatment of the saint, and in fact, in Evliyā's account at least,

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[434] This is at least in part the lesson that Kātib Çelebi, who elsewhere was critical of both the Kāḍīzādelis and of sufi şeyhs, urging 'moderation,' wants to convey. For his related stance on the emergent Ottoman culture wars see Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth,* trans. by Geoffrey Lewis (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957). Even for Kātib, the potential polticial danger of the Friends of God is cause neither to doubt their overall validity nor to instead locate the control of sanctity in the sultans.

Murād was initially reverent towards the Kurdish şeyh, even seeking aspects of his special knowledge, while both Ibrāhīm Peçevī and Melek Aḥmed Paşa, respectable members of the ʿ*askerī* class, quite clearly revered the saint during his lifetime and after his martyrdom. That said, it is also possible that emergent critiques and outright attacks on contemporary sainthood and the living friends of God played a role in shaping these accounts of Şeyh Maḥmūd's martyrdom. As would certainly be the case with later Ottomans, such as that of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī analyzed later in this study, attacks on the saints could spur a sort of doubling down on contemporary saints, a closing of ranks that sought to prevent any ceding of ground to the enemies of the friends of God. In short, many dynamics, some of which must for now remain somewhat indistinct, can be discerned in these accounts, pointing to the continuing vitality and transformation of sainthood in the Ottoman world, a theme that will become even more clear in the following section.

iii. Melāmī, meczūb*, and Bektāşī: saintly repertoire and practice in seventeenth century Istanbul and Anatolia:*

If Evliyā and our selection of Ottoman historians point us towards changed perceptions of sainthood among at least a portion, if not the entirety, of the Ottoman elite, alongside the continued potency of rural and borderland saints' political roles, the famed traveler can also orient us towards other developments in Ottoman registers and dialects of sanctity and associated religious practice. Already in the accounts of Şeyh Maḥmūd we have seen further developments in the dialect of Kurdish sainthood in the Ottoman borderlands which we first encountered in the previous chapter, with suggestions of saintly script and everyday practices of veneration. Overall, the visions of sainthood that emerge from Evliyā's many encounters with living and

departed saints is a decidedly unsystematic and heterogeneous one, reflective of Evliyā's particular devotional interest in the friends of God as well as the fact that despite formation in a medrese and the cultivation of ties to various *ṭarīḳat*s, he was neither an *ʿālim* nor closely affiliated with any single *ṭarīḳat*, both factors that tended to 'narrow' or at least structure the focuses of other authors, hagiographic and otherwise.[435] As such, while certainly a representative of Ottoman elite culture, Evliyā's perspective can generally be taken as relatively close to that of ordinary devotees in the places he visited and described (even if his descriptions are shot through with literary and other flourishes), and as such serves us as particularly useful in uncovering local registers of sanctity and scripts of sainthood.

The hagiographic components of the *Seyāḥatnāme* tend to be marked by certain commonalities of structure, even as they vary greatly in length, detail, and tone. As befits what is primarily a travel narrative, Evliyā organized his hagiographic material based on places, with short (and sometimes not-so-short) *menāḳıb* texts either prefacing or post-facing the description of a saint's *türbe* and associated structures. And as befits a narrative strongly marked by the autobiographical, many of Evliyā's hagiographic excurses involve some personal experience with the saint and his tomb. These experiences ranged from the dramatic to the mundane, the latter consisting of such standard practices as writing a bit of verse and one's name on the wall of a tomb (or on the surface of a tombstone), something that many pilgrims to saints' shrines did but which Evliyā is especially careful to reproduce. Evliyā almost certainly kept records of the *menāḳıb* material he encountered—usually, it would seem, in oral form—which he could then reproduce in his *Seyāḥatnāme*, often at some length, generating *bereket* within his text by so

[435] Enfī Ḥasan Hulūs Halvetī's early eighteenth century hagiographic compilation, which is discussed further below, is another good example of such a wide-ranging treatment on the part of someone formed in elite Ottoman culture and not especially attached to a single *ṭarīḳat*.

doing, while inadvertently providing later historians invaluable glimpses into local iterations of sainthood and hagiography, often in places for which there are no other textual records. Insofar as Evliyā has a recurring argument to his hagiographic material, it is that even sultans and high officials ought to respect and venerate the saints, failure to do so putting even the most powerful at risk in both this world and the next, as Sultan Murād belatedly discovered in the case of Şeyh Maḥmūd.[436] Out of a vast trove of material, I have selected two interrelated sections from the *Seyāḥtnāme* to illustrate Evliyā's approach to sainthood and the heterogeneous diversity of sanctity in Istanbul and Anatolia during this period, working towards provisional conclusions about genealogical ties and shared discursive contexts as well. We begin with his exploration of a diverse mix of Istanbul saints who may broadly be classified as 'deviant' holy men, following this discussion (which involves saints either living at the time of writing or at some point in Evliyā's life) with Evliyā's encounter with a long-departed Bektāşī saint in Anatolia, highlighting commonalities in saintly script, social reception, and the role of Ottoman power and memory, in the process.

Evliyā devoted an entire section of his substantial opening Istanbul portion of the *Seyāḥatnāme* to the city's 'holy fools, folk of blame, and divinely attracted ones (*büdelā ve*

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[436] Sultans are rebuked elsewhere in Evliyā's hagiographic renderings: 'Murād Hān the Second, was in Merzifon building a mosque, hân, and medrese, when hypocrites and deniers came to him to complain about Pīr Dede Sultan, saying to the Pādişāh, "Pīr Dede goes into the hammam with women and rubs down some of the ladies with soap and performs other services, saying to them, 'This child in your womb is a boy, and this child in your womb is a girl. Let her by my daughter, give her the name Rābiʿa!' Saying such he claims knowledge of one of the five hidden things, and so is nakedly an unbeliever, a heretic, an antinomian, and without *mez̠hab*!" Having spoken such complete slander against him, Murād Han was filled with anger and, declaring his intention of performing licit violence, girded up his sword, and, within the hammam, saw Pīr Dede Sultan girding up his apron within the hammam,' from which point the saint cleverly rebutts the 'deniers' charges and turns away Murād's misplaced anger, inducing the sultan to repent of his attempted violence upon the saint. Note also the transgression of gender norms, the deployment of special knowledge, and charges of 'heresy' and antinomianism, none of which Evliyā finds troublesome (nor, in all probability, did his informants in Merzifon). Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi Seyâhatnâmesi,* (Beyoğlu, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları Ltd. Şti., 1996), vol. 1, bk. ii, 206.

melāmiyyūn ve mecāzibūn),' terminology that in itself points to the heterogeneous nature of what I have heuristically termed 'deviant saints,' a usage that would not have likely occurred to Evliyā in that there was nothing *genuinely* deviant about these holy men—their strangeness and lack of conformity to either social or *sharīʿa* prescription integral to their realization of sainthood. Three major themes can be traced through Evliyā's renderings of the 'holy fools, folk of blame, and divinely attracted ones': first, the sheer broadness of sainthood and accompanying and constituting piety that Evliyā embraced, a broadness that points to the ways in which once dangerous and even hostile subcultures of sufism and sainthood has become increasingly mainstreamed over the course of the seventeenth century. Second, and related, we see in his hagiographic renderings the gradual coming together of many forms of piety and sainthood, 'deviant' and otherwise, under the broad banner of the *meczūb*, with Bektāşī identity[437] and practice of especial importance (Bektāşī practice itself often enfolding other 'antinomian' scripts of sainthood and subcultures of practice and identity).[438] This particular coalescence and interaction with antinomian milieus sets the process in the Turcophone world apart from similar dynamics at work in the Arab provinces, where the *majdhūb*—the divine drawn saint, in theory

[437] Here as throughout, my usage of 'identity' takes into account the reality described by Peter Marshall in the context of the English Reformation, who notes of identities that they 'were a product of the ways people chose, and were forced, to identify themselves relative to a number of competing external influences: inherited cultural resources, family and other forms of association, ecclesiastical and secular authority. In order to be a useful way of illuminating the past, "identities" need to be understood, not as stable, inherent, or intrinsic, but as social personae fundamentally constituted by and through forms of engagement and self-representation, very often polemical and political ones.' Peter Marshall, *Religious Identities in Henry VIII's England* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2006), vi.

[438] For the long durée background to seventeenth century developments in antinomian dervish practice and identity, see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994); for an emic view of this milieu on the part of generally critical ʿālim, the go-to text is Vāḥidī, *Vāḥidī's Menāḳıb-i Ḫvoca-i Cihān ve Netīce-i Cān: critical edition and analysis*, ed. by Ahmet T. Karamustafa (Cambridge, MA: Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1993).

compelled towards sainthood—was an increasingly dominant presence in many local landscapes of sainthood as well.[439] The emergence and articulation of the *meczūb* script in Istanbul can be seen in the fact that earlier deviant saints were sometimes retrofitted as *meczûb*s, as in Evliyā's brief description of the well-known Unkapanı saint Nalıncı Dede (d. 1592), whom he called the 'essence of the *mecāzībūn*,' though the *meczūb* appellation does not appear in earlier hagiographic accounts of the saint.[440] The Nalıncı Dede that Evliyā and his contemporaries knew had, at some point in the seventeenth century, attracted the specific title of *meczūb* as a suitable description for his strange, even deviant behavior, as the *majdhūb* conceptualization of sainthood first truly popularized in North Africa and Egypt became more and more established in Rūm.[441] Evliyā's account of Nalıncı Dede points to a third theme as well, that of the centrality of place,

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[439] Perhaps the best example of the place of the *majdhūb* in the Ottoman Arab province landscape is that of the *majdhūb* saint Abū Bakr (d. 1583), discussed by Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh in her 'Deviant Dervishes: Space, Gender, and the Construction of Antinomian Piety in Ottoman Aleppo,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 4 (2005): 535–65, as well as Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004), 134-148; see ibid., 128-129 for a discussion of Aleppo's Bektāşī-Kalendar tekke and Ottoman patronage thereof. Also useful in thinking through the identities and roles of what are in effect transformed deviant, antinomian saints, are the following studies examining more contemporary manifestations: Jürgen Frembgen, 'Divine Madness and Cultural Otherness: Diwānas and Faqīrs in Northern Pakistan,' *South Asia Research* 26, no. 3 (2006): 235–48; Katherine Pratt. Ewing, *Arguing Sainthood: Modernity, Psychoanalysis, and Islam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); Jürgen Frembgen, 'The majzub Mama Ji Sakar: "a friend of God moves from one house to another,"' and Katherine P. Ewing, "A majzub and his mother: the place of sainthood in a family's emotional memory," *Embodying Charisma: Modernity, Locality, and Performance of Emotion in Sufi Cults* ed. by Pnina Werbner and Helene Basu (London; Routledge, 1998).

[440] For an earlier hagiographic entry, see ʿAṭā'ī, *Ẕeyl,* 370, which says only that Nalıncı was a manifestation for divine *cezba* and divine love, that he was known to all, and that he manfiested many miracles and signs of sainthood. His funeral was held in the Sultan Meḥmed Mosque, he was buried in his house, and Murād III had the *kubba* over his grave built.

[441] 'Le foisonnement des extatiques (*maǧḏūb*) constitue pour certains historiens maghrébins un des phénomènes propres au xe siècle de l'Hégire; or, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Maǧḏūb est le contemporain de Šaʿrānī, et la place que celui-ci accorde aux *maǧḏūb*-s, nous le savons, ne connaît pas de précédent dans l'histoire islamique. Le témoignage de Léon l'Africain confirme ces similitudes. Au début du xe/xvie siècle, il s'avoue choqué par le nombre de va-nu-pieds qu'il rencontre dans les rues de Tunis et que la population prend pour des saints, mais il ajoute qu'ils sont plus nombreux encore au Caire.' Eric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans: orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels* (Damas: Institut français d'études arabes de Damas, 1995), 268.

the body, and physicality, through which deviant and 'mad' saints, *meczūb* and otherwise (the various forms existing, in Evliyā's rendering at least, on a shared continuum), realized their social status and operations, which varied widely in valence, from ribald digs at members of the elite to innovative grooming practices.[442] In the case of Nalıncı Dede, Evliyā was most interested in the trajectory of the saint's hallowed tomb and his shop, the latter of which remained in the use of sanctified successors to Nalıncı Dede and survived both a massive fire and the ill-fated attempt of 'a Jew named Küpeli' to take over the use of the shop (boundaries between Muslim and non-Muslim frequently intersecting with place and physicality in these accounts).[443] With these three themes in mind, we will examine a selection of Evliyā's encounters with and accounts of the divinely mad holy men of the city and begin to make sense of some of the dynamics at work both within the text itself and within the social worlds of seventeenth century Istanbul, which in turn were closely tied to wider Anatolian—and empire-wide—currents.

Evliyā captions the section concerning the *büdelā ve melāmiyyūn ve mecāzibūn* of Istanbul as having to do with such saints as he encountered in his own lifetime and whose 'holy hands he himself kissed,' most figuring prominently into Evliyā's own memory and self-narration, a distinction that sets these saints apart from those holy people whom Evliyā knew by means of visits to their tombs and orally transmitted hagiography. The most important among the 'mad saints' of his home city to Evliyā Çelebi was one Kapanī Meḥemmed, a saint that Evliyā identifies as, among other things, a *meczûb*, though his identity and range of repertoire was not

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[442] There is certainly an aspect of 'style' present here, as well as particular semiotics of the body, only aspects of which we can develop here. On these topics, I have broadly worked off of M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), even as the Ottoman context revealed in the following pages might suggest certain modifications to his overall ideas.

[443] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâmesi,* vol. 1, bk. i, 180-181. See the following chapter for a discussion of boundary maintance in the context of seventeenth century religious debate and polemical contests; Evliyā's emphasis upon seemingly deviant, even antinomian saints effecting the difference between Muslim and non-Muslim should serve as a reminder of just how complex the 'lines' and 'factions' within Ottoman society could be.

limited by that designation—he was also '*Sulṭān-i Melāmiyyūn*,' and, as we will see, a saint (*er*) in the Bektāşī lineage, appellations that point to the available bricolages of scripts, models, and cultural contexts of sanctity available in seventeenth century Istanbul. Evliyā's relationship with this saint began, he writes, shortly after his birth: Kapanī Meḥemmed recited the *ezân* in Evliyā's left ear after his birth, while the (rather more conventional) saint Şunʿulūh Efendi recited it in his right ear, the implication being that both saints, despite their very different *meşreb*s, imbued Evliyā with their *bereket*.[444]

Kapanī was also known as Geysūdār Meḥemmed Efendi, while Meḥmed Naẓmī, a slightly later hagiographer, refers to Kapanī in his discussion of the *mecāzīb* as Kapanī Saçlı Meḥmed Efendi. Both appellatives point to the most salient aspects of his physicality: he went both barefoot and bareheaded, 'his curling locks (*geysūları*) all at once twisted and curling, matted together, folded and wound with each other, forelocks disheveled, a singular dervish.' Summer and winter he wore only a white Imroz sheepskin coat and carried in his hand a battle-ax (*teber*). He was born near Gelibolu into a family of Bosnian origin (Evliyā notes that he spoke Bosnian) but he settled in a quarter of Unkapanı, dwelling in a *mekteb*, while his relatives were off on the frontier near Pecs working as fur traders. He had performed '*inabet* in Konya[445] at the hands of one Erlizâde, a name that suggests Bektāşī affiliation (though a Mevlevī context might also be implied), after which he underwent *cezbe-i ilāhīye* and 'entered the ranks of the *meczūb* and of the winehouse saints' (*harābātī erenler*) and so became 'a possessor of curling locks,' his

[444] Ibid., 183.

[445] Presumably here meaning at the shrine of Mevlānā, underlining again the importance of this shrine in the spatial formation and organization of Ottoman sainthood in Rûm. Cf. Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography,* 17-18.

distinctive bodily deportment being linked to his experience of *cezbe*, an experience that in Evliyā's telling was precipitated by his encounter with Erlizâde.[446]

The interplay of Bektāşī and Shiʿi, or, more accurately, ʿAlid piety,[447] repertoire elements visible in the above description is even more on display in the central anecdote Evliyā relates about Kapanī Meḥemmed, which I have reproduced here, using Dankoff's translation, with some modifications:

> One day when I was young, while sitting in our jewelry shop in the Unkapanı marketplace, I was reciting the Qur'an and had just come to the verse (Q. 5:45): *We decreed for them a soul for a soul*. Kapanī Efendi, who happened to come along, listened to this and said, "O God, O God!" Just then Pehlivân ʿAlī Halhālī, who was the şeyh of the Tekke of the Wrestlers, showed up in front of the barber shop, and when he saw Geysûdâr in front of our shop he let out a yelp and cried, "O friend! Our *shâh* is Shāh ʿAlī—may I be his sacrifice! I have come to offer my head to Shāh Ḥusayn, as the ball in the field of calamity (*belâ*). 'The field of Kerbela is our playing-field' (*Kerbela meydanıdır meydanımız*)." He saluted Kapanī Meḥmed Efendi respectfully and kissed his hand.
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> "God willing," replied Kapanī Efendi, "you will attain your wish this very moment, and will earn the merit of the martyrs of the Plain of Kerbela on this day of ʿAshura." He was carrying a wine goblet which he now handed over to Derviş ʿAlī, who proceeded to take several draughts (*bir kaç nefes çekdi*) from it. Then he let out a yelp, got naked, and entered the barber shop. "Well," said Kapanī Efendi, addressing me, "now is the time for *We decreed . . .*— recite it again!" And the next thing we saw was Dervish ʿAlī running out of the barber shop with a certain young man named Hācī Aḥadoğlu in hot pursuit, brandishing a knife. Just as Dervish ʿAlī came in front of our shop Hācī Aḥadoğlu caught up with him, stabbed him above the nipple, and killed him. "So," cried Kapani Meḥmed Efendi, this time addressing Dervish ʿ Alī,

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[446] One of the abiding themes in Arabic-language hagiography and in 'theoretical' literature from this period and somewhat before is the suitability or not of the *majdhūb* as a source of mimesis and as a sufi guide: should (and can) the *majdhūb* inculcate others into his (or rarely her) manner of life? The eventual theoretic synthesis, in both the Rūmī and the Arab lands, is no. See for instance the 'classic' formulation in Çerkeşī Mustafa Efendi's little late eighteenth century treatise *Risāle fī tahkīki't-taṣavvuf* (Istanbul: [n.p.], 1873), in which he defends all antinomian-appearing dervishes and saints, particular the meczûbs, concluding however that they are not to serve as spiritual guides. On Çerkeşî see Nihat Azamat, 'Çerkeşî Mustafa Efendi,' in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi.*

[447] I am borrowing the term ʿAlid piety' in lieu of 'Shiʿi' from R. Michael Feener and Chiara Formichi, 'Debating Shiʿism in South Asian History,' in *Shi'ism in Southeast Asia: 'Alid Piety and Sectarian Constructions,* ed. Chiara Formichi and R. Michael Feener (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 10-15.

> "have you gained the martyrdom of Kerbela? Have you become the place of manifestation (*mazhar*) of the verse, *We decreed for them a soul for a soul*?" And he went away. At this point my late father cried out: "Arrest that Hācī Aḥadoğlu!" Our servants collared the murderer and brought him to the Ağa of the Janissaries, Şehīd Ḥasan Halīfe. When Hācī Aḥadoğlu's guilt had been ascertained, he was first of all deprived of his janissary ration-chit at the Ağa Gate. Then he was sent to the dungeon, where he was put to death. Later that night he was thrown into the Bosporus in front of a *çardak*. In the meantime, my father buried Dervish ʿAlī in the garden of the Tekke of the Wrestlers.[448]

In this striking story, Kapanī Meḥemmed plays a rather passive role, as the interpreter and preceptor of another holy man—here a soon-to-be martyr, Derviş ʿAlī, who enacts aspects of a 'mad saint,' both in his stripping off his clothes and in his rushing in upon the evidently violently tempered Hācī Aḥadoğlu. Evliyā does not explicitly indicate *why* Derviş ʿAlī was killed by Aḥadoğlu, as it is ultimately immaterial to the story: what matters is that Kapanī Meḥemmed, through divine foresight, foresaw the martyrdom, and in his interaction with Derviş ʿAlī inscribed his imminent death as martyrdom, declaring that what was about to transpire was Derviş ʿAlī's own Kerbala. Throughout the story devotion to ʿAlī and his descendants is stressed, in a way that could, but need not necessarily be seen as 'Shiʿi,' with the mention of ʿAlī as 'our shāh' carrying the potent charge of Kızılbaş language and identity, not necessarily with the explicit political content that might have been operative further east closer to the Safavid borderlands. For instance, the references contained within the opening paragraph are strongly reminiscent of the opening lines of a poem by Shāh Ismāʿīl, Hiṭā'ī's poetic corpus, as noted further along below, certainly having circulated in Istanbul during the period:

> In the transcribed writings (*nüsḫalar*) of God there is a command (*beyân*):/ Assuredly know that it is blood for blood![449]

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[448] Translation in Dankoff, *Ottoman Mentality*, 27-20, modified in reference to Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâmesi,* vol. 1, bk. ii, 183-184.

[449] A clear reference to Q. 5:45, substituting 'blood' for the Qur'ānic 'soul' (*nafs*, hence also 'life' or 'self'), but with the same meaning.

> May my head be a sacrifice (*kurbân*) in the path of the true guide!/ How many hundreds like me, [ready to] sacrifice their lives, there are![450]

Alongside such Kızılbaş allusions, extracted from the milieu of their original production and reinterpreted as part of saintly repertoires, elements from Bektāşi repertoire and discourse—themselves generated through contact with and use of ʻAlid, overtly Shiʿi, and antinomian sufi traditions—structure the entire exchange. Evliyā uses language redolent, if hardly exclusively so, of Bektāşī discourse such as *meydān* and *nefes*, references, metaphorical and otherwise, to wine sprinkled throughout. At the same time, Kapanī Meḥemmed is shown being conversant with more conventional Islamic traditions, as he understands the Qur'an and offers—albeit unconventional and situational—exegesis of a sort. Throughout the story, there is every indication that Derviş ʿAlī and Kapanī Meḥemmed are in the right, culminating with the punishment of Derviş ʿAlī's murderer. Whatever meanings and political contexts can be read lying behind this account, it is notable that Evliyā himself does not bring up possible justifications for Derviş ʿAlī's murder, nor does he seek to defend him against charges of heresy or of Kızılbaş sympathy. Instead, in the story his father immediately seeks justice for a friend of God, and in so doing, the story suggests, both inhabits the sacred historical drama of Kerbala while also righting its wrong.

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[450] Shāh Ismāʿīl and V. Minorsky, 'The Poetry of Shāh Ismā'īl I,' in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (1942), 1033a Minorsky's translation of these lines and the rest of the poem is at 1044a. On his poetry see also Amelia Gallagher, 'Shāh Ismāʿīl's Poetry in the Silsilat al-Nasab-i Safawiyya,' *Iranian Studies* 44, no. 6 (2011): 895–911. Shāh Ismāʿīl's memory circulated in the Ottoman world in a variety of ways and in many contexts, such as the *ḥikāye* genre, in which the Safavid founder was transformed in far-reaching ways, even as that transformation remained in a relationship of reference to the 'historical' Shāh Ismāʿīl. On this transformation in memory, see Amelia Gallagher, 'The Transformation of Shāh Ismail Safevi in the Turkish Hikâye,' *Journal of Folklore Research* 46, no. 2 (2009): 173–95.

As with his account of Şeyh Maḥmūd, the moral is relatively straightforward: while martyrdom may be pre-ordained for God's friends, one ought to avoid becoming the instrument of that martyrdom, and hence, as a corollary, learning to recognize God's friends in all their heterogeneity is quite valuable, life-saving even! It is possible that the social context lying behind this story is that of sympathy for emergent puritanical sentiments among the middling ranks of early seventeenth century Istanbul society even before the launch of Kadızāde's career, such that Aḥadoğlu could be seen as 'commanding the right and forbidding the wrong' against a deviant, heretical dervish. Perhaps more saliently, if for Evliyā—and many others in his Istanbul—the array of ʿAlid, Bektāşī, and downright antinomian allusions and repertoire items coalesced under the banner of sainthood, at least in the instances Evliyā gives, these same elements, coupled with ongoing political tensions with the Kızılbaş Safavids, could be used to other ends and could be perceived in very different ways, even by those not inclined to anti-saint puritanism.[451]

For a sense of those other ends and interpretations, we may turn to a fascinating appendix attached by an unknown hand to Peçevī's *Tarīh* in which a vizier, Çeşmī Efendi, reports on an alleged group of 'heretics' in 1619 Istanbul, attributing to them all manner of strange and aberrant rites and social structures, from ritual sexual communism, to rites of re-instatement after lapses, to complex hierarchies of preceptors and preachers, reminiscent (perhaps deliberately so on the heresiographer's part) of the Ismāʿīlis.[452] The discursive world these 'heretics' inhabit is

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[451] For the general background of interactions and tensions across the Ottoman borderlands during this period, see Farbia Zarinebaf, 'Rebels and renegades on Ottoman-Iranian borderlands: porous frontiers and hybrid identities,' in Abbas Amanat, *Iran Facing Others: Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[452] On this text also see V. Minorsky's critical remarks in his 'Shaykh Bālī-efendi on the Safavids,' in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 20, No. 1/3, (1957), 448-450. Certain tendencies in heresiography—tendencies which in many cases pre-date Islam, in fact—can be seen from early accounts forward; accusations of sexual communism or sexual orgies are too numerous in both Christian and

described by Çeşmī Efendi as having strongly ʿAlidand indeed pro-Safavid tones: for instance, 'they' call all who hold to *sunna* and *jumā'* 'Yazīd,' cursing and calumning against them; references to ʿAlī, his famed sword, and other typical aspect of ʿAlid devotion abound, along with more suggestive elements, such as extolling Şāh ʿAbbās by saying *'Huwa! Huwa!*' (and sending the Safavid şâh a portion of their 'fines' and offerings), reciting the poetry of Şāh Ismāʿīl Hiṭā'ī, declaring that the Qur'anic 'pure drink' (this is, the wine of the Garden) is 'the drink that is drunk in this world below,' and so on.[453] Surveying these descriptions and accusations, the editor of the little treatise, M. A. Danon, could only conclude that 'Le vague du terme générique, par lequel ces derniers [certains hétérodoxes] sont désignés, en rend l'identification difficile.'[454] Rather than try to identify an intended discrete community, it is more likely that Çeşmī Efendi rendered a composite community based on various groups and figures, drawn from different iterations of ʿAlid devotional repertoire and practice, represented by figures such as Kapanī Efendi as well as more coherent communities such as those of Bektāşī tekkes. While what a Çeşmî Efendi and a Kapanī Efendi would have heard in, say, the recitation of Şāh Ismāʿīl's poetry might not have been the same, the existence of reactions like that of Çeşmī Efendi, *even if* they misread the actual political and other valences at work, served to reinforce the social effectiveness and discursive potency of a Kapanī Efendi's use of that poetry, and by the by, of Evliyā's later reproduction (or outright production, as the case may be, reflecting what he expected to have been the case).

Islamic contexts to marshal specifics, while the presence, real or suspected, of complex hierarchies for the spreading and preservation of the heresy is another common trope: which is not to say it need not be true. The Ismāʿīlis, for instance, undoubtedly had complex hierarchies, and we know from contemporary 'new religious movements' that orgies and sexual communism (at least on the part of select members and leaders in many cases) do in fact take place. Nonetheless, we must always be careful of such claims, and interrogate ultimately what they are doing in the text and what sorts of attitudes they might point to on the part of the heresiographer.

[453] M. A. Danon, 'Un interrogatoire d'hérétiques musulmans,' in *Journal asiatique*, ser. 11:17 (1921), 290-293.

[454] Ibid., 281.

As has so often been the case in Islam and elsewhere, the line between heresy and sainthood was often thin, and contingent upon political, personal, and social configurations and connections. That an Aḥadoğlu or a Çeşmī Efendi might perceive antinomian dervishes and *meczūb* or otherwise deviant saints as heretics deserving punishment did not necessarily undermine the wider social power of these *büdelā ve melāmiyyūn ve mecāzibūn:* in fact, the fluidity of interpretation and political configuration of these heterogeneous discourses and practices lent them a powerful frisson of danger, apiece with the other practices of social dislocation and deviancy that lay at the heart of these saintly performances and the underlying subculture[455] made up of antinomian sufi piety, ʿAlid devotion, and diverse components from different registers of wider Ottoman culture, elite and non-elite. These saints and their contexts—particularly that of the Bektāşīs and the associated antinomian (or, perhaps more accurately for our period, the antinomian-adjacent)—existed in Ottoman society as neither fully mainstream nor as entirely deviant and marginal. The continued resonance of their deviant practices, of their daring (or, perhaps, *formerly* daring) symbolic repertoires, of their styles and deportment, existed simultaneous to and in causal conjunction with their largely unchallenged position in both the metaphorical and literal landscape. If fifteenth and sixteenth century antinomian and marginalized dervishes and their socio-cultural allies represented active communities of dissent, embodying resistance to the Ottoman center and politically charged transgression of the religious and cultural norms expressed by that center, by the mid-seventeenth century these same

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[455] My usage of 'subculture' here is decidedly tentative and not entirely satisfactory, as the literature on subcultures has primarily looked to modern, mostly postwar, exemplars, structuring by the interplay of class, capital, race, and so on, factors that either do not apply at all in our context or apply only with modification. Yet the benefit of thinking in terms like 'subculture,' 'counterculture,' 'styles,' and so forth is akin to the benefits of using terms like 'dialect,' 'repertoire,' 'script,' 'resources,' and so forth: all these terms imply an openness at the edges, a lack of reification, an inherent dynamism, and the interplay of loosely constituted groups and factions and tendencies, without imposing rigid institutional frames or decrying operative governing hierarchies where nothing of the sort actually existed.

communities, subcultures, and routes of sanctity had been absorbed into broader Ottoman culture and socio-political systems, to the point that members of the elite could not only themselves participate in these subcultures and communities of sanctity but could draw upon that participation as a form of cultural capital, legible and valuable to many, if not all, of their peers.

The second story that Evliyā relates about Kapanī Meḥemmed captures both the antinomian physicality of the saint as well as his very forward relationship with the Ottoman elite, underlining once again for us the 'triumph' of the saints as well as the changed political dynamics of religious deviancy:

> Once the Grand Vezier Recep Paşa ran into Kapanī Meḥemmed inside a tavern in Unkapanı with a mug of wine in his hand, and said to him, 'Dede say a prayer for me!' Kapanī replied, 'With health of body eat, drink, shit, then eat, then drink, then shit again.' Receb Paşa replied, 'Ah Dede, that's no prayer! I won't accept this, do something more exalted,' to which [Kapanī] replied, 'You are but a grand vizier and no pādişāh! If you will not accept this prayer then eat, drink, but don't shit!' Afterwards, for seven days the grand vizier's condition was distressed, his bodily composition on the brink of becoming desiccated. 'Come, let me seek aid from the dede!' he said. Coming in that moment to Geysūdār he passed his blessed hand once over Recep Paşa's body and in that very hour Recep Paşa was delivered from the pain of his constipation![456]

This ribald story, with its Bakhtinian focus on bodily ingestion and defecation, underlines both the sheer *physicality* of Kapanī Meḥemmed, a divinely-charged physicality which enabled him to manipulate the bodies of others, as well as stressing his fearlessness with and power over members of the Ottoman elite, right up to a grand vizier (who, notably, is shown supplicating the saint, in jest or seriousness or both). If Kapanī Meḥemmed appears disordered in body and deportment—inside a tavern, wine glass in hand—this appearance disguises (or, perhaps more appropriately, activates) his power of controlling the openings, and hence bodily health, of others. Not only does the winehouse *Melāmī-meczūb* invert the possible expected appearance

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[456] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâmesi,* vol. 1, bk. ii, 184.

and deportment of a saint here, he also seemingly inverts the sort of supplication a saint might be expected to give. The crassness of his supplicatory-turned-imprecatory words disguises, or, rather, contains his divine power, just as the strangeness and disorderliness of his bodily appearance is continuous with both his divine attraction (*cezbe*) and his seeking of worldly blame. His words have a physicality of their own, as it were, further indicated by the manner in which he reverses the vizier's constipation—passing his 'blessed hand' over Recep Paşa's body. That all of this performance perfectly accords with and indeed points to the sainthood of the strange and divinely drawn holy men is simply assumed by Evliyā, whose narrative neither engages in much explication nor in apologetics over these strange and ribald practices.

Kapanī Meḥemmed had disciples, though he did not, it would seem, establish a community as such.[457] In addition to his role in the formation of the *meczūb* Delī Aḥmed[458] who figures prominently in Meḥmed Naẓmī's discussion of the *meczūb*,[459] Kapanī Meḥemmed had as

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[457] As noted further along below, the limitation of mimesis among the *mezcūb* and other deviant or antinomian saints of this period—a limitation that seems very much to have been a matter of process and slow contestation—was a key factor in making them less socially dangerous and more 'mainstream.'

[458] The lengthy story given in Delī Aḥmed's voice picks up after his entry into the service of Sîvâsî Efendi: after seven years of practice Delī Aḥmed went to Sīvāsī who said to him, *Ben sana demedim mi ki senin semṭ-i cemālden ḥazzın yokdur? Senin meşrebin celālendir.* So Sīvāsī Efendi called out through the window of his cell two time for Kapanī Saçlı Meḥmed Efendi, saying, 'Meḥmed Çelebi! Meḥmed Çelebi!' A man, barefoot and bareheaded and wearing a shepherd's coat (*bir kebe içinde bir kimse*) soon came and asked Sîvâsî what he needed. Sîvâsî teold him that 'This man wants you.' Entering into *celāl*, Saçlı Meḥmed began to speak abusively to Delī Aḥmed: 'What do you want from me? Go naked like me, drop out into the streets, and get lost!' Having said this, Delī Aḥmed reports, 'I found in myself such a state and condition that, involuntarily, I pulled off my clothes, and stark naked found myself in this place. It's now close to forty years that I've lived in your neighborhood.' And with that 'he concluded narrating his *sebeb-i cezbe*.' Mehmet Naẓmī, *Osmanlılarda tasavvufī hayat: Halvetīlik örneği: Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān*, ed. Osman. Türe (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2005), 425-426.

[459] In Meḥmed Naẓmī Efendi's account not only is Kapanī Meḥmed the main 'preceptor' of subsequent *meczūbler*, Naẓmī also describes Kapanī as having originally been a *muʿīd* of none other than the great Ebūssu'ūd Efendi. After years of activity in the hierachy, he abandons his career in *ʿilmiye*, and takes the *beyʿat* from one Ezelīzade Efendi in Konya (as in Evliyā's telling). It is at the death of his shaykh that he is overcome by *cezbe*, due to his shaykh's 'grant' to him: *ʿAzīm zaḥmetler ile taḥṣīl ettim ḥālimi sana hîbe etdim,' deyip teslīm-i rūḥ eder*. From this moment *cezbe* descended on him, and he 'abandoned custom and relation and set to naked in the streets.' However, Ebūssuûd, hearing about all this, wanted him to wear something, so he sent him the *kebe* that would become his stylistic trademark. This *kebe* in time would be

one of his *halīfe*s a Keçeli Dede, who imitated his master in taking on a distinctive pattern of dress and public deportment, in his case wearing a Mevlevī hat, wooden platform shoes (in allusion to Nalıncı Dede perhaps?), and performing impromptu dances for members of the elite who came to him for supplications.[460] Evliyā suggests, but does not state explicitly, that Keçeli Dede imitated Kapanī Meḥemmed in *cezbe*—his ambiguity here probably best interpreted as expressive of the wider ambiguity, in Istanbul as elsewhere, over the mimetic possibilities of *cezbe*. Keçeli Dede certainly imitated his master in the formation of a heterogeneous identifying register, the various components of his dress and performance pointing to different traditions and discourses, both drawing symbolic power from those various practices while reconfiguring them into a unique sanctifying performance, which would have appeared different to various observers picking up and interpreting his array of symbolically-laden clothing and practices.

While Evliyā profiles over a dozen 'mad' and deviant saints of Istanbul in addition to Kapanī Meḥemmed and Keçeli Dede, mention of two more, Armağanî Meḥemmed and Boynuzli Divane Ahmed, must suffice for our purposes here, leaving aside such delightfully strange figures as Dîvâne Burnaz Muḥammad Çelebi (also known as Ṣabaḥ Ṣabaḥ Delisi), whose *bereket* was transmitted through his massive snotty nose, or Yetmiş Guruş, so-called for his long-standing habit of going around crying out nothing other than '*Yetmiş guruş*!'[461] Armağanī Meḥemmed, originally from Kocaeli, earned his moniker out of his habit of giving each of his visitors an apple. 'With the permission' of Sultan Murād IV he went out to the Bostāncıbaşı

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passed to Ṣarı ʿAbdullāh Efendi's disciple (sic.!) Lā'līzāde ʿAbdülbākī Efendi: in this rendering, in short, the bricolage has become integrate indeed, and the layers of connection and interaction quite complex. Naẓmī, *Osmanlılarda tasavvufī haya*, 427-429.

[460] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâmesi,* vol. 1, bk. i, 184.

[461] Ibid., 184-186.

Bridge at the outskirts of Üsküdar and there conversed with the good and bad spirits of the 'army of the plague,' learning who in Istanbul would die and who would be spared in the coming plague, writing their names in a *defter*, then going to Sultan Murād and informing him of the tribulations to come:

> Three days later when the calamity befell Islāmbol: if Armağanī Meḥemmed Efendi had written it in his *defter* it took place, and by the seventh day some seventy thousand men had died, as marked down in the *sicill*. But Armağanī took no joy from the unveiling of this secret, and afterwards he returned the Kocaeli wherein he died, *God sanctify his secret*.[462]

Boynuzli Divane Ahmed lived in the house of a janissary named Kocamışoğlu, but he would decamp to a spot alongside the slaughterhouse in Kasımpaşa where he would all day long cry out to passers-by, "If God wills you will go to the Ka'ba!' He would add the nonsense title '*çabu'* to people's names, and would remember people's names—*Fulān* son of such-and-such *woman* is the formula Evliyā gives—even twenty years after encountering them. His name was derived from his habit of collecting all kinds of animal horns and antlers, which he would give out to people as both gifts conveying *bereket* and as indications of things in their lives, such as whether they were married or single. He would know if non-Muslims wearing Muslim clothing came to him—an incidental indication of the lack of enforcement of sumptuary laws during the period—and rebuke them for their impropriety. He would also scratch his fingers to make a sound like a stork and would do a strange dance when he gave someone a horn. If he told someone 'God willing you will go to the Kab'e,' they would.[463] On the whole, his repertoire, as reported by Evliyā at least, was a not untypical combination of the strange, if not precisely in his case antinomian, intersecting with much more normative aspects of Islamic practice.

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[462] Ibid., 184.

[463] Ibid.

What ought we to make of these strange and deviant saints? One, it goes without saying that the identities of these saints—identities which as noted earlier Evliyā does not seem to have made any efforts to smooth over beyond adding literary flourishes here and there as was his wont in general—cannot be fitted into categories of 'orthodox' or 'heterodox,' nor 'Sunni' and 'Shiʿi.' Nor can they simply be summarized as *meczūb* or any other appellative, even with the allowance for the wide breadth of that term in our period. Instead, each of these saints brings together, in himself and in his later memory, a wide range of repertoires and discursive traditions and constructions, from the Bektāşī to the *majdhūb* to the Qalandar, expressed in clothing styles, language, practices, affiliations, and so forth. The dynamics that are visible here remind us that none of these traditions or repertoires, or however we wish to classify them, existed in anything like isolation or unitary integrity, but were in fact generated and sustained through exactly such dynamics of sharing and borrowing and tension. The repertoire of Boynuzli Divane Ahmed could lend itself easily enough to interpretation as some sort of survival of rural dede saints in Istanbul, a phenomenon often traced to 'shamanistic' survivals or tendencies among rural Turks. However, a more likely context is that of the entertainers who would dress up in animal skins, especially horned goats, a tradition of performance with deep roots in both elite and popular cultures in the core Islamic worlds, and which flourished in both Ottoman and Safavid lands.[464] The saint's imitation of stork sounds and his 'strange dance' both further suggest that his performance was keyed to such repertoires of entertainment. At the same time, it is also possible that this manipulation of animal horns drew some of its resonance from the association of animal

[464] For this fascinating context in the Islamicate long durée as well as in the Safavid and Ottoman case, see Richard Ettinghausen, 'The dance with zoomorphic masks and other forms of entertainment seen in Islamic art,' in *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A. R. Gibb,* ed. by George Makdisi (Leidin: Brill Archive, 1965), 211-224.

horns and saints' shrines elsewhere in Anatolia, a context that would not have been foreign to many residents of a city always dependent on in-migration from other parts of the empire.[465] At any rate, his practice demonstrated creative application of cultural symbols and repertoires, be they drawn from entertainment or from saint-veneration.[466] Furthermore, his strange antics, which, if not precisely antinomian, certainly had no classification one way or another within the *sharīʿa*, were placed by observers such as Evliyā within a normative Sunni Muslim framework: Boynuzlu miraculously identified non-Muslims who were transgressing sumptuary rules, and his exclamations in his own '*divāne*-speak' summoned Muslims to the *ḥajj*, and could even have the power of making such a thing happen in someone's life.

Yet even if these saints, their personas and practices continually out in the open could serve as markers and enforcers of belonging and exclusion, the capaciousness of the repertoires, discourses, symbologies, and deviant or simply idiosyncratic practices points to their place within a broader socio-religious dynamic. The processes driving this dynamic were several, obviously, ranging from the deeply embedded, such as love for the People of the House, to the distinctly Ottoman, such as the codification and circulation of Bektāşī practices and genealogies, with the Bektāşī themselves—in so far as we can speak of a coherent entity in this regard—representing the ongoing coming together of a gamut of late medieval deviant practices and

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[465] On migration from Anatolia into Istanbul, see for instance Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia,* 271.

[466] Dick Hebdige's remarks, in the context of 1970s British punk subculture, are quite apposite here: 'Style in subculture is, then, pregnant with significance. Its transformations go "against nature," interrupting the process of "normalization." As such, they are gestures, movements towards a speech which offends the "silent majority," which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus…' Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979), 18. Perhaps the most important difference in the context at hand is that the subcultural style on display in the deviant saints, *meczūb*s, and bricolage practioners of the mid-seventeenth century and forward is their being balanced between a stance of 'interreuption' and 'resistance,' the central motifs uncovered in Karamustafa's *Unruly Friends*, and a socio-cultural position of acceptance (within limits, such as limitations upon the extent of mimesis) and valuation.

communities. If the Bektāşī *ṭarīḳat* provided one site of such coming together, the *meczūb* saint provided another, while other discursive sites such as '*Melāmī*,' detached from any explicit *ṭarīḳat* affiliation, could do similar work. The *meczūb* repertoire was particularly capacious, and capable of more dispersed reproduction, given that it did not necessarily have any 'institutional' or otherwise collective form beyond a dispersed community of devotees and believers (and doubters and mockers and the simply curious); 'Bektāşī,' as we have already noted to some extent and will see further below, could have a similar indeterminacy and free-floating application. A *mezcūb* or other strange or deviant saint might have imitators, or he might not, and if he did, his community of imitators and close disciples would not be particularly large. It was precisely such limitations—which lacked enforcement beyond the broadly socio-cultural, which worked things out over time, to make a long story short—which made these saints and their small bodies of followers relatively safe, at least compared to the previous communities and bodies of discourse and practice upon which they drew and which they creatively referenced.

This heterogeneous construction of sainthood that emerges in Evliyā's hagiographic entries was predicated upon the wide circulation of diverse Islamic identities and repertoires, as well as the investment by others of those elements with value, or at least some degree of recognition, even if hostile or indifferent. This circulation and investment with value interacted with, but was not absolutely dependent upon the vagaries of political action, something that is particularly true in relation to Bektāşī repertoire, one of the more important sources in many of these individual and collective repertoires of sainthood, particular the *meczūb* saints described by Evliyā and later authors in Istanbul.[467] By way of his recorded encounters with Bektāşī spaces,

[467] There are many works on the Bektāşī and related 'groups' and communities, works of decidedly uneven quality, few of which take the seventeenth and eighteenth century for their focus. Instead, the first centuries of origin have received much emphasis, followed by modern manifestations. Among the more important works over the last century that have tackled this topic, besides those previously cited, are: John Kingsley Birge, *The*

saints, and dervishes in Anatolia Evliyā provides valuable evidence of the ways in which Bektāşī components were integrated into the oecumene of Ottoman sainthood, as well as the local factors contributing to Bektāşī-coded modes of sainthood and saint veneration. To conclude this section I have highlighted one such encounter out of many, Evliyā's description of his visit to the shrine of the (probably) thirteenth century saint and reputed companion and *halīfe* of Ḥācī Bektāş, Koyun Baba (so named for his habit of bleating like a sheep to mark each of the five daily prayers), in the town of Osmancık.

Evliyā begins the story of his encounter by noting both Koyun Baba's relationship to Ḥācī Bektāş and to Sultan Bāyezīd II (*Bāyezīd-i Velī*): Ḥācī Bektāş's *halīfe*, Koyun Baba, came to Bāyezīd in a dream on the Night of Power, 'and with the instruction of the saint (*ʿazīz*) he built an exalted *kubbe* over the noble tomb, as well as a noble mosque, and, for the destitute dervishes a *meydān*, as well as a dining hall and a *mihmansarāy hân* for travelers, along with a number of other structures, all roofed with lead, such that the whole complex could be seen from a *farsaḫ* off, looking like a dark-blue sea.'[468] In the *ʿimaret*, Evliyā adds, a fire is always kept going for travelers, to whom various 'benefits' are dispersed. When Evliyā visited the shrine, he bent to kiss the exalted threshold of the shrine then entered into the tomb, 'in accordance with the *adab* of *ziyāret*' and performed one *hatm-i şerīf* for the saint. The Bektāşī fakirs and preacher within

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Bektashi Order of Dervishes (London: Luzac & Co., 1937); Ahmet Refik and Mehmet Yaman, *Onaltıncı asırda Râfizîlik ve Bektāşîlik: onaltıncı asırda Türkiye'de Râfizîlik ve Bektâşîlik'e dair Hazîne-i Evrak belgelerini içerir* (İstanbul: M. Yaman, 1994); Frederick De Jong, 'The Iconography of Bektashiism: A Survey of Themes and Symbolism in Clerical Costume, Liturgical Objects and Pictorial Art,' in Manuscripts of the Middle East, Vol. 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1989); Mark Soileau, "Conforming Haji Bektash: A Saint and His Followers between Orthopraxy and Heteropraxy," *Die Welt Des Islams* 54, no. 3–4 (December 2, 2014): 423–59; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Der Bektaschi-Orden in Anatolien: (vom späten fünfzehnten Jahrhundert bis 1826)* (Vienna: Verlag des Institutes für Orientalistik der Universität Wien, 1981); Irène Mélikoff, *Hadji Bektach: un mythe et ses avatars : genèse et évolution du soufisme populaire en Turquie* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

[468] On these sorts of 'little cities of God,' (a phrase from Lisa Golombek, 'The Cult of Saints and Shrine Architecture in the Fourteenth Century,' in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles*, ed. D. Kouymjian (Beirut, 1974), 419-30), complexes which do not precisely fit standard typologies of Islamic architecture, see Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography*, 14-15.

prayed for Evliyā, blessing his travels and asking for his safety from enemies, then recited the Fâtiha and crowned Evliyā with the 'Bektāşī *sikke'* having belonged to the saint. His being invested with this headgear, he writes, caused the instant improvement of his eyesight, which had been harmed by having fallen into the cold of the Black Sea some years before—as soon as the *tac* of the saint rested upon his head his sight was improved![469] After describing the various significant objects received from Ḥācī Bektāş in the tekke—cloak, drum, and so forth, though which contact with the saint is maintained—Evliyā notes that 'upon the walls of the *ḳubbe* how many different pilgrims and lovers have written all manner of verse and poetry,' such as these lines: 'Leader of the lords of realization, saint of the people of the fathers/ Treasury of the secret of sainthood, Ḥaẓret-i Koyun Baba!'[470]

There are several important elements worth disentangling: first, we may note that Koyun Baba's tomb was read by Evliyā—and other observers, whether provincial or from further abroad—as subsisting within an imperial 'classical' Ottoman architectural idiom, an idiom that was stamped with, and marked by the memory of, sultanic authority. The lead-covered blue-green domes that Evliyā could see on his approach to Osmanlikça placed Koyun Baba within an

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[469] The 'logic' of Evliyā's contact with the saint's *sikke* is clarified in an illuminating passage from Barry Finnbar Flood's article 'Bodies and Becoming Mimesis, Mediation, and the Ingestion of the Sacred in Christianity and Islam,' in *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice*, ed. by Sally M. Promey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 463: 'If, however, mimesis as dynamic reenactment offered one means of embodying pious exemplars, the kissing, licking, or even ingestion of fragments of the sacralized bodies, or of materials transvalued by contact with them, are less easily accommodated under the rubric of mimesis, at least in its commonplace sense of re-presentation or re-staging. On the contrary, such practices point to a desire to collapse a distinction between emulator and emulated that is central to the operation of mimesis as re-presentation. In this sense, as Gary Vikan has noted, the relation of desire that unites pilgrim and sanctified model bears comparison to the ontological indeterminacy exploited in sympathetic magic, in which the relation between model and referent had less to do with imitating than with becoming.… Their production reflects beliefs in the capacity of sanctity to be both transmitted and, perhaps more significantly, to be mediated materially, thanks to an indexical chain of contact with the saint's body that imbued even mundane or profane materials with a sacrality capable of further transmission, in effect transforming them into part of the saint's "distributed personhood."'

[470] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâmesi,* vol. 1, bk. ii, 94.

Ottoman frame of reference even before a traveler would necessarily know who was buried therein. The story of Bāyezīd's encounter with the saint, perhaps told to Evliyā at the shrine, translated this argument in architecture into the realm of verbally articulate memory. Bāyezīd II was no doubt, as Zeynep Yürekli and others have discussed, motivated by a range of concerns in renovating or constructing commemorative structures for Bektāşī and other sorts of deviant saints, whether out of a desire to repair damaged relationships with dervish groups and border lords or out of his own evident personal devotion to the friends of God.[471] But regardless of the animate motivations for Bāyezīd, what mattered for Evliyā and others far removed from the original circumstances was the perception of diverse saints across the empire being commemoratively and authoritatively ensconced within one shared Ottoman architectural idiom. This unitive view was reinforced by other factors: the practices of shrine visitation were remarkably stable across the empire, regardless of the particular profile of the resident saint, and helped to cement the particularities of a particular saint and place within that wider 'oecumenical' context.[472]

Here it might be helpful to think of a given Bektāşī community, such as that gathered around Koyun Baba, as the primary agents of the continual reproduction of the sanctity of 'their' saint, a saint who was oriented genealogically and hagiographically towards one of the premier saints of all Anatolia, Ḥācī Bektāş, an orientation expressed in the use of distinctively Bektāşī

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[471] The disconnect between what Bayezîd was probably trying to do at the time and the way Evliyā saw what he had done, and the way in which the memory of Bayezîd's involvement was locally remembered, is a good example of how the past and its presence in the present is constantly changing and shifting; past contexts or bodies of memory cannot be assumed to be always operative, and what people perceive in architectural assemblages is especially changeable and capacious.

[472] This unity of practice, and the general ecumenical nature of shrine veneration on the part of many people, elite and non-elite, for whom the *sharīʿa*-compliance or otherwise of the saint was a moot point, drove puritanical attacks on such shrines; as we will see in the next chapter's discussion of anti-shrine literature, continuums of practice were used to deflect attempts at justifying shrine veneration on the part of more 'sophisticated' devotees.

discourse, practices, rituals, clothing, and other material objects. Participants, such as Evliyā, in the veneration of a Bektāşī saint, veneration which for him was continuous with other Muslim saints, helped to normalize and disperse those particular components, making them, if not normative, then at least recognized and valued as possible elements in the making of saints and sainthood. Not only did Evliyā venerate Koyun Baba—he did so as a participant in the living Bektāşi community gathered around the saint, neither here nor elsewhere—in his other visits to Bektāşī-coded shrines nor in his discussion of saints such Kapanī Meḥemmed—condemn their deviant practices. As our above discussion demonstrates, this is not because of the erasure of deviant, even antinomian practice, which certainly continued to be manifest in Bektāşī milieus and elsewhere, albeit, it seems, less vigorously as in the past.[473] Sixteenth century attitudes among Ottoman ʿulama and other elites had certainly been more ambiguous and even hostile—Ṭaşköprüzāde is quite unsparing in his condemnation of Bektāşī dervishes, as is Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī, both echoing the sentiments of yet earlier figures like Vāḥidī.[474] Besides the probable softening and relocation of some deviant and antinomian practices, the fading purchase of the political contexts—struggles between frontier and center, conflict between saint-presenting Ottoman and

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[473] Perhaps most important, and really in need of explication beyond the scope of this chapter, 'deviant' and 'antinomian' sainthood was, as noted above, increasingly subsumed under the concept and practice of the *majdhūb/meczūb* and related modalities of piety and sainthood, with a de-emphasis on such holy people forming mimetic communities. The trajectory of the Aleppine *majdhūb* Abū Bakr al-Wafā'i's community displays the larger trend in miniature: initially his disciples (it being significant that he had disciples at all) lived just as he did, antinomian, though without claiming *jadhb*; Abū Bakr himself, al-Ghazzī strongly suggests, 'learned' *jadhb* from his *majdhūb* preceptor Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Zaghabī al-Majdhūb (d. 978/1570). Abū Bakr's eventual successor Aḥmad ibn 'Amr al-Qārī would 'clean up' the *zāwiya* to an extent, continuing some deviant and antinomian attitudes, while integrating more mainstream practices as well, gradually moving the community away from a life structured by mimesis of the departed *majdhūb*. al-Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, vol. iii, 29-31; al-ʿUrdī, *Ma'ādin,* 43-52; 312-315.

[474] Ṭaşköprüzāde 's comments are worth reproducing in part, translated here by Yürekli: 'Nowadays, there is a group of unshaven people practicing false religious practices. The noise of their drum of error and the clamor of their kettle-drum of insolence reach the summit of the heavenly sphere just like the lusterless tip of the post of their banner. They are eager to claim attachment to his threshold where the power of sanctity dwells… God forbid that such people…who return from the watering place of the *sharīʿa* and take the path of *bidʿa*, should be attached to such an esteemed saint!' Cited in Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography*, 63.

Safavid sovereigns—that animated fifteenth into sixteenth century Bektāşī and other 'deviant' repertoires and communities no doubt contributed to the relative 'mainstreaming' of such forms of piety and routes of sainthood.[475] The trajectory from the sixteenth century into Evliyā's age should be seen as one in which the bounds of sainthood for elite audiences broadened, instead of narrowed, with the sultanic 'project' of sainthood much reduced or laid aside entirely, and, crucially, attitudes of hostility and expansive critique of sainthood increasingly moving into distinguishable 'puritanical' channels. It seems likely that just as the Kāḍīzādelis reacted in part to sufi 'monopolization' of preaching positions in mosques, this expansive support for heterogeneous and deviant sainthood helped to drive the articulation and spread of such puritanical sentiments as well.

iv. Conclusions: heterogeneity, the play of scripts, repertoires, and bodies of symbolism:

The distribution of Bektāşī resources of sanctity and the integration of Bektāşī and other (in some contexts) deviant-coded scripts and repertoires into other modes and communities of sanctity continued long after Evliyā, surviving the ensuing eruption of puritanical activism and debate over the very lineaments of sainthood, never mind potentially deviant practices of sanctity. The heterogeneous context visible in Evliyā's saintly encounters—a dynamic context undergoing modifications due to imperial routes of circulation and exchange—can be descried in the writings of many other observers, a sampling of which we have already seen in the context of Ottoman historiography at the beginning of this chapter. Contemporary with the saints of Evliyā's childhood, the Mevlevī şeyh, and eventual *nişan-post* of the Yenikapı Mevlevīhāne,

[475] Here Yürekli's arguments concerning the 'network' of Bektāşīs and others in articulating hagiographies, building shrines, and forming communities, is quite valuable, and seems largely correct, the conflict being one between the Ottoman center and its frontier peripheries, 'orthodoxy' and 'heterodoxy,' as we saw to some degree in chapter three, more expressions or functions of political maneuver and the location of power.

Ṣabūḥī Aḥmed Dede (d. 1646), is a further good case in point: as described by the Mevlevī biographer Sākıb Dede (himself, like Evliyā, very much a product of elite Ottoman society and culture), Ṣabūḥī, before his entry into the Mevlevī *ṭarīḳat*, was 'drawn' to the Bektāşiyye and for some years faithfully served a Bektāşī şeyh, one Ḳāsım Dede, resident near the tomb of Eyyūb.[476] His pursuit of the Mevlevī path began only after the death of Kâsım Dede, and, as argued by Alberto Fabio Ambrosio in his study of Ṣabūḥī, Bektāşī, Melāmī,[477] and other 'deviant' elements featured prominently in Ṣabūḥī's poetry long after his ascent into the ranks of Mevlevī şeyhs. Sākıb Dede expresses no disapproval at all over Ṣabūḥī's trajectory; instead, Ṣabūḥī's faithful service to his Bektāşī şeyh is a positive feature, not one in need of apologetic explanation.[478]

Even more striking an example, and one which comes to us from the early eighteenth century, indicating the continued vitality of the landscape of sanctity and sainthood Evliyā made visible for us, is the life of Taslak Dede, recorded by Enfī Ḥasan Hulūs Halvetī, whose hagiographic compilation, *Tez̲kiretü'l-müteahhirīn*, is an important guide to a wide and diverse swathe of Muslim saints of seventeenth into early eighteenth century Istanbul. Enfī Ḥasan was very much a man of his age: of free-born Muslim, Turkish-speaking origin, he nonetheless became a part of the Enderūn, obtaining the sort of training and cultural inculcation that marked an elite and learned Rūmī of his day, eventually becoming an *ağa* of the Hāṣ Oda, specializing in

[476] See the description of his pre-Mevlevī career in Ahmet Arı, 'Sâkıb Dede,' in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*.

[477] The lowercase here is deliberate, as an indication of '*Melāmī'* as a largely free-floating set of practices and deportment, referencing back to but hardly determined by older traditions and discourses, all as distinct from the Melāmī-Bayrāmiyye *ṭarīḳat* which made extensive use of that body of practice and reference but had its own distinct trajectory.

[478] Sākib Dede, *Sefīne-i nefīse-i Mevlevīyān* (Cairo: Bulaq, 1283/1866-67), vol. ii, 76; Aberto Favio Ambrosio, 'Lorsque le derviche tourneur était un mystique nomade: Ṣabūḥī Aḥmed Dede. Du marquage territorial et des personnalites marquantes,' *Oriente Moderno*, vol. 93, (no. 1, 2013), 139-143.

calligraphy and musical composition.[479] Alongside and subsequent to his career as part of the Enderūn, Ḥasan Hulūs affiliated himself with the Halvetī *ṭarīḳat* by way of Naṣūḥī Efendî (d. 1718).[480] Ḥasan's hagiographic work, however, while repeatedly featuring in a prominent manner Naṣūḥī and the Halvetī saintly lineage, was not organized with *ṭarīḳat* affiliation in mind at all. Rather, its organizing principle is indicated in the very title, the remembrance of (mostly) 'contemporary' holy people, some of whom had *ṭarīḳat* affiliations even as others did not, or, as in the case of Taslak Dede, participated in multiple *ṭarīḳat* and repertoires of sanctity at once.

Ḥasan Hulūs introduces Taslak Dede as a Bektāşī *fâkir*, having been 'awakened' by a Bektāşī *er* named Sarı Kazak, who commanded the dervish to travel, which he did until 1123/1711, at which point he settled into a room in bachelor lodging in Üsküdar. He spent most of his time, however, walking the streets or in his designated room in the tekke of Naṣūḥī Efendi, also in Üsküdar. At some point he had become 'divinely immersed,' such that, Ḥasan Hulūs tells us, in a given hour he had fifteen spoken words that 'belonged' to him (that is, came from his reasoning faculties), while the rest of the time he spent in 'immersion,' with many 'unveilings proceeding from him.'[481] His repertoire of practice included considerable asceticism: he would lie down for an hour but not sleep, and in general slept little, preferring to sleep in a place suited for sitting, not lying down.[482] 'He was constantly in a state of witnessing, with annihilation in

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[479] Nuri Özcan, 'Ḥasan Ağa, Enfī,' in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*.

[480] On whom see Mustafa Tatçı's introduction to Muhammed Naṣūḥī, *Üsküdarlı Muhammed Nasûhî ve Dîvânçe-i İlâhiyat'ı*, ed. by Mustafa Tatçı (Üsküdar, İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları, 2004), 11-46; ibid., 125-132 reproduces Naṣūḥī's account of a journey undertaken from Üsküdar to Kastamonu, of especial interest as an Ottoman Turkish iteration of sacred route-finding akin to the (considerably longer, to be sure) examples of al-Nābulusī, al-Kurdī, and others to be examined in the following two chapters.

[481] Enfī Ḥasan Hulūs Halvetī, *Tezkiretü'l-müteahhirîn: XVI. - XVIII. asırlarda İstanbul velîleri ve delileri,* ed. by Mustafa Tatçı and Musa Yıldız (İstanbul: MVT Yayıncılık, 2007), 109.

God prevailing in him. He spoke sparingly, always with meditation, and never spoke empty words.' His immersion could lead to strange and remarkable results:

> One day in winter the air was especially cold with the season's chill, and the saint [Taslak Dede] was in his room lying down. Because the air had reached utmost cold, they brought one or two handfuls of wood and ten *kıyye* of coals, saying, "Taslak Dede ought not feel cold!" But as the fire blazed up with the fuel, Taslak Dede stood up and filled his tobacco-pipe. As the fire needed stoking, in that very moment divine immersion (*istiğrāk*) overtook him completely and he began to address his pipe, saying, "If he fell with the pipe into the midst of the fire, could he lie in it for an hour, or longer?" We scattered about inside the room, as more than half his body and face were entirely within the flame, so three or four of us took hold of him and with force pulled him out of the fire. But his flesh, his dervish robe (*hırḳa*), and his dervish cap (*sıkke*) were completely unharmed, and his [presumably wooden] pipe, in his left hand, had dropped to his left side and was entirely within the fire, yet was unharmed. Picking him up we place him on a cushion. For the course of three hours he remained in divine immersion. Afterwards, "*Eyvallāh! Eyvallāh*!" he cried, and stood up, and once again we began conversing with him (*ṣoḥbete başladık*). Many strange and marvelous things such as this were made manifest through him.[483]

Rather like Baba Tükles in the hagiography of the Golden Horde,[484] Taslak Dede proves invulnerable to fire; unlike Baba Tükles, the impetus for his *kerāmet* is the onrush of 'divine immersion,' and is not overtly polemical in purpose, though Ḥasan Hulūs' mention of the tobacco pipe might be significant as an intervention in the ongoing controversy over the substance.[485] His mastery over the fire of the hearth clearly demonstrates his sainthood, while

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[482] This was one of the things that distanced him from the norm of *mezcūb* practice as it appears in early 18th century Istanbul, Taslak Dede in other ways being quite close to the *meczūb* repertoire as described in other entries by Ḥasan Hulūs (at 98-100, 102-106, 107-108, 112, 121-122, 123-124, 125-133).

[483] Enfī Ḥasan Hulūs, *Tezkiretü'l-müteahhirîn,* 110.

[484] Devin A. DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 231-289.

[485] Şeyh Naṣūḥī would clash with another contemporary saint, Ḥasan Ünsī, over the permissibility of tobacco, as we will see in the following chapter, Naṣūḥī not only permitting it but allowing his dervishes to smoke in his presence, something that greatly perturbed Ḥasan Ünsī. The connection between tobacco and *meczûb*, or *meczûb*-like, saint was not unique to Taslak Dede. Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī tells the story of a Damasence *majdhūb*

both the presence of his pipe[486] and his strange, even erratic behavior, attributable to the presence of divine 'attraction' in him, points towards the *meczūb* saints who fill much of the rest of Ḥasan Hulūs' hagiographic composition. Other elements of his saintly repertoire are incidentally on display here: he seems to have been treated as something of a household saint, hosted and honored by the other dervishes of Şeyh Naṣūḥī's tekke, even though he himself was not explicitly Halvetī, but instead is shown here wearing typical Bektāşī garb, while the presence of fire has a decidedly Bektāşī feel to it as well. His sanctity is indicated here not only by his spectacular self-inflicted (or, rather, divinely instigated) trial by fire, but also by his return to a non-immersed state and practice of *ṣoḥbet* with those around him. His sainthood, then, is predicated here upon at least three distinct repertoires of sanctity and sufism: *meczûb*-like 'divinely immersed' behavior, the deportment and appearance of a Bektāşī *er*, and the wide-spread practice of *ṣoḥbet*.

Another story further along that Ḥasan Hulūs tells of this strange saint indicates especially vividly the extent to which scripts, repertoires, and communities of sanctity and sufism could be entangled in the eighteenth century Ottoman world: one day Taslak Dede was sitting in a room (*oda*) in Naṣūḥī Efendi's tekke, with some of his 'lovers,' holding *ṣoḥbet*, when

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named Aḥmad who invited him to visit him, saying, '"Come out to my *khalwa*, I'll host you!" I wasn't able to go against him in that, so I went out with him, fearing that the smell of tobacco would harm me due to the closeness of the *khalwa*. He set to with his pipe, talking with it [in his mouth], but I did not smell the scent of the tobacco nor anything of it come to my face—and I knew that this was a mark of sanctity (*karāma*) of his!' Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī, *al-Bayān al-ghanī 'an al-tahdhīb fī suná aḥwāl al-majādhīb*, (Cairo: Dārat al-Karaz, 2011), 75.

[486] Like many deviant dervishes in general, the Ottoman *majdhūb/meczūb* is frequently identified with particular objects: keys, bangles, hats, tools, and so forth, objects often seen as being invested with not just the baraka of the saint—a common enough appraisal—but as intimately tied to the saint, almost as an extention of his person and saintly identity, taking on a new significance—or many significances at once. Cf. John Clarke's remarks on mid-twentieth century youth culture: '…when the bricoleur re-locates the significant object in a different position within that discourse, using the same overall repertoire of signs, or when that object is placed within a different total ensemble, a new discourse is constituted, a different message conveyed.' Cited in Hebdige, *Subculture*, 104.

he gave the author's uncle, Ṣāliḥ Efendi, some curious instructions. 'On part of a tile,' he told him, 'make a fire and give it some wood, and place it in the tekke next to the şeyh's prayer rug. When it is completely burned up, stand up and go.' He did so, but came running out of the tekke, ashenly pale and trembling. Ṣāliḥ Efendi explained to the others that he put the tile piece with the fire next to the prayer rug, but 'I was drawn back and I saw the *pīr* of our *tarîka*, the sultan of the saints, Şaʿbān Efendi,[487] and ʿÖmer Fuʿādī Efendi, and the master of *ʿilm*, Ismāʿīl Efendi, plus Muṣṭafā Efendi, and Karabāş el-Hāccī ʿAlī Efendi,' all of whom were at the time 'in the Next World.' They were seated upon the prayer rug from which Ṣāliḥ Efendi had been pulled. At the time of this vision Naṣūḥī Efendi was himself in exile in Kastamonu, but now he stood up in front of the other gathered saints in 'the Next World.' It was at this sight that Ṣāliḥ Efendi entered his agitated state, becoming 'senseless,' and fled from the tekke, though afterwards, Ḥasan Hulūs notes, he returned and took the *beʿyat* of the *ṭarīḳat*, having hesitated in doing so before. Ḥasan Hulūs relates other, somewhat less dramatic instances in which Taslak Dede revealed his extraordinary knowledge of the living and departed friends of God, underlining in particular the exalted status of Naṣūḥī Efendi, a status that would have probably been in question for some potential devotees, such as Ṣāliḥ Efendi, due to his exile to Kastamonu.[488] Taslak Dede acts in these accounts as a sort of mediator: his sainthood exists apart from that of Naṣūḥī Efendi, yet he is shown supporting through his own saintly powers the sanctity of the şeyh in whose tekke he lived. His intervention here is distinctive, with fire once again central, though in this

[487] The 'founder' of the Şa'bāniyye 'branch' of the Halvetiyye, described in depth in Curry, *Transformation*; ʿÖmer Fuʾādī being his chief hagiographer and Curry's primary source.

[488] We were intending to go to Varadin with the army. He [Taslak Dede] was sick, so I came to ask him about his thought [on the matter]. 'Where is the army going?' I replied, 'It's retreating from Mora, and will next go towards Nemçe.' 'Yā! The saints (*erenler*) are all fleeing to Anatolia, and in the coming year the army of Islam will not have victory in Bosnia.We however will not see those days. But at last I shall be well.' The following week he died, and was buried in the Üsküdar Cemetery, in a neighborhood near the Taşçılar mosque. Enfī Ḥasan Hulūs Halvetī, *Tezkiretü'l-müteahhirîn,* 110-111.

case Taslak Dede precipitates a disordered state in someone else which leads to a divine intervention. In this intervention, the saintly power of the Bektāşī-oriented Taslak Dede effectively serves as a projector displaying the Şabʿānī saintly hierarchy and confirming Naṣūḥī Efendi's place in it. For the story to 'work' in its hagiographic setting, and for the message concerning Naṣūḥī Efendi's sainthood—despite his exiled status—to come across, Ḥasan Hulūs expected his readers to identify Taslak Dede as a saint in his own right. If to many modern observers the bricolage of practices and symbolisms attributed to Taslak Dede appears 'heterodox' or 'syncretic,' the same was not the case for Ḥasan Hulūs and his audience. For them, like Evliyā Çelebi and other members of saintly publics unknown to us, in the right contexts scripts and symbols that might read 'transgressive' or 'Kızılbaş' in one setting could and did read 'saint' in others.

In summary, we may better think about this world of sainthood by returning to the metaphor of language and dialect. The language of sainthood in Anatolia, which extended into Istanbul and mingled with many other dialects, transmitted in many different ways, can be understood as a 'vast dialectical continuum,' to borrow a term from the study of late medieval Indian vernacular literature.[489] While different points on the map displayed variations of dialect, with some regions, *ṭarīḳat*, and saintly lineages drawing more heavily upon, say, ʿAlid piety, others upon the emergent repertoires of the *majdhūb* flourishing in the Arab provinces, each of these dialects were mutually intelligible, and did not admit clear demarcation from one another. This diversity of saintly dialect, repertoire, and reception was made possible by many factors, including the greater integration—on a cultural, economic, and social level if not always the political—of the empire's various cultural zones and distinct regions, as well as the faded

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[489] Aditya Behl and Wendy Doniger, *Love's Subtle Magic: An Indian Islamic Literary Tradition, 1379-1545* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 19-22.

urgency of the sixteenth century struggle with the Kızılbaş of eastern Anatolia. And if saints could find themselves caught up, willingly or otherwise, in the continued unsettled nature of Ottoman Anatolia, the challenge for the symbolic and effective control and dispersment of sanctity so typical of the sixteen the century had largely been decided in the favor of the many friends of God over against the scions of the House of ʿOs̱mān. Simultaneously, this triumph of the saints over the sultans went hand-in-hand with the embedding of these diverse saintly practices and discourses in Ottoman space, imagination, and social configurations, including among the rarefied ranks of the palace-trained Ottoman literati. Saints and sainthoods moved in and out of rural and urban space alike, and if a rural would-be Mehdī could still elicit intense anxiety and violent reaction, men of the Ottoman *devlet* could and did also perceive such disruptive şeyhs as saints and mourn their martyrdom. The integration of diverse ranks of saints and of the structures and practices of sanctity surrounding them owed not a little precisely to such people as Evliyā, Sākıb Dede, Ḥasan Hulūs, and other men (and, though less visible, women) who moved around and across diverse spaces and routes within the empire, the agents of circulation and cultural dynamism across geographic, cultural, and socio-economic space. But of course this is but one part of the story of sainthood during the so-called post-classical age: traces have already appeared here of the great conflict over not just sainthood but the very definition of Islam that typified the seventeenth century (and beyond). It is to that conflict, and other accompanying and causally linked social, cultural, political, and economic transformations of the tumultuous seventeenth century, that we next turn.

Part II:

Sainthood in the Transformed Ottoman World, 1660-1780

Chapter V

Sainthood in Spaces and Times of Siege and of Triumph, i.: The Context Introduced, and Ḥasan Ünsī and the Rūmī Lands

i. Introduction: the changing circumstances of saints and sainthood in the transforming Ottoman world and the emergence of Ottoman puritanism and reformism:

ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd-i Sīvāsī faced a dilemma. Given at birth in 1563 the name of his family's patronal saint, ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd Şirvanī,[490] his childhood was spent in learning the exoteric disciplines of Islam under the tutelage of family members.[491] As a young man he had been initiated into the sufi path by his saintly uncle and had gone through the forty-day retreat, experienced *vecd,*[492] and attained various spiritual degrees. But his uncle resisted authorizing his nephew to lead dervishes or to act as his *halīfe* elsewhere for one crucial reason: his nephew harbored 'doubts' about the *devrān*, the rthymic movements the dervishes engaged in during sufi audition (*semāʿ*), ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd questioning the legitimacy and legality of these things,

[490] On whom see Şeyh Mehmet Naẓmī, *Osmanlılarda tasavvufī hayat: Halvetīlik örneği: Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān*, ed. Osman Türe (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2005), 296-318.

[491] Ibid., 390-391.

[492] That is, 'spiritual ecstasy,' often, but not always, associated with participation in sufi dance, *devrān*.

particularly the ecstatic states that some dervishes would enter into during the *devrān*'s performance.[493] ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd remained in this state, his uncle's hagiographer tells us, until one night in a dream-vision he saw himself standing in front of the room of Muḥammad in Medina. Then Muḥammad came forth, leading a camel with a heavy load by the halter. The camel, 'with joy and happiness,' began to spin and twirl (*devrān ve cevlān ider*), Muḥammad leading and not releasing the bridle. When ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd awoke he immediately understood the dream's significance: the camel stood for the masters of the *ṭarīḳat*, the heavy load for the *şerî'a*, and the Prophet for 'the bonds of the folk of the *ṭarīḳ'*, while the camel's *devraan* represented the *devrān* of the sufis, so demonstrating the Prophet's acceptance of the practice. 'Some of the *inkār* left my heart,' ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd reported, but for further explication he went to his saintly uncle, and found that the *fuḳarā'* were beginning the *semāʿ*, some already in various states of ecstasy and emotional transformation, with rending of clothes, crying out, and so forth. Still bothered by all this—having accepted the legitimacy of the *devrān* in itself, but not these other adjacent practices and emotional states—ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd later went to his uncle in his room and told him of his worries. His uncle looked at him 'with anger' and said, 'Was not what you saw this night in a dream-vision sufficient to quell your doubt?' In that moment, 'the doubt entirely ceased and

[493] Sufi *devrān* had long been a point of contention both within sufism and without, and would be one of the major points of conflict in the struggle over sufism and sainthood that unfolded through the seventeenth century, precipitating numerous defenses and attacks. For one of the most influential defenses, that of Ismāʿīl Anḳaravī, see his *Ḥüccetü's-semāʿ,* included in İsmâ'îl Anḳaravī, *Minhacü'l-fuḳarā'; Ḥüccet üs-semāʿ* (Istanbul: Riza Efendi Matbaasın, 1870/1); he describes his cause of writing as precipitated by 'brethren' in the *ṭarīḳat* wondering how to respond to the calumny and denial levied against their practices by some people. The continuation of the debate over *devrān* is indicated by, among other things, the continued production and copying of treatises in its defense, such as the 18th century tract by one ʿAbdülḳādir ibn ʿAbdullāh el-Tursī, *Risāle-yi sırr ül-devrān*, Islamic Manuscripts, Third Series no. 256, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fol. 67b-79b. For a discussion of earlier Ottoman opponents to *devrān*, and responses to them, see Derin Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissent,' 266.

my doubt was replaced with love (*muḥabbet*), perfect consolation and the realization of pious intention.'[494]

In short order his uncle authorized him as a *halīfe*, sent him out to preach and lead *zikr* among townspeople, villagers, and nomads, his nephew undergoing intense spiritual states (*z̲evk ve şevḳ*) in the midst of the *devāân*. In short, he set out on a path to sainthood himself, one which would eventually lead to his moving to Istanbul, preaching in the Ayasofya, and clashing in the 1630s with the reformist-puritan preacher Kāḍīzāde: a career which we ought to understand as probably informing the shape that the hagiographer who recorded this story, Meḥmed Naẓmī (d. 1701), gave to it. Nonetheless, it is not improbable that a young ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd would have been plagued by doubts or concerns about sufi practice, in light of the trajectory of men of similar status and background like Meḥmed Birgivī (d. 1573), whose own path ran from adherence to a sufi şeyh to a career as a modest provincial preacher who would formulate a body of works strongly critical of not just much sufi practice but of many hallmarks of the Ottoman polity and of wider Ottoman society.[495] Birgivī's program did not arise from a vacuum. As Terzioğlu notes, 'proto-puritans' had been in active in various parts of Anatolia from at least the late sixteenth

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[494] Naẓmī, *Osmanlılarda tasavvufî hayat*, 392-393.

[495] On whom see Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissent,' 196-200, *et passim*; Katharina Anna Ivanyi, 'Virtue, Piety and the Law: A Study of Birgivī Meḥmed Efendi's "al-Tariqa al-Muḥammadiyya,"' (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2012); Jonathan Allen, 'Birgivī Meḥmed Efendi,' in *Christian-Muslim Relations 1500—1900*, gen. editor David Thomas (Brill Online, 2016). On the ubiquity and status of his works in the Ottoman world, see Jonathan Parkes Allen, 'Reading Meḥmed Birgivî with ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī: Contested Interpretations of Birgivî*'s al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadīya* in the 17th–18th-Century Ottoman Empire,' in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts)*, ed. by Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 156-157. For a glimpse at the process of 'canonization' of Birgivī (the result being that his works were universally received, read and owned by everyone from the strictest puritans to Bektāşī tekkes), here 'from above,' see Madeline Zilfi, 'The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul,' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies,* vol. 45/4, (1986), 262.

century forward.[496] These initial currents would soon grow into a more coherent and politically potent manifestation of Islamic puritanism, under the Ḳāḍīzādeli moniker and otherwise, hostile to not just *devrān* but nearly all aspects of contemporary sufism and sainthood and much else beside.[497]

If for the majority of Ottoman Muslims, of whom Evliyā Çelebi was broadly representative, the heterogeneous composition of Ottoman Islam was perfectly acceptable and indeed hardly notable, it was deeply problematic for others, even downright offensive and dangerous to the integrity of Islam.[498] ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd would resolve his doubts, aided, his hagiographer argues, by the intervention of Muḥammad himself. The doubts and concerns of

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[496] 'Writing in the reign of Murād IV, the Halvetī-Sivasī sheikh 'Abdülaḥād Nūrī noted that medrese students were already harassing the Sufis "in the provinces" (*eṭrāf*) in the reigns of Meḥmed III (1595-1603/1003-1012) and Ahmed I (1012-1026/1603-1617), and added that they were still doing so "in the *eṭrāf* of Manisa and some other *eṭrāf*." In both cases, the central government felt obliged to send letters to the kadis in these regions to stop them.' Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissent,' 199.

[497] My usage of 'puritan' is not casual: the source of the term is of course the Puritans of England and North America, and while 'puritan' has certainly expanded in lexical value, it always implicitly or explicitly refers back to its original derivation (which began as an insult), on which see Michael P. Winship, *Hot Protestants: A History of Puritanism in England and America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 29. While this sort of correspondence is often problematic, in this case, while keeping in mind the very real differences (some of which I will note in the following) between Puritans and Ottoman 'puritans,' it serves in this case to point out the shared contexts, similar resources, and often closely parallel responses that both groups undertook, in very close chronological synchronism. Paul Rycaut certainly had such correspondences in mind when writing his decription of the Ḳāḍīzādelis in his *Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, a description which should be seen as referencing (and criticizing) Puritans back home, with some of his insults—'great admirers of themselves,' for themselves—identical to criticisms directed against English Puritians. Part of this description is worth reproducing here, indicating as it does certain doctrinal positions, ascetic deportment, and social profile, filtered through an anti-(English) Puritan lens to be sure: 'for the Sect of *Kadizadeli* before mentioned, is of a melancholy and Stoical temper, admitting of no Musick, chearful or light discourses, but confine themselves to a set Gravity; in publick as well as private they make a continual mention of God, by a never wearied repetition of these words, *Ilahe ila Ellah*…. In short, they are highly Pharisaical in all their comportment, great admirers of themselves, and scorners of others that conform not to their Tenets… they admonish and correct the disorderly; and such who are not bettered by their perswasions they reject and excommunicate from their Society. These are for the most part Tradesmen, whose sedentary life affords opportunity and nutriment to a Melancholly, and distempred fancy.' Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire Containing the Maxims of the Turkish Politie...* (London: Printed for John Starkey and Henry Brome..., 1668), 130-131.

[498] The outsider Rycaut clearly found the morass of Islamic groups and devotional profiles rather confusing—contrast his clear and generally, it seems, accurate appraisal of the Ḳāḍīzādelis with his attempts at making sense of Bektāşīs and other sufi affiliations. Ibid., 93-151.

others lacking in such Prophetic intervention would not be so easily soothed, and would, as the seventeenth century unfolded, become manifest in bitter and deeply contested divisions and conflicts breaking out across the whole of the empire. The remainder of this section will introduce these conflicts and the approaches that I have taken in relation to them. I follow these introductory remarks with a more detailed sketch of *some* of what was at stake during this period, and of the various sides that emerged in the course of these struggles, before concluding with a consideration of the chronological and geographical parameters I have employed here. After this extended introduction to the wider context our close reading of the life of Şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī, the first of two biographical loci for examining this period in depth, will commence.

This chapter and the following one comprise the major historiographic pivot point of this study, dealing as they do with a period of the history of sainthood both deeply dynamic and consequential as well as possessing abundant attestation in our sources. The second half of the seventeenth century into the early eighteenth was a period positively overrun with saints and related phenomenon, all entangled with the operations of Ottoman puritans as they moved in and out of political power. The saints and friends of the saints—individuals and communities who took a broadly hagiophilic stance—of this period include some of the most significant and prolific figures in Ottoman religious history as a whole, including ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī,

Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī,[499] Ismāʿīl Ḥaḳḳı,[500] Mustafā al-Bakrī,[501] Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı, Ismāʿīl Anḳaravī, and others; if most advocates of puritanical reform, with some exceptions, would not become so well-known or influential in the long-term, they too nonetheless left extensive textual traces.[502] Historiographically, the attendant social and cultural and other transformations of the post-classical age in general have attracted increasing scholarly attention, adding to the potential thickness of the history of sainthood for the period, as well as challenges in controlling all of the available material. There are many types of transformation explored by existing historiography which have a bearing on the story I am telling here. Perhaps most important was the process of decentralization and of political reorganization and distribution seen by Baki Tezcan as constituting a 'second Ottoman Empire,' one in which political power and status, concentrated in possession of ʿaskerī position, were increasingly available to free-born Muslims across the empire, with increased political and economic power resting among the socially expanded

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[499] Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissent,' which she has not developed thus far into monograph form, remains a vital study of Mıṣrī, even if it has its limitations in interpreting the wider milieu. Many of the studies of not just this period but of Ottoman religious history in general face one of two problems: either a lack of awareness of more general Islamic history, literatures, and themes, or a lack of Ottoman-specific historical contextualization (Mustapha Sheikh's study, noted below, is an example of the latter). Whether this present study has avoided this particular historiographic Scylla and Charybdis will lie in the readr's estimation.

[500] Unfortunately, his corpus will only feature intermittently in what follows, but on him (and his own renderings of self and autobiographical voice) see most recently Kameliya Atanasova, 'The Sufi as the Axis of the World: Representations of Religious Authority in the Works of Ismail Hakki Bursevi (1653-1725)' (PhD Dissert., University of Pennsylvania, 2017).

[501] See for instance his important theological and 'heresiological' treatise Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī, *al-Suyūf al-ḥidād fī aʿmāq ahl al-Zandaqah wa-al-ilḥād: fī al-tafriqa bayna al-Ṣūfīyah wa-ghayrihim al-mudda'īn wa-radd shubhat al-mu'tariḍīn* ed. by BakrīAḥmad ibn Farīd ibn Aḥmad Mazīdī (Cairo: Dār al-Áfāq al-'Arabīyah, 2007), or his treatise and 'auto-*sharḥ'* on devotional practice, Muṣṭafá Bakrī, *al-Ḍiyā' al-shamsī 'alá al-Fatḥ al-Qudsī: sharḥ Wird al-saḥar lil-Bakrī* (Beirut: Kitāb Nāshirūn, 2013).

[502] A few recent studies can be pointed to so as to give a flavor of the state of the field, some of which will reoccur below: Marlene Kurz, *Ways to Heaven, Gates to Hell: Fazlizade 'Ali's Struggle with the Diversity of Ottoman Islam* (Berlin: EB-Verlag, 2011); Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Mustapha Sheikh, *Ottoman Puritanism and Its Discontents: Ahmad al-Rumi al-Aqhisari and the Qāḍīzadelis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Janissary corps for instance.[503] Whether or not we accept the full range of his interpretation of this phenomenon, greater distribution of power and status was certainly the case, alongside the dominance of local power-brokers who remained loyal subjects of the Sultan even as they politely declined to fulfill many of his commands.

In short, from the ease with which free-born Muslims could join the Janissary corps to the significant shift to the tax farming system of revenue collection, this was a world in which many of the sureties and strategies of the sixteenth century were no longer valid. Parallel to this political and social transformations were economic, cultural, and further social changes: some of them positive, in at least a material sense (and for many critics, whether nostalgists for the classical age of Süleymān or Selim, or advocates of puritanical reform, these developments were decidedly negative), by way of expanded levels and types of consumption, increased levels of literacy, integration into proto-globalized trade networks, and so forth. Other aspects of change would not have appeared positive to anyone, or almost anyone: the undeniable decline in internal stability and security as a result of not just the Celālī risings but continued outbreaks of violence and revolt at many points within the empire, as explored in the last chapter, while of less pressing concern in the second half of the seventeenth century, did not entirely disappear, even with the relative re-stabilization of the empire under the Köprülü vizierial dynasty. Highly contested were developments such as the rise of puritanism, or the concomitant elaboration of Ottoman confessionalization, manifest in genres like *ʿilm-i ḥāl* and in attempts to encourage Sunni identity and Islamic learning up and down the social ladder.[504] Decentralization and

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[503] Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. 182-190, 191-212.

[504] On the idea of Ottoman ‘confessionalization,’ see for instance the recent article by Derin Terzioğlu, ‘Where Ilm-i Hal Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization,’ *Past & Present* 220, no. 1 (2013): 79–114; and Tijana Krstic, *Contested Conversions to*

imperfect control and maintenance of internal security would remain themes up to the empire's dissolution in 1922. Concurrently, the empire did not dissolve in the seventeenth century, and in many ways the cultural and social cohesion of the empire in terms of a shared Ottoman identity grew stronger through this period, a trend reflected in the second phase Ottomanization I discuss in the following chapter.[505]

Given the diversity and depth of these wider contexts and of the potential routes of selection and analysis, I have had to be even more selective in choosing my case studies in the following section than in part one. In particular, I have not been able to explore the history and dynamics of puritanism in all of its manifestations across the empire to the extent I would have preferred.[506] Nor have I been able to give some major figures and contexts their due: the

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Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire (Stanford University Press, 2011); Marc David Baer's *Honored by the Glory of Islam* touches on both concepts of confessionalization and the role of puritanism, though his synthesis on the whole is not entirely satisfying for a range of reasons. The concept of 'confessionalization' itself comes from the study of early modern Western and Central European religion; on recent trends in the wider historiography of the Reformation, including confessionalization, see Joanna Miles, *Devil's Mortal Weapons: An Anthology of Late Medieval and Protestant Vernacular Theology and Popular Culture.* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2018), 3-19. It is worth noting that while diverse in their points of origin, *ʿilm-i hâl* texts could also take on an anti-saint and anti-sufi tint. The seventeenth century *ʿilm-i ḥāl* of one Ebü-Bakr Islâmbolî, for instance, after a fairly conventional and uncontroversial elucidation in a colloquial register of Ottoman Turkish, instructs its reader that zakat is not to be given to the 'people of innovation,' namely, the sufi şeyhs who practice *devrān*; rather, one should give to the true 'ulama. Abū Bakr al-Islāmbulī, *ʿilm-i ḥā*l, s. 4746/1, Kat. Br. 5788/1 Vol. 9, Ghazi Husrev Bey Library, fol. 6a.

[505] On which in general see, among others, Christopher K. Neumann, 'Political and diplomatic developments,' in *The Cambridge History of Turkey Volume Three*, ed. Kate Fleet, Suraiya N. Faroqhi, and Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[506] For studies that focus on questions of origins, underlying social dynamics, and the interface of puritan and political power—issues that I can only touch on at points in what follows—see the seminal works Madeline Zilfi, 'The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul,' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies,* vol. 45/4, (1986), 251-269, and Madeline C Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), the latter focusing primarily on the relationship between the ʿulamaat the center and the rise of puritanism—an important context though one in need of supplementary and connected contexts and explanations. For instance, more recently, see the interesting (if not entirely convincing, or, rather, not entirely explanatory) arguments of Marinos Sariyannis, 'The Kāḍīzādeli Movement as a Social and Political Phenomenon: The Rise of a "Mercantile Ethic"?' *Political Initiatives "From the Bottom Up" in the Ottoman Empire*, (Rhetymmo: Crete University Press, 2012), 263-291.

important şeyh, saint, and messianic figure Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, for instance, will enter into our narrative only obliquely, in reference to ʿAbd al-Ghanī, and the spectacular intersection of the apocalyptic and of sanctity which he (and, more famously and relatedly, the would-be messiah Sabbatai Zevi) embodied so vividly, only a passing notice. Geographically, Egypt recedes from view, aside from relatively brief interjections, and as was the case in previous chapters I have had to overlook the Balkans almost entirely, though it is clear that puritanical currents (and counter-currents) continued to operate there, as well. I have made no attempt here to trace the repercussions of these conflicts beyond the Ottoman domains.[507] Instead of an attempt at a comprehensive treatment of this period, I have chosen to primarily focus my energies around two select figures from this era: the Damascene sufi shaykh and saint ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (1641-1731), on the one hand, and, in this chapter, Şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī (1643-1723) of Istanbul. My choice was driven by a number of considerations: almost exact contemporaries in two of the core cities of the empire, both grappled with puritanical, anti-sufi, anti-sainthood movements and individuals even as the bulk of their careers fell outside of the mid-century efflorescence of the Kāḍīzādelis, their continued struggles useful evidence of the continued purchase of these controversies well into the eighteenth century even as the political sway of Kāḍīzādelis declined after the 1680s.

Yet their approaches to confronting Ottoman puritanism, and to other major transformations and challenges in Ottoman society, offer a study in contrasts: besides their very different stances towards asceticism, interiority and publicness, and the practices, discourses, and spaces of new forms of sociability, al-Nābulusī and Ḥasan Ünsī's respective fields of

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[507] On the relationship between Ottoman puritans and perhaps the best-known Muslim puritan of any place or period, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, see James Muḥammad Dawud Currie, 'Kadizadeli Ottoman Scholarship, Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, and the Rise of the Saudi State,' in *Journal of Islamic Studies* 26, no. 3 (September 1, 2015): 265–88.

engagement with both polemical opponents and with their saintly publics were often strikingly different. Where al-Nābulusī waged a multiple front war against the enemies of the friends of God and sought to draw together saints and hagiophilic communities across the Ottoman lands, Ḥasan Ünsī—probably like the majority of saints and hagiophiles in the Ottoman world—concentrated his activities not just within Constantinople and its immediate hinterlands but within certain neighborhoods, neither dispatching treatises and disciples across the empire nor seeking any especial influence with Ottoman officialdom, much less with the sultan himself. The difference in audiences and approaches is manifest in, among other things, Ḥasan Ünsī's limited literary production compared to the vast prodigality of al-Nābulusī,[508] the reams of texts, often quickly fired off, aimed at reaching as expansive an audience as possible, a difference related to their stances on spiritual freelancing, a theme we will explore in depth in what follows. Third, and perhaps most obviously, Ḥasan Ünsī and ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī stand in for Turcophone and Arabophone and the incumbent differences that went well beyond linguistic. That said, this marker of difference ought not be overstressed, as al-Nābulusī's realm of operations was not limited to the Arabophone but encompassed the entire empire, setting up for us examination of a different form of Ottomanization than that discussed in part one, one responsive to both the increased cultural integration of the empire (which operated in spite of or perhaps even causally linked with imperial decentralization of political power) as well as the efflorescence of puritanism.

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[508] Bakri Aladdin counted some two hundred and eighty separate works, ranging from short tracts to massive works of *shurūḥ*; Demiri and Pagani located around sixty of these in published form in their recent introduction to al-Nābulusī. Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani, 'Introduction: ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī and the Intellectual and Religious History of the 17th—18th Century World of Islam,' in in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts)*, ed. by Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 1.

ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī was an almost necessary choice for inclusion in this study: besides being one of the commonly recognized axial saints of the Ottoman period and an increasingly frequent subject of contemporary scholarly investigation,[509] his life and works stand out on numerous fronts, only a few of which can be taken into account here: a veritable polymath, al-Nābulusī wrote and taught in almost every genre current in the Ottoman world, maintaining a far-flung network of correspondents, friends, and devotees up and down the social ranks, from members of the ʿaskerī elite to craftsmen and barbers, including even non-Muslims. His textual productions, which ranged from brief tracts to voluminous commentaries, extended his range even further, indeed, as far as Southeast Asia.[510] As such his life and oeuvre can be profitability studied from many angles—his writings include everything from lyric descriptions of wild red tulips along the Jordan River, to spirited defenses of drinking coffee and smoking tobacco, to voluminous commentary on Akbarian theology, to a treatise on agriculture![511] The centrality of sainthood in al-Nābulusī's life and corpus, however, has seldom been recognized, despite its pervasive and structuring presence both in his own works and in the works of memory devoted to him by others, during his life and after his physical death.

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[509] Major examples include Samer Akkach's rather odd interpretation of al-Nābulusī's life, one that seeks to place the shaykh anachronistically and unhelpfully in dialogue with the Western European Enlightenment, *ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi: Islam and the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007); and Elizabeth Sirriyeh's decidedly better treatment, which is also the best overview of the shaykh's life to day, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascusa `Abd Al-Ghani al-Nabulusi, 1641-1731* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005). The first edited volume devoted to al-Nābulusī, *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology,* contains a wide range of approaches, from the investigation of his contributions to *kalām* to his anthropology to his place, within the wider Ottoman oecumene.

[510] By the 1780s at least one of al-Nābulusī's texts had been translated into Malay, while other texts of his circulated in Java. Anthony H. Johns, 'Sufism in Southeast Asia: Reflections and Reconsiderations,' *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26, no. 1 (March 1995), 180; K. A. Steenbrink, 'Indian Teachers and Their Indonesian Pupils: On Intellectual Relations Between India and Indonesia,' in *India and Indonesia During the Ancien Regime: Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 135.

[511] ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Kitāb 'alam al-malāḥah fī 'ilm al-filāḥah,* ed. by 'Ādil Muḥammad 'Alī al-Shaykh Ḥusayn (Amman: Dār al-Ḍiyā', 2001).

Ḥasan Ünsī is perhaps a somewhat less obvious point of reference: while, as we will see, his hagiographer, Ibrāhīm Hāṣ, embarked upon a large-scale project of hagiographic memorialization for his beloved saint, Şeyh Ḥasan would remain a relatively marginal figure in the dense landscape of sanctity that overlaid and ran beneath Ottoman Istanbul—unlike, for instance, his precepting şeyh Karabaş Velī. For instance, in Hafız Hüseyin Ayvansarayî's late eighteenth century encyclopedia of mosques and holy places Şeyh Ḥasan's *türbe* and *tekke* are accorded brief mention, with no indication of the occupant's special sanctity or prestige within the city's saintly hierarchy.[512] This is not for a lack of sensitivity towards the friends of God: in his description of the Z̲al Maḥmud Paşa Mosque, Ayvansarayî spends much of the entry discussing the Melāmī-Bayramī saints Pīr ʿAlī Aksarayī and his martyred son, Ismāʿīl Maşūḳī, neither of whom are in fact buried at the mosque, instead the burial there of a halīfe of Pīr ʿAlī precipitating Ayvansarāyī's hagiographic excursus.[513] Rather, as we will see, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ's hagiographic rendering confirms what Ayvansarуī's laconic entry suggests: Ḥasan Ünsī as very much a neighborhood saint, during and after his physical lifetime, never becoming a figure of city-wide, much less empire-wide, repute. Yet it is this (relative) obscurity that makes him an ideal reference point for everyday sainthood and saintly responses to conflict in early modern Constantinople.[514] In sum, these two related and quite different figures can serve in a rather

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[512] Ḥafīz Ḥüseyin Ayvansarāyī, *The Garden of the Mosques: Hafiz Hüseyin al-Ayvansarayî's Guide to the Muslim Monuments of Ottoman Istanbul,* trans. Howard Crane (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 34.

[513] Ibid., 277-278. Ismāʿīl Maşūḳī is further described by way of the mosque marking the site of his execution, the (no longer extant) Ücler Mosque. Ibid., 38-39.

[514] That much of the literature on the Kāḍīzādelis, and on Ottoman sufism in general, has tended to focus on the role of the palace, the upper echelon elite, and the ranks of the 'ulama, makes Ḥasan Ünsī's life and memory especially valuable in moving beyond such contexts into the everyday role of the saint as well as street level dust-ups in the Ottoman 'culture wars.'

synecdochic fashion, each standing in for larger patterns, dispersed communities, and broad tendencies within Ottoman Islam during this important period in the history of sainthood.

ii. Competing visions of social space and sanctity in the historical trajectories of Ottoman puritans and their opponent:

The very diversity embodied in the two lives of al-Nābulusī and Ḥasan Ünsī points to what might be the most powerful reason Ottoman puritanical and generally confessional movements ultimately ran out of steam: in the absence of a powerful polity or centralized entity willing and capable of enforcing (or attempting to enforce) conformity on a regular basis, Ottoman puritans lacked a mechanism suited for their unitary, homogenizing vision of Islam, particularly given the depth and durability of the heterogeneity revealed in the previous chapter. The friends of God and their devotees, by contrast, inhabited a political and imaginal world that was often *more* receptive to diversification and heterogeneity in their theoretical expressions, and, hence, dynamism and flexibility, than it had been even in the relatively recent past. This opening up of Ottoman Islam—which we will explore further in the next chapter—meant that responses to hagiophobic individuals and movements could draw upon a plenitude of approaches, sources, and supportive publics, a situational flexibility that in the long run contributed to the demise of Ottoman puritans and the triumph of sainthood.[515]

The difficult ground puritanical attitudes and measures would often face from the get-go can be seen in encapsulated form through life of one of the Ottoman ḳāḍīs profiled by the

[515] It will be discussed further below, but one public that the Ḳāḍīzādelis did not cultivate—far from it, it seems—was that of women, whereas women were frequently a crucial saintly public across the empire (their being so one of the many things that drew puritanical ire!). In this regard Ottoman puritans diverged from their English contemporaries, with women a major, if subordinate, component of English and American Puritanism. See *The Intellectual Culture of Puritan Women, 1558-1680*, ed. by Johanna I. Harris and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Aleppine biographer al-ʿUrdī, Asʿād ibn Saʿd al-Dīn Efendi. Al-ʿUrdī notes, besides his 'remarkable' probity and fairness as a *ḳāḍī*, that he was extremely scrupulous in his ritual piety, particularly paying attention to the water that he had to use for ritual cleaning (it was for this reason, interestingly, that he embarked on a project to clean up the trash-chocked waterways of Aleppo during his tenure).[516] He was also a lover of sufis, al-ʿUrdī adds, believing in them, and going—while still resident in Istanbul—every Monday and Thursday to listen to the sermons of Meḥmed Hüdayī in Üsküdar, as well as practicing on his own assigned *awrād*. Not only that, but despite (or perhaps because of) his own rigorous personal piety, when he confronted the deviant dervishes who followed the deceased *majhūb* saint Abū Bakr ibn al-Wafā'ī, the de facto patron saint of Ottoman Aleppo, about their lack of adherence to the *sharīʿa*, they simply argued that they were following the example of their saintly forebearer, an answer the pious ḳāḍī accepted. And when with his Aleppine friend his friend Shaykh Abū al-Jawd he visited the famous and expansive coffeehouse of the Turkish-speaking *majdhūb* saint Aslān Dede (d. 1638),[517] Asʿād Efendi was troubled by the music being performed, but was gently corrected in his attitude by his friend who gently argued for the permissibility of such music in the space.[518] While the story in part is meant to show an Aleppine cultured shaykh inculcating his Turkish-speaking Rūmī friend in local custom (and it is worth noting that music in coffeehouses would have also been typical

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[516] Al-ʿUrdī, *Madā'in*, 82. Shades of *waswās*, in other words, which had a long if very contested history of being a pious practice: Megan H. Reid, *Law and Piety in Medieval Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 144–96.

[517] Probably of Rūmī origin, though a Turkmen background is possible as well. On his life see Al-ʿUrdī, *Madā'in,* 258-263; and Muḥammad Amīn ibn Faḍlallāh al-Muḥibbī, *Tarīkh khulaṣat al-athar fī 'ayān al-qarn al-ḥadi ʿashar* (Cairo: al-Maṭbaah al-Wahbiyah, 1867), 420-422; and, on his coffeehouse and adjoining tekke, see Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004), 152-153.

[518] Al-ʿUrdī, *Madā'in,* 84.

in Constantinople during this period),[519] both this encounter and the *ḳāḍī's* interaction with the dervishes of Abū Bakr point to the reality discussed in the previous chapter about this period, a reality that contributed in no small part to the ultimate inability of Ottoman puritans to reconfigure the practices they so loathed. Sainthood, and the practices and cultural expectations and norms that flowed along and within it, were deeply embedded in Ottoman life, such that even a *ḳāḍī* practicing rigorous personal piety, akin to that of the Kāḍīzādes and other puritans, would accede to strange and seemingly deviant saintly practices in their local, socially accepted manifestations.

Arslân Dede was, as his own profile by al-ʿUrdī reveals, connected with various important stratum of Ottoman Aleppo, from members of the janissary corps to respected 'ulama familes such as that of al-ʿUrdī, aided by a manager, one Shaykh Muḥammad al-ʿAjamī, 'a shaykh known to some of the elite of the *arbāb al-dawla*, and who had a good voice and good handwriting,'[520] with the result that his tekke, next-door to his coffeehouse (the two forming an effective saintly complex), was well-patronized, if not dominated by, members of the Ottoman elite, even being given a decidedly classical Ottoman architectural form.[521] If Asʿād Efendi, like others in the late sixteenth into early seventeenth century, spurred by a range of factors, from realization of imperial disorder to the activation of the recurrent desire for Islamic reform and recovery, had reformist inclinations, it rarely proved easy to act on them or to develop those inclinations at length. The successes that Ottoman puritans, from the Kāḍīzādelis of the imperial

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[519] On which see the classic treatment by Ralph S Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle: Distributed by University of Washington Press, 1985), 106-108. Treatment of the coffeehouse will return in the following chapter.

[520] Al-ʿUrdī, *Madā'in,* 259.

[521] Watenpaugh further notes it to be 'one of the rare major architectural intervenions related to Ottoman offiicals in this area of the city during the seventeenth century.' Watenpaugh, *Image*, 153.

core outward, did experience were dependent upon the cultivation of wider publics with political and socio-cultural sway, publics which when activated could contest the existing discourses and spatial configurations in ways that an Asʿād Efendi was unable or unwilling to do. Not only did the bases of support for reform and purification expand over the course of the seventeenth century, ambitions expanded as well: where an As'ād Efendi might have sought small-scale changes here and there (and al-ʿUrdī writes that he was successful in correcting some aspects of local *ṣalāt* performance), a Kāḍīzāde or Meḥmed Vānī or their provincial equivalents saw themselves as being in a contest for the very definition of Islam itself and the shape and role it would take in the Muslim community as a whole at every level of life.[522]

Asʿād Efendi's concerns about the dervishes of Shaykh Abū Bakr and his unease with Dede Arslân's coffeehouse points us towards one of the most important aspects of the contest over sainthood as well as the wider 'culture wars' conflicts typical of this period: the struggle over the definition and the actual physical control of symbolically charged places and spaces, a struggle closely linked to another important imaginative axis, that of the struggle over the meaning of historical time and movement through time.[523] Metaphorical space was also at issue, intersecting with the struggle for physical space: the contestation of what constituted the viable arena of Islam, in terms of what practices, communities, and, of especial interest to us, repertoires of sainthood fit within the community and which had to be excluded—with the friends of God such as al-Nābulusī determining their own parameters for exclusion. At the macro

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[522] The concern over definition and limits can be seen in rather literal fashion in the popularity among puritans for expanding speech, beliefs, and practices that would place a person outside of Islam, on which see Simeon Evstatiev, 'The Qādīzādeli Movement and the Revival of Takfīr in the Ottoman Age,' *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: a Diachronic Perspective on Takfīr*, ed. by Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro and Sabine Schmidtke (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 213-244.

[523] I am not the first to recognize the connection with space in general terms: Zilfi describes the mosque—primarily in its function as a site of preaching (and of the stipends attached to preaching)—as a key space and precipitant of the conflict. Zilfi, *Politics*, 166, *et passim*.

level of social imagination Ottoman Muslims disagreed about *where* the locus of divine sanctity should be, and how that sanctity ought to move from God to the wider *umma*. Al-Nābulusī articulated—to different degrees and in sometimes contrasting or even contradicting iterations, to be sure, over his long career—the maximalist vision of Ottoman hagiophiles, a vision that might aptly be termed one of 'deconfessionalization,' a deliberate pushing back at attempts by political powers to instate coercively maintained orthodoxy. In al-Nābulusī's reckoning, one which drew deeply upon Akbarian theology, Islam was concentrated in the persons of the saints, through whom divine power and presence were radiated to the wider community, and whose special knowledge and authority not only gave guidance to others but also mediated what were really only apparent moral failings or lapses from orthodox belief. For others in Ottoman society, and not just hagiophilic puritans, sanctity was invested in the community as a whole, such that even inner lives and spaces should fall under the gaze of those invested—by whatever means or by whatever authority—with enforcing compliance with their interpretation of the *sharīʿa*. If for al-Nābulusī and likeminded others the *sunna* and sanctity of Muḥammad and the early community was realized in the modern world through the presence and practices of the saints, living and departed, his opponents required, first, the community in its entirety to be in conformity with and expressive of that *sunna* and sanctity. Second, they urged the effacement of what they saw as both generators of dangerous innovation and as rival centers and sites of sanctity, with the saints, their communities, and their shrines the most important such entities.

Such puritan anxieties over sacred symbolic space (and indeed the very definition of sacred space) is on particular display in what is probably the most important Ottoman treatise against saints' shrines, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Rūmī Āqḥisārī's *al-Risāla al-maqābiriya.*[524] Not

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[524] This treatise was widely copied and dispersed, often being included in puritan-themed *majmūʿa*s. I have consulted two manuscript copies of this treatise, both contained within such *majmūʿa*s: no. 1773/6, Ghazi

only does this treatise lay out the puritan approach to the contestation of sacred space, it serves as a good example of how Ottoman puritans thought and acted towards questions of epistemology, social regulation, and the nature of religious practice and access to sanctity in general. Āqḥisārī (d. 1631) is himself something of a cipher, known to us primarily through his Arabic textual output and its widespread popularity, aspects noted by Yahya Michot and Mustapha Sheikh, both of whom have usefully demonstrated his importance to the Kadizadeli movement and wider Ottoman puritanism.[525] Alongside this important treatise written in Arabic by an author of Rūmī background, I have also incorporated analysis of a more obscure anti-shrine work, *Taḥrīm ziyārat al-qubūr* by one Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Kurdī, a resident of Aleppo (and likely part of the urban Kurdish diaspora discussed in chapter three).[526] We can say little else about him save what is revealed by evidence internal to the work in question. He seems to have flourished in the seventeenth century and to have been in dialogue with puritanical works emanating from the Kāḍīzādeli milieu, serving for our purposes as a representative of those puritanical currents as they developed outside of Rûm.[527] This one work of his known to me actually deals with a range

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Husrev Beg Library, copied in 1702, and Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett no. 276Y, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, copied sometime in the mid-seventeenth century. Indicative of the often declining fortunes, though not cessation, of Ottoman puritans through the eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth, while this text is abundantly attested in the manuscript literature it was never, so far as I can tell, printed, even though sufi treatises of more limited coverage and less significance received lithographic imprints, sometimes more than once, in Ottoman presses (Āqḥisārī's *Majālis* however did receive publication in print).

[525] Ahmad al-Rumi al-Aqhisari, *Against Smoking: An Ottoman Manifesto* ed., intro, and trans. By Yahya Michot (Oxford: Interface Publications, 2010); Mustapha Sheikh, *Ottoman Puritanism and Its Discontents: Ahmad al-Rumi al-Aqhisari and the Qadizadelis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[526] Yūsuf ibn Ya'qūb al-Kurdī, *Taḥrīm ziyārat al-qubūr,* Islamic Manuscripts, Garret no. 939H, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections. Demirbaş 01035-004, Süleymāniye Kütüphanesi, fol. 48-67, appears to be a copy, or close copy, of this same treatise.

[527] What attention has been given to Kāḍīzādeli and the writings has largely focused on those emanating from the core Ottoman lands, with virtually no attention to either production or consumption of puritanical texts in the Arab provinces, with the partial exception of Sheikh's work, a situation that goes hand-in-hand with the

of topics in addition to tomb veneration, his particular concerns and stances generally analogous to those of Aqḥisārī and other Rūmī puritans, even as his particular approaches reveal his own distinctive anxieties and concerns. After an extended attack on tomb veneration, Yūsuf al-Kurdī launches into attacks on what he sees as pseudo-saints, on sufi music, and on the popularization of sufi teaching and knowledge in his day, among other targets, all ultimately in reference to the veneration of saints' tombs, the locus—literally and metaphorically—of the practices and beliefs he found so damning.

Aqḥisārī and Yūsuf al-Kurdī both offer detailed descriptions of the offending practices at these saints' shrines, descriptions that highlight the somewhat different rationales for condemning tomb-veneration each had, while also painting vivid pictures of lived practice in the seventeenth century Ottoman world. Aqḥisārī describes how devotees, particularly on special days commemorating the saint, 'come from afar to make visitation, dismounting from their riding beasts in front of the tomb, putting their foreheads upon the earth before the tomb, kissing the earth, baring their heads, seeking intercession, raising their voices, crying out from afar, and praying when they reach the tomb, thinking they are doing right.' At the tomb they make petitions and requests, 'and they crowd about it, as if it were the Ka'ba which God sanctified.' They kiss and bow as is done to the Black Stone, and rub their clothing—male and female clothing, Aqḥisārī specifies—against it. 'Then they complete the rites of the *ḥajj* of the tomb,'[528]

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relative neglect of puritanical movements in the Arab lands, aside from sporadic attempts to link the Kāḍīzādelis to the Wahhabī milieu.

[528] Some of Aqḥisārī's language and terminology, such as his suggestions of a collapsing of shrine visitation into the rites of the *ḥajj*, are borrowed from Ibn Taymiyya, though without attribution, as Sheikh has helpfully demonstrated. The overt rehabilation of Ibn Taymiyya lay well in the future. Sheikh, *Ottoman Puritanism*, 119-130.

performing *ḥalq* and *taqṣīr*[529] in the presence of the entombed saint.[530] Further along, Aqḥisārī rails against the fact that the people pour out devotion at these tombs, but, he alleges, do not come to the mosque, nor do they practice night vigils. They hope for *barakat al-ṣalāt* from prayers at tombs and supplication before them, such that they do not hope for in mosques. It is for this very reason—the neglecting of mosques in favor of holy tombs—that Muḥammad, Aqḥisārī argues, forbade *ṣalāt* at graves, including the graves of the holy dead, fearing that Muslims would imitate Christians in making such places sites of worship.[531] For Aqḥisārī, then, the conflict was one between spaces: on the one hand, the space of the mosque, which is also (at least potentially) the space proper to a rigorist scholar like Aqḥisārī, and, on the other hand, the space of the saint's tomb. The shrine drew away more than just worshippers from the mosque, Āqḥisārī argues. The devotees of the tombs set up candles, build tall structures, and endow them with *waqf*s, place flags upon the tombs with phrases from the Qur'ān written on them, in addition to the inscriptions on the tomb structures themselves, all practices perilously akin to those of Christians in venerating their shrines.[532] Muslims' piety and devotion in these money-attracting structures is stronger and more deeply felt than that in mosques, which entails the financial and social support of the shrine (here, *mashhad,* with deliberate suggestion of Shiʿi resonance on the

[529] That is, cutting hair and fingernails, remnants of which, we know from other sources, might be left in the vicinity of the shrine: Taḥa al-Kurdī, who will feature in this work's final chapter, describes his burying of some hair he cut near the tomb of Muḥammad, a practice which he apologetically adds does not constitute *shirk*. Ṭaha ibn Yaḥyá al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat al-shaykh Ṭāhā ibn Yaḥyá al-Kurdī: al-tarbīya wa-al-sulūk fī tarājim mashāyikh al-taṣawwuf alladhīn iltaqāhum al-muʿallif fī riḥlatihi al-'ilmīya wa-al-rūḥīya*, ed. by 'Alī Najm 'Īsá (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Ilmīyah, 2007), 71.

[530] Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Rūmī Āqḥisārī, *al-Risāla al-maqābiriya*, no. 1773/6, Ghazi Husrev Beg Library, fol. 43b-44a.

[531] Āqḥisārī, *al-Risāla,* Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett no. 276Y*,* Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fol. 171b.

[532] Āqḥisārī, *al-Risāla*, Ghazi Husrev*,* fol. 44b.

author's part) and the ruin of the mosque. They believe that in these saints' shrines 'trials are unveiled, enemies conquered, and rain is sent down from the heavens,' prayers in them being more effective than in mosques. This is all the greatest sort of *shirk*, angering God more than any other form. Those who practice such *shirk*, Aqḥisārī concludes, are not to be considered Muslims, but apostates, making their blood, their families, and property licit booty.[533]

Yūsuf al-Kurdī prefaces his attack on tomb-veneration with a determinedly leading question narrating in indignant detail the offending practices associated with these spaces: the *fuqarā'* gather in a shrine,[534] beating tambourines, singing, gathering around to listen with a mass of people, high and low, men and women mixing and bumping into one another. 'These people' believe that their presence at the shrine is an act of worship, even alleging that coming to this place three times is in God's sight equivalent to going on the *ḥajj*. The 'insensible (*khaddar*) from among the women and others' go out and about to make such *ziyāra*—it is the only thing that seems to motivate them religiously. If that were not bad enough, they expend wealth on these places, and when visiting they decorate themselves in 'finery.' They all treat shrine-visitation as an act of worship, even as a religious obligation (*waẓīfa min waẓī'if al-dīn*), combining their veneration with 'joy and affectation.'[535] What is the correct teaching about this practice, Yūsuf al-Kurdī's (perhaps imagined) interlocutor asks? His answer:

> This is among the worst of calamities, the strongest of corruptions and *fitna*s, the worst of disobedience! They take their religion to be play and jest. They disdain the tombs of Muslims, making them fallow and wretched with their revelry. It does not suffice them to practice obedience to Shayṭān: they must go yet further and imagine that this is obedience to God! They laugh instead of

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[533] Āqḥisārī, *al-Risāla*, Ghazi Husrev*,* fol. 44b.

[534] There is a suggestion in the text of a particular shrine, but it is not named, and should be seen as a stand-in for shrines in general.

[535] al-Kurdī, *Taḥrīm,* fol. 1a.

> weep. They make the tombs of Muslims into idols. They gather together *qaṣīda*s and poems which they sing with melodies, calling out to those present.[536]

A little further along, Yūsuf enumerates yet more evils that unfold in the shrines, such as dancing, men looking to unrelated women and to the beardless young men present, the raising of voices before the tombs, obliteration of proper deference (*iḥtirām*), laughing, and eating and drinking alongside tombs. In sum, he argues, it is the accumulation of these various sins and errors that reveals the true magnitude of the evil of the saint's shrine, similar to someone collecting lots of small pieces of wood and setting them ablaze and so producing a larger fire than simply burning one lone piece of wood. In response to this affront to Islam, Yusūf al-Kurdī argues, congruent with Aqḥisārī's position, social interaction with the venerators of tombs is forbidden: no greeting them, sitting with them, eating with them, and so on. One ought not even live near them or come near them in public. 'Those who persist in [shrine veneration] are equivalent to those who persist in adultery, taking of interest, drinking of wine—yes, and worse, on par with murderers.'[537] The contestation for sacred space, in other words, should have ramifications in everyday social space and personal deportment and interaction, such that the lines between true and false Islam, as seen by puritans, would become visible in the distribution of adherents and opponents.

If Aqḥisārī and Yūsuf al-Kurdī differed somewhat in the ends they were willing to deploy socially in policing shrine visitation, likely reflecting the relative political sway of puritanism in the center as opposed to the Arabic-speaking provinces, they agreed on what ultimately needed to be done to these offensive shrines. Aqḥisārī states flatly that these 'false mosques should be razed.' They should be attacked, 'until they are level with the earth, because they are founded

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[536] Ibid., fol. 1b.

[537] Ibid., fol. 2a.

upon disobedience to the Prophet,' and every candle and taper and lamp extinguished.[538] Even though they imagine they are worshiping God, Aqḥisārī avows, those who seek out the intercession of the saints at their shrines are akin to those who seek out astrologers and soothsayers, abandoning their religion and imperiling their souls, for no benefit in either this world or the next. The physical sites of this devotion simply must be destroyed.[539] Al-Kurdī states succinctly that the one who destroys these shrines is more virtuous in the eyes of God than those who destroy synagogues and churches which have been made licit for such demolition, as saints' shrines cause far greater harm to Muslims than churches and synagogues.[540] While Ottoman puritans were rarely able to marshal the necessary organized violence or political pressure to actually carry out such assaults, instances of attacks on shrines did exist, and the arguments of both Aqḥisārī and Yūsuf al-Kurdī make clear that the contest of holy spaces was to be ultimately resolved through physical force and not simply social pressures and persuasive argument.[541]

That said, in their treatises both engaged with some of the arguments and defenses of the friends of the saints. Aqḥisārī includes and rebuts some of the justifications circulating

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[538] Āqḥisārī, *al-Risāla*, Ghazi Husrev, fol. 54a-54b.

[539] Ibid., fol. 55b.

[540] al-Kurdī, *Taḥrīm,* fol. 9a.

[541] Baer describes one such assault: 'in 1668 Vani Meḥmed Efendi targeted a shrine affiliated with the Janissaries' Bektashi order. He convinced the grand vizier to issue orders to destroy the shrine of the Bektashi sheikh Kanver Baba located on a hill overlooking Edirne because it had become a site of pilgrimage. Abdi Pasha emphasizes the role Vani Meḥmed Efendi played… Meḥmed IV spoke to his historian one day while being shaved: "Today at prayers Preacher Vani Meḥmed Efendi said during his sermon that near Hafsa there is a grace of certain Kanber Baba to which some people come with bad convictions and slip into polytheism." The sultan issued an imperial decree ordering the destruction of the shrine. Abdi Pasha praised the sultan: "Just as his eminence our pious emperor guards the people of Islam from their enemies, so, too, does he protect them from infidelity, error, and polytheism."' Baer, *Conversion*, 114. Note the traces of anxieties over boundary blurring—that the shrine was inculcating 'polytheism,' that is, *shirk*.

concerning saint veneration. He reports that those who venerate the saints say that the departed saint does not act of his own accord or power, but that his power is contingent upon his spirit's closeness to God. Good 'overflows' to his spirit from God, and if the pious visitor clings to the saint, turning his intention and will to the saint, so that no other intention or thought remains in him, then the saint channels some of the divine overflow from his spirit to that of the pious visitor, the saint's spirit being like a mirror or clear water reflecting a flame upon a body facing it. Ibn Sīna and other philosophers have talked in similar terms, Aqḥisārī notes opprobriously, particularly in relation to the stars, describing techniques of adhering to holy spirits in the heavens—which is simply a justification for the worship of created things, Aqḥisārī interjects, finding in these philosophically sophisticated arguments simply more evidence for the evil of shrines and saint veneration.[542] For Aqḥisārī, there is no appreciable difference between the errors and attitudes of such theologically sophisticated defenders of the saints and their shrines, on the one hand, or the masses—women and men—who frequent the shrines, even if they articulate their practice and devotion using different discursive registers. Aqḥisārī recognized that the veneration of saints was not limited to the uneducated masses, but was as much a matter of elite discourse as popular, not that such recognition made these practices any more legitimate in his eyes.[543]

Finally, while both Aqḥisārī's and Yūsuf al-Kurdī took sharply polemical stances against non-Muslims (and, implicitly, non-Sunnis), condemning Christian and Jewish practices (real and

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[542] Āqḥisārī, *al-Risāla*, Ghazi Husrev, fol. 46b-47a.

[543] This suggests a quite different model from Grehan's suggestion of a 'bi-cultural' world on the part of the 'ulama, with their participation in the 'oral' culture of shrine and saint sealed off from their 'intellectual' pursuits (Grehan, *Twilight*, 5). In the argument related by Āqḥisārī—which very much has the ring of something actually in use, and which could probably be located in the theoretical literature, though it may well have been in conversation that Āqḥisārī acquired it—the interpentration of 'elite' and 'popular' is displayed, the way in which everyday practices permeated and shaped the concerns of the intellectual elite.

imagined) as idolatrous, and lamenting the collapse of difference between Muslim and non-Muslim practice, anxiety over the erasure of confessional difference was most pronounced in Aqḥisārī. For Aqḥisārī, the saint veneration practices of Sunni Muslim were equivalent to those of Christians and Jews and, just as damnably for him, 'Rafīḍī,' that is, Shiʿi, ones as well, drawing an idealized distinction between Sunni and Shiʿi in a sharp and polemical manner even as his attacks reveal the actual lack of clear distinction between 'Sunni' and 'Shiʿi' practices. Again and again in his treatise Aqḥisārī compares tomb-veneration to idol-worship or to the Christian religious use of images, arguing that everything from the worship of idols to Christian and Jewish *shirk* can be traced back to the veneration of tombs. The saint's shrine appears in this telling as a dangerously ambiguous space, closely resembling non-Muslim spaces, degrading the boundaries between confessional communities and hence undermining the exclusivity and dominance of Islam.[544]

For Yūsuf al-Kurdī, the idolatrous and boundary-collapsing nature of shrines was less important than their being dangerously ludic spaces in which norms of gender segregation were erased and proper public deportment was ignored in favor of excessive revelry and displays of

[544] That Muslim and Christian practices could resemble one another was recognized by hagiophilic Ottomans, without a trace of anxiety. In one especially striking instance, while in the vicinity of Kosovo Polje Evliyā Çelebi visited the shrine of the heart of Murād I and along with Melek Ahmed Paşa noted the filth into which the shrine had fallen. Evliyā's response is telling: 'My lord, the inauspicious infidel who slew this sultan lies in a monastery on yonder mountain in a fine mausoleum (*kubbe-yi müzeyye*), lit with jeweled lamps and scented with ambergris and musk. It is supported by wealthy endowments and ministered by priests who every day and night play host to passing visitors, infidel and Muslim alike. The mausoleum of our victorious sultan, on the other hand, has no such institution or keeper to tend to it, and thus all the infidels come and treacherously deposit their excrement in it. You ought to summon the infidels from the surrounding villages and have them clean and repair the mausoleum. With one load of akçe drawn from the has of Zveçan, strong walls could be built around it and a keeper could be appointed to live here with his family.' Besides a fine reminder of the energy and costs involved in keeping a saint's cult alive and structurally present, striking here is the way in which Evliyā recognizes the similarity between Muslim and Christian saint-veneration, but in so doing uses the vitality and indeed opulence of the nearby Christian shrine to argue for why the Muslim shrines needs to be supported, as a matter of both respect for the saint and for honor on the part of Muslims. No trace of boundary blurring anxiety is evident. Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi in Albania and Adjacent Regions: Kossovo, Montenegro, Ohrid* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 18-21

conspicuous consumption. The mixing of men and women and other violations that take place in the shrine, Yūsuf al-Kurdī argues, have further repercussions: for instance, he tells the story of a marriage undermined by the wife's making a vow to visit a particular shrine, her husband becoming angry with her for going out and about alone, drawn by the temptation of the shrine. This disruption of gender norms has further manifestation in the practice of sufi shaykhs taking 'even women into their allegiance, saying it is the *sīra* of their forbearers.'[545] In short, the saint's shrine was an engine of social disorder and disarray—*fitna*—disorder and decay which were carried out into the wider body of Islam through the saints and discourses of sainthood which, in Yūsuf al-Kurdī's imagination, ultimately traced back to the threatening space of the shrine. From the dangerous allure of sufi music to saintly claims of special epistemic authority, all were sustained in his imagination by the social space of the saint's shrine. Hence, for both Aqḥisārī and Yūsuf al-Kurdī, sainthood—or pseudo-sainthood as they saw it, refusing the validity of any contemporary holy person—was intimately tied into socially produced places, namely, shrines, even as they saw in that social production all manner of evil and danger. The saint's shrine became in their eyes a space in opposition to that of (properly regulated) mosques; the proper order of religious practice and of social life was reinforced in the mosque, but disintegrated in the shrine, disintegration then spreading beyond even into the space of the home. If, as we will see in the following pages, *all* social space was to some degree contested between puritans and others, for these puritans the real frontline lay in competing sacred spaces, spaces in which values and practices were generated that would shape how the rest of the social world unfolded. To raze the saint's shrine was to undermine all other varieties of *bidʿa* and *fitna* that threatened true Islam, and to strike directly at the projection of saintly authority and power which posed

[545] Al-Kurdī, *Taḥrīm*, fol. 4a.

such a threat and challenge to puritan epistemology and attempts at social control. In this way attempts to undermine and control the veneration of saints intersected with wider puritan concerns over other social, political, and economic corruptions and disruptures.

Even as Ottoman puritans certainly sought to do away with particular dangerous symbolically charged spaces outright, anxieties about social change and the spatial ramifications of those changes were hardly limited to overtly puritan circles. Yet, ironically, over the course of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth centuries, the oppositional logic of Ottoman puritans against all deviant spaces seems to have helped drive a certain coalescence of profane and sacred spaces that might otherwise have remained notionally and experientially apart.[546] To return to the example of Dede Arslân's coffeehouse, while the licitness of coffee was broadly and early on accepted even by some puritans, the appropriateness of the coffeehouse was not.[547] Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī (d. 1651), deeply hagiophilic and hardly a sympathizer with puritanical sentiments otherwise, had this to say about coffee and coffeehouse:

> Coffee is not unlawful. / It does not cause the person dizziness,
> Except he who frequents coffeehouses. / In them, coffee becomes the nullifier of honor,
> Where a person sees beardless youths, musical instruments, and backgammon, / Everything that causes diversion or leads to diversion ...
> So avoid it and leave the folk who invite you to it / No matter how persuasive their call…

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[546] Or been driven further apart: this is precisely what happened in early modern England during this period, as the space of the church and of entities like the public house and the coffeeshop were increasingly coded as separate, even oppositional.

[547] Hattox notes that 'we must consider the prohibition of coffee as two separate questions: the legal question concerning coffee itself as a substance; and the socio-Iegal question, whether there are any factors associated with but external to coffee drinking that are socially undesirable. Jazirl himself recognized this distinction. He was an outspoken advocate of coffee, as long as it was free from the taint of reprehensible actions; activities of the sort that had become common in the coffeehouses of the time were to his mind quite clearly indefensible. This is not an artificial distinction, but one that arises naturally from the arguments.' Hattox, *Coffee*, 45; for political actions against coffeehouses, see ibid., 112-117.

> So let coffee remain in the midst of your home so that /You do not mix its purity with the cause of foolishness.[548]

By contrast, for al-ʿUrdī and for many others in his milieu, the coffeehouse could become a permissible, even sacred, space because of its adoption by a saint, Aslān Dede. In the work of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī coffee, coffeehouses, and the public sociability both realized through them and symbolized by them would become central to his performance of sanctity, and their defense would be integrated into his defense of the saints and sainthood.[549] While many spaces and practices were contested by people coming from many different perspectives and alignments, clear coalescences between claims for sacred space on behalf of saints and sufis, on the one hand, and claims for the permissibility and even praiseworthiness of social, public spaces, on the other, can be seen with increasing frequency over the course of the seventeenth century.

And if there was deep disagreement as to how sanctity was to ultimately be realized within the Islamic community, there was broad agreement as to *who* was supposed to be involved in the sanctification of that community. Here, all parties involved tacitly agreed that *all* adult Muslims—men *and* women—were and indeed ought to be involved as active participants. The puritans and the puritan-adjacent envisioned the realization of personal sanctity—through rigorous, textually-mediated conformity to the *sharīʿa*—as requiring the moral and spiritual formation of every adult Muslim, with the coercive and supervisory power of the Ottoman

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[548] Youshaa Patel, 'Muslim Distinction: Imitation and the Anxiety of Jewish, Christian, and Other Influences' (PhD dissertation, Duke University, 2012), 236-237.

[549] One evocative instance of how al-Nābulusī subtly linked sacred space and the space of the coffeeshop: after visiting the Jerusalem Mevlevi tekke for *samāʿ*, al-Nābulusī and his companions made their way out into the market and come across a coffee house full of people, with music being played with all sorts of instruments, and so, he writes, 'our *samāʿ* was perfected,' the experience of the tekke carrying over into that of the coffeeshop, the boundaries between 'sacred' and 'profane' breaking down. 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya fī al-riḥla al-Qudsīya: min 17 Jumādá al-Ākhirah ḥattá ghurrat Shaʿbān sanat 1101 H*, ed. Akram Ḥasan 'Ulabī (Beirut: al-Maṣādir, 1990), 241-242.

dynasty supporting implementation of such a vision (and if not them, then likeminded activists at a grassroots level). The purification of Ottoman Islam, and the elevation of the *umma*, was predicated upon mass participation. And not just any form of participation—as demonstrated by, among other things, the proliferation of *ʿilm-i ḥāl* texts in the Ottoman world, *all* individual Muslims, men and women, needed to understand the tenets of their faith, to put the *sharīʿa* into daily practice, and to remain firmly and consciously within the confines of Islam.[550] Suppressing or converting troublesome spaces helped to clear the ground for individual Muslims to embody the *sharīʿa* and to personally reform and purify themselves, actions which would take place in concert with others, all the way up to the level of the sultan. Any practice—whether enshrined in *kanûn* or expressed through everyday custom—that seemed to contravene the puritans' interpretation of the *sharīʿa* or relax it in any way needed to be abolished, by whatever means necessary. Only when *all* Muslims had realized in themselves the practices and stances of the first community of Muslims around Muḥammad would the Ottoman lands be genuinely Islamic and in conformity with God's will. For the puritans, then, wide public participation required a lack of differentiation, in which all were expected to realize the same degree of moral probity,

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[550] This is the basic message of Birgivī's Ottoman Turkish (of a decidedly vernacularizing register) *Vaṣiyetnāme*, a 'proto-*ʿilm-i ḥāl*' work, on which see Jonathan Allen, '*Vasiyetnâme*,' in *Christian-Muslim Relations 1500—1900*, gen. editor David Thomas (Brill Online, 2016). After laying out basic matters of belief and ritual, the text deals at length with 'words of unbelief' (*küfr sözler*), one of Birgivī's major concerns, phrases which range from saying that 'If Adam hadn't eaten the fruit, we wouldn't be unhappy!' to contending that Muḥammad's licking his fingers was impolite, the treatise concluding with more specific instructions for moral living and self-policing. Birgivī Mehmet Efendi, *Vasiyetnâme* ([Istanbul]: n.p., 1852]), 41-47. On the genre of Ottoman 'catechism' in general, see Terzioğlu, ʿilm-i Hal'; and for an instance of such a text translated into English, see Anonymous, *ʿilmu Hal. A Manual of the Doctrine and Practice of Islam; Translated from the Turkish.*, trans. by Claude Delaval Cobham (Nicosia, [n.p.], 1902). For a 'sufi' version of an *ʿilm-i hâl* manual, see ʿAbdullāh Ṣalāḥaddīn-i ʿUṣşāḳī (d. 1782), *Elli dört farẓ şerḥi* (Istanbul: Tab'hane-yi Âmire, 1844). Şeyh ʿUşşāḳī, who, in typical eighteenth century fashion (as we will see) had affiliations to and made use of many *ṭarīḳat*s (Nakşbendiyye, Mevleviyye, Celvetiyye, Bektāşiyye and Gülşeniyye), settling ultimately into the Halvetī 'spin-off' the ʿUşşāḳī, also wrote, among other things, a *mevlîd* text, an Ottoman Turkish translation of a Persian Naqshbandī handbook, and Arabic treatises on *waḥdat al-wujūd.* In other words, his profile was very far indeed from a puritan—though his 'explication,' in simple Ottoman Turkish, of the fifty-four daily obligations, bears little mark of his sufistic and hagiophilic concerns expressed elsewhere in his corpus.

personal devotion, and public activism ('commanding the right and forbidding the wrong'), leading to the purification and sanctification of the community as a whole. Authority and guidance were textually rooted and, in theory at least, universally accessible, the special authority of the saints either denied altogether or severely limited (and, if allowed at all, placed in the distant Islamic past).[551]

The broad outlines of this vision of a moralistic, textually rooted community were not in themselves new, of course—analogues and antecedents can be traced back to the early centuries of Islam.[552] The insistence on wide-spread participation, and, crucially, enforcement (by the authorities or by activists) of moral vision on the part of the Ottoman *devlet*, is decidedly early modern and a marker of the distinctiveness of the Kāḍīzādelis and their kin within Ottoman Islam.[553] Cultivating a pious remnant, à la a figure like Ibn Ḥanbal, was not the goal. Rather, the remaking of society was the ultimate ambition, a goal that would have resonated with many other reformist and radical religious groups across seventeenth century Eurasia.[554] Aspects of this

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[551] In this Ottoman puritans bore close resemblance to English Puritans. Winship describes how early Puritan theory, as it developed in Geneva, envisioned the role of the sanctified community: 'A major element of this remodeled church would be strict discipline that taught all its members how to "frame their wills, and doings, according to the law of God," as Knox's committee put it. Heavy doses of edifying sermons were a vital foundation for discipline, but the core disciplinary tool was ongoing supervision of behavior. For Knox's committee, that supervision would be everybody's business. All the members, male and female, were to be godly busy-bodies, continually "admonishing and instructing one another."' Winship, *Hot Protestants*, 18.

[552] For instance, as described in Christopher Melchert, 'The Piety of the Hadith Folk,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 3 (2002), 429.

[553] Though noted in a polemical context, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī was correct in pointing out that Birgivī himself would have likely been displeased with the confrontational activism of later puritans, such as shutting down tekkes, interrupting *zikr*, harassing neighbors, attacking opponents, with 'spying' on the moral failings of others a particularly obnoxious practice, and none that did not require political power per se. While Birgivī's works stress personal purity, the maintanence in one's self of confessional boundaries, and so forth, the stress is inward, not outward; it would be his self-appointed followers who drew additional conclusions about 'what is to be done.' ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥadīqa al-nadiyya sharḥ al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya*, 2 vols (Lalpur: al-Maktabah al-Nūrīyah al-Riḍwīyah, 1977), vol. i., 162, 171, 189-190.

[554] Winship describes one early Puritan endevaour to do just this—many more attempts would follow—with, as was the Ottoman puritan ambition, only intermittently realized, governmental power backing: '"Sworn

activist vision could certainly be found among friends of the saints and among some Ottoman claimants to sainthood themselves. Like the discourses and practices of asceticism discussed below, iterations of which existed across the divisions of Ottoman Islam, desire for a purified and morally righteous community of Muslims was commonly articulated by sufis and claimants to sainthood, though usually without recourse to activism or overt political interventions.

The contest over sainthood, uses and meanings of social space, and of the very meaning and parameters of Islam had repercussions in unexpected places, including in the shape that life-writing and the expression of the self would take during this era, an age—across Eurasia—of autobiographical abundance and increasingly elaborate and sophisticated renderings of the self. Unlike their English and American contemporaries, Kāḍīzādeli and other Ottoman puritan-minded individuals and groups do not seem to have produced anything along the lines of autobiographical literature or other forms of life-writing,[555] in sharp distinction to the explosion of such texts and materials produced by the friends of the saints and by saints themselves, for whom autobiographical writing (in rather more sophisticated and generally more concise form than al-Shaʿrānī's sprawling auto-*manāqib*) was a potent technique of the saintly, public self. It

men" in each parish were to write up any drunkards, fornicators, scolders, blashpehmers, whores, or other sinners. On Thursday mornings, after Wiburn's edifying lecture, the audience would be further edified by seeing ministers, justices of the peace, and the mayor and town corporation punishing those sinners—the godly governments of church and state cooperating in strict public reformation, as hopefully would soon be happening all over England.' Winship, *Hot Protestants*, 32.

[555] This appraisal is based upon an extensive reading of Kāḍīzādeli and like-minded sources, only some of which is referenced directly in these pages, and much of it in archival form since there was little impetus until recently for publication. The Ottoman puritan experience stands in sharp contrast to that of the English Puritans, who, for a range of reasons internal to their movement and milieu—not least of which was their insistence on a different sort of living sainthood among the true believers—saw a flourishing of life-writing and autobiographical reflection. The need, indeed demand, for scriptural interpretation on the part of every Christian that the Puritans expressed probably also contributed to this difference, with Ottoman puritans studiously avoiding interpretive license, hewing as close to textual authorities as possible. Cf. Winship, *Hot Protestants*, 54-58; cf. Jeffrey Hammond, *Sinful Self, Saintly Self: The Puritan Experience of Poetry* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993).

seems that for Ottoman puritans, the ideal for the self was conformity to an idealized vision of the earliest Islamic community, a vision mediated through texts and textually constituted authority, removed from the deformations of both the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy and of the polycentric and polyvocal realm of the saints. If for al-Nābulusī and others of his bent, God was constantly speaking and manifesting himself within historical time, the divine will and presence operative within the diversity of selves and moments across time (though especially in his special friends, the saints—with saints being potentially everywhere and not just in the obvious places),[556] self-expression and articulation of historical particularity were not just permissible but valuable and potentially authoritative as examples worthy of imitation. An example from Niyazî-i Mıṣrī can clarify what I have in mind here, from his exegetical and autobiographical work *Mawā'id al-ʿirfān wa 'awā'id al-iḥsān,* here commenting on Q. 6:75-80, in which Ibrāhīm looks upon various celestial bodies, trying to ascertain their divinity or lack thereof:

> During these days [of Niyāzī's earlier sufi wayfaring] … stability was lifted from me, and volatility (*firār*) took me from side to side, until I was almost to the point of casting myself off of a minaret or a mountain due to my instability in a condition caused by the ardor of my ascetic struggle and intense exercise. The number of my invocations during these days reached eighty or ninety thousand, sometimes more, and my sustenance most days was a small measure of barley bread. On the Friday night of Muḥarram 4th, in 1060 (January 7th, 1650), I saw, while I was walking, a star opposite me… I thought that it was visible to me through the eyes of my head, so I closed my eyes and it was visible just the same… I knew that it was visible through the eye of the heart. That star did not cease from my sight for days. Then it increased in size until became like the moon, then some days more, it became like the sun, then it increased yet more until it shone in the six directions. And so my confused unrest (*iḍṭirābī*) and my anxiety quieted down little by little from the beginning

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[556] As al-Nābulusī expresses it in his *sharḥ* on Birgivī, if someone claims to be from among the folk of God, one should honor him, regardless of whether one can ascertain his authenticity. God accepts one's honoring of saints, 'real and imagined.' Not only that, but God has men and women whom he has formed to have a natural disposition for pure goodness, and they do not see anyone save they naturally think well of him or her, not even a flicker of a thought (a subtle rebuke in itself of puritans' consistently 'thinking bad' of others). God has hidden such hearts in order to realize good, and they benefit everyone they meet, ʿAbd al-Ghanī significantly concluding 'May God make us to greet in peace all saints upon whom we alight—nay, all Muslims of every sort!' Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥadīqa,* 190.

> of my vision up to the filling of the six directions. After that I was unable to struggle and exercise with the body, but rather with the heart and the spirit and with what was connected to them. I related this story to my shaykh, the apple of my eye, Shaykh Ümmī Sinān al-Elmalī, God sanctify his secret…[557]

His şeyh would further clarify his strange experience and help him place that experience within the framework of sufi practice and theory—such '*ṣoḥbet'* a important Ottoman technic of self, whether carried out face-to-face or, increasingly in this period, via correspondence. What is most important for our purposes is the intense subjectivity Niyazî expresses here in what amounts to a sort of self-examination, with a reproduction of his inner states (some quite disturbing), of discrete temporal moments in his life, all of which, ultimately, support what is effectively a claim to special authority by virtue of his realization of sainthood. This claim is both supported by his subjective self-rendering and in turn generative of that self-reflection and emotionally sensitive self-narration.[558] Divine inspiration, at various points, is required by the particularities of Niyazî's spiritual ascent and journey into realized sainthood. Such claims of special authority,

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[557] Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, *Kullīyāt Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Niyāzī al-Miṣrī*, Cod. Arab. 057, University Library of Leipzig, 13a-13b. On the autobiographical content of Niyazî's writing, see Derin Terzioğlu, 'Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times: Sufi Self-Narratives and the Diary of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī (1618-94),' *Studia Islamica*, no. 94 (2002): 139–65.

[558] It is this inward look for the signs of spiritual realization and obtainment, leading, in Niyazî's case, to sainthood, and the textual reproduction (and outright enactment) of that search, that connects similar practices in the English Puritan milieu, with self-examination required to ascertain one's election in the ranks of God's saints. As a representative instance, in his hagio-biographical compendium *The lives of sundry eminent persons in this later age* Samuel Clarke (d. 1683) writes of one of his subjects, Edmund Staunton (d. 1671), that 'he was very careful and dilligent in the great Duty of *Self-Examination,* which also he often pressed upon others. Concerning which he thus writes. "Evidences for Heaven, which (if my heart deceive me not) are in me, through the gracious workings of Gods Spirit upon me… [such as the sixth instance,' Sixthly, *Kindly meltings and mournings for sin, upon the sense of Gods free Love in* Christ… Going to *Hemsteed* to Preach, as I was Meditating on the Rode near *Langely,* of the Love of God in Calling such an one as I am, when thousands more Noble, more Migh|ty, more Wise and Learned, *&c.* Lye in Ignorance and profaneness, I burst out into a fit of weeping, and my heart by and by was filled with abundance of Joy and rejoyceing."' Clarkes adds further along that Staunton, 'according to the *Psalmists* Counsel and other good Mens custome… was wont to commune with his heart in the night season, when there is the greatest silence, and least interruption. He also kept a *Journal,* or *Diary,* of Gods Mercies…' Samuel Clarke, *The Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in This Later Age: In Two Part, I. Of Divines; II. Of Nobility and Gentry of Both Sexes* (London: Printed for Thomas Simmons, 1683), 166-167.

and all that went with them, were rejected by the rigorous puritan, nor did his project otherwise require such autobiographical flourishes or personal voice. The only differentiation of the self that mattered was for a given life to be more than that of others in conformity with the textually mediated sunna of Muḥammad, and such differentiation hardly warranted extensive commentary. The dramatic and emotionally laden voice of a Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī—or any other number of people in analogous situations—is simply not to be heard among the representatives of Ottoman rigorist and activist piety.

Finally, before continuing on to Ḥasan Ünsī, a word about the chronological and geographic scope of this second part of my study. We will be dealing, in this chapter and the next, with the later part of the Kāḍīzādeli movement and its adjacent tendencies, with both saints whose lives are foregrounded here entering into their fiercest polemical combat during the Kāḍīzādeli second wave of the 1670s and 80s.[559] While 1683—the year of the Ottoman defeat before Vienna and the resulting defeat of Meḥmed Vānī—has often been seen, not without justice, as marking a crucial turning point in Kāḍīzādeli fortunes, or lack thereof, we ought not think that the movement simply collapsed or that puritan-minded Ottoman Muslims meekly crawled away into the shadows to fester until the appearance of ʿAbd al-Waḥḥāb out in the Hijaz desert. Rather, it is clear from many vantage points that while the prospect of political power at the center largely vanished, Kāḍīzādelis and like-minded individuals and groups remained potent forces across the empire, and perhaps, in the case of the Arab provinces, reached their greatest extent after the subsiding of Meḥmed Vānī's wave. Away from the rarefied realm of the Enderūn the struggle over saints, sufism, social and sacred space and practice went on at the level of the street and of polemical broadsides and tracts, well into the eighteenth century. Whatever

[559] This was the period in which puritans had, at times, the ears of the Köprölüs and Meḥmed IV, with the preacher Vānī Efendi a regular fixture in the halls of power.

cohesiveness the movement may have once had, it is true, largely evaporated, but concurrent with that evaporation was the diversification of stances as well as of geographic distribution.

Consider two instances, from either end of the empire, of this geographic distribution and chronological expanse, one from Mosul, the other from Bosnia.[560] In his 1775 work of local history and hagiography, *Manhal al-awliyā'*, al-ʿUmarī, the scion of a prominent family of 'ulama in Mosul, repeatedly frames his hagiographic entries in a defensive tone, arguing for the validity of sainthood—especially that of ostensibly marginal figures such as the *majādhīb*—against un-named but rhetorically pervasive opponents.[561] Al-ʿUmarī's perceived need for continued defense against opponents of sainthood, whatever their exact origins and genealogical connections to the Kāḍīzādeli and affiliated movements of the previous century, is especially evident in his choice of concluding chapter to *Manhal al-awliyā'*: a treatise defending the practice of shrine visitation, al-ʿUmarī's contribution modeled after and directly citing ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's *Kashf al-nūr ʿan aṣhāb al-qubūr,* about which he writes, 'It is fine book, brief in size, yet abundant in knowledge. I have seen it, and copied it.'[562] Al-Nābulusī's corpus, including his polemical contributions, would remain popular well through the end of our period, scattered in libraries great and small from one end of the empire to the other.[563]

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[560] Other examples could be given: Mykhaylo Yakubovych has recently detailed the penetration and persistence of puritanism in Crimea as revealed in the works of several scholars, 'Crimean Scholars and the Kadizadeli Tradition in the 18th Century,' *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 2017, Vol. 49, 155-170; none of the scholars he describes seem to have self-identified, or been identified by others, as Kāḍīzādelis, but instead should be seen as part of the general opening out of puritan currents, texts, and sentiments in the empire at large, which could take quite different and diverse forms.

[561] Of especial note is his extended defense of the sainthood of al-Ḥallāj, suggesting that this long-running debate had come back to life in Mosul in the context of anti-saint and puritanical currents. Muḥammad Amīn ibn Khayr Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Manhal al-awliyā' wa-mashrab al-aṣfiyā' min sādāt al-Mawṣil al-ḥudabā'* (Mosul: Maṭba'at al-Jumhūrīyah, 1967/8), 216-224.

[562] Ibid., 246.

The second case comes from Sarajevo, and is related in the *mecmuʿa* of one Mulla Muṣṭafā as discussed by Kerima Filan. Mullah Muṣṭafā relates how on several occasions, from 1771 to 1798, individuals and groups of Kāḍīzādelis[564] engaged in bursts of activism and polemics, from (unsuccessfully) attempting, with some degree of violence, to prevent dervishes from holding *ẕikr* in a mosque[565] to (successfully, at least temporarily) shutting down acrobatic performances in Sarajevo,[566] in both instances (and in others related by Mulla Muṣṭafā) the contestation for space and meaning clearly on display. The pinnacle of Kāḍīzādeli penetration

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[563] See for instance the list of works by al-Nābulusī held in Şeyhülislam Muṣṭafā ʿĀşir Efendi's personal collection: Erdal Toprakyaran, 'Nābulusian Sufism in the Ottoman Realm: The Case of Şeyhülislam Mustafa Âşir Efendi,' in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts)*, ed. by Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 221.

[564] Such is Mulla Mustafa's terminology at some points, an indication that the name was being applied to puritans long after their political efflourescence in the center; see also Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī's use of the term earlier in the eighteenth century, rendered into Arabic as 'Zādiliyya,' in his *Burʿ al-isqām fī ziyārat Barzah wa-al-Maqām*, (Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Adab al-'Arabī, 2009), 116-117, where he describes them as a group violently opposed to saints' shrines, mentioning a 'Shaykh Zādi,' whose story is 'well-known in Rūm,' enough so that he need not reiterate it. Interestingly, he condemns here, not Kadızāde himself, but his followers, a stance almost identical to that of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, as Terzioğlu notes: 'In fact, writing forty years after the event, Misri still professed respect for Birgivi and Rumi, even as he made clear his points of disagreement with them. He also distinguished these scholars, and even Kadizade, from his archenemy Vani on the grounds that the first group, unlike Vani, did not do any harm to Sufi sheikhs…' Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissent,' 59.

[565] Kerima Filan, 'Life in Sarajevo in The 18th Century (According To Mulla Mustafa's Mecmua),' in *Living in the Ottoman ecumenical community: essays in honour of Suraiya Faroqhi,* ed. by Suraiya Faroqhi, Vera Costantini, and Markus Koller, (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), 335. In another article, Final gives the whole of Mulla Mustafa's description, which is strongly reminiscent of the 'riot' in Cairo in 1711 (and no doubt many similar no longer recorded events around the empire): 'A row broke out in the mosque. [The] *Müteʿassibs* say "we won't let you do it," the dervishes say "[we] shall." The row grew into a fight, they started with punching… [Later, the offending presiding imam, brother to 'the greatest *müte'ssıb'*] imam was removed from his duty, the bullies stopped coming and making rows, while the dervishes continued holding the *dhikr* every day after the *asr* prayer. This is how the Sublime Creator manifested His Power. The said sheik [Mustafa Mlivar, leader of the *dhikr* circle] is a frail old man, calm and quiet, but he and his side came as winners out of this clash which happened in the heart of the City, at the time when the religious Puritans assumed the highest superiority...' Kerima Filan, 'Religious Puritans in Sarajevo in the 18th Century,' in *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulamaları Merkezi Dergisi*, 33 (2013), 47-48.

[566] Filan, 'Life in Sarajevo,' 336-337. Mulla Mustafa was not pleased, writing,' Sarajevo is a city such that there are some Kāḍīzādelis who, out of sheer obstinacy (*inad edüp*), if the Prophet himself gave permission for something they would remain in blindness.'

came when a puritan preacher,[567] originally from Amasya in Rūm, rose, briefly, into the office of mufti in Sarajevo, only to be removed, according to Mulla Muṣṭafā, because 'his *fetve*s made no sense.'[568] As was probably the case in Mosul, puritans in Sarajevo were a persistent if generally marginal presence, occasionally capable of political intervention, their activities compelling responses from people like al-ʿUmarī and Mulla Muṣṭafā, the latter frequently labeling them simply as *müte'aṣṣıb*s, 'fanatics,' a moniker used in both Ottoman Turkish and in Arabic by many other opponents of puritans.[569] Even if Ottoman puritans would never again have the ear of the imperial center, then, they remained an active force, developing, we might say, a distinct subculture from which individuals and groups might make occasional activist forays against the wider culture, a culture in which the friends of the saints had by and large won, as the following chapters will demonstrate in much greater detail.

iii. Spaces, movement, opposition, and authority: Ḥasan Ünsī's saintly formation and the struggle for saintly space in seventeenth century Istanbul:

With some degree of the wider background of puritanism and the social and cultural conflict of the seventeenth century and beyond in mind, we can begin a closer reading of the life—in both senses of the term in use in this study—of Şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī (1643-1723) of Istanbul. His career and saintly self, as presented by his hagiographer and disciple Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, including his confrontations with 'deniers' (confrontations which themselves were part of his

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[567] His prominence underlining the continued validity of Zilfi's observation that 'the Kadizadeli vaizan were the indispensable backbone of the movement. Their role in the pulpit gave the movement its special public shape.' Zilfi, 'Discordant,' 265.

[568] Ibid., 336.

[569] Filan, 'Religious Puritans,' 45.

saintly performance and memory) were intimately bound up with uses and contestations of space and place, and as such his life provides an excellent opportunity to explore the intersection of spatial practices, polemical conflict, and local social dynamics of sainthood in late seventeenth into early eighteenth Ottoman Istanbul.[570] Towards these ends, I have traced below in largely chronological fashion the şeyh's entry into sufism, his embarking on a career in sainthood, and his struggle with the deniers by means of the spaces he inhabited and through which he moved over the course of his life. I have divided my discussion of the şeyh's life as seen through his use and formation of saintly space as well as the place of other forms of space—gendered, confessional, and so forth—into two chronologically successive sections: first, his entry into a saintly career, his sense of relationship with other saints, and his skirmishes with the 'people of denial' during the late seventeenth century. The second section encompasses his life as a neighborhood saint after taking up a position in his own tekke, his saintly presence becoming a continuous point of reference to the people of the neighborhood, a role that after Ḥasan Ünsī's death was continued by means of his türbe and reinforced with oral and written accounts of his life. The stories that Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates, because so many of them were rooted in his neighborhood—the Hoca Paşa neighborhood (*maḥalle*)—touch on many aspects of everyday material, cultural, and religious life, while also suggesting ways in which the şeyh and his followers conceptualized and carried out interactions with the different categories and classes of people who moved in and out of the saint's orbit.[571]

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[570] Molotch's definition of space is quite appropriate for what will follow in this chapter: 'A space is thus neither merely a medium nor a list of ingredients, but an interlinkage of geographic form, built environment, symbolic meanings, and routines of life. Ways of being and physical landscapes are of a piece, albeit one filled with tensions and competing versions of what a space should be. People fight not only over a piece of turf, but about the sort of reality that it constitutes.' Harvey Molotch, 'The Space of Lefebvre,' *Theory and Society* 22, no. 6 (1993), 888.

[571] For an introduction to neighborhoods in Istanbul across the Ottoman period, see Cem Behar, A *Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul: Fruit Vendors and Civil Servants in the Kasap Ilyas Mahalle* (Albany:

Unlike the voluminous and multifaceted writings of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, Ḥasan Ünsī's textual oeuvre was much more limited, consisting of his *Divān* as well as a *ṣoḥbetnāme,* both actually compiled by Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, his *menāḳıb* of the saint our primary source for this analysis.[572] As was often the case with hagiographic writing from this period, the text is only a few years removed from the saint's life, many of the accounts from the second half of the work coming in fact from the author's own recollections or those of other people in the neighborhood or tekke.[573] The earlier recollections are further removed in time, though they too seem to often reflect both Ḥasan Ünsī's own orally expressed memories as well as those of his friends and followers with whom Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ was in daily contact. As such, while there is a very clear argument running through the text—namely, the sainthood of Ḥasan Ünsī and the effectiveness of pious visits to his türbe—we can also interpret this *menāḳıb* as in no small part an expression of cultural memory at relatively close remove from its subjects, produced in a context in which accounts of the saint (as well as contestations of Ḥasan Ünsī's sainthood and authority) would have been widely available within neighborhood circuits.[574] This context of local memory and

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SUNY Press, 2012), 3-7 Behar notes that the '*mahalle* was an economic and social entity which, as far as the daily lives of its inhabitants is concerned, delineated their primary cultural milieu)family life, religious community, neighborhood, etc.)… Local consciousness at *mahalle* level necessarily meant close and frequent contacts,' an important factor in Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' hagiographic work. For a 'reading' of neighborhood space in pre-Ottoman Damascus with useful analogues to our case here, see Torsten Wollina, 'A View from Within: Ibn Ṭawq's Personal Topography of 15th Century Damascus,' *Bulletin d'études Orientales*, no. Tome LXI (December 1, 2012): 271–95.

[572] For editions see Ḥasan Ünsī, *Dîvân-ı ilâhiyât*, Mustafa. Tatçı (İstanbul: Sahhaflar Kitap Sarayı, 2004); Ḥasan Ünsî, *Tasavvufî incelikler: Kelâm-ı azîz / Ḥasan Ünsî; derleyen, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ,* ed. by. Mustafa Tatcı and Cemâl Kurnaz. (Ankara: Bizim Büro, 2001).

[573] As Campany notes in a very different but in this sense still analogous hagiographic context, 'authors did not make up these narratives in a vacuum and spring them on an audience that was unprepared for them and would have perceived them as completely new; rather, they collected them from various sources, reworked and recontextualized them, and put them into renewed, often broader circulation.' Campany, *Transcendants*, 11.

[574] Several examples of those 'neighborhood circuits' will follow below. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ closes out the *menāḳıb* with a very explicit 'summons' the saint's tomb: 'Even now someone who has a fearful matter or a difficult thing or a problem will go to the venerable Şeyh's noble türbe with honor and, practicing honor and

circulation meant that our hagiographer had to operate within certain constraints if his account was to be taken seriously.[575]

For instance, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ includes the rather dispiriting story of his şeyh's only surviving child, a daughter who, it is clear even from within the hagiographic framing, did not live up to her parents' expectations, not only leaving the tekke but taking up a dissolute life, to the point of working as a hammam attendant, hardly an expected career choice for the daughter of a saint.[576] It is easy to imagine such details being left out had the hagiographer been working at a more distant chronological or geographical remove from his subject, but Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ indicates quite clearly that the daughter's story was well-known, in part because she was living just over Halıc in Galata, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ at least once encountering her. So instead of passing over this aspect of the saint's life, our hagiographer explains that Ḥasan Ünsī foresaw his daughter's fall from grace even before her birth, a story meant to wrest some hagiographic use out of an otherwise incongruous detail. This and other similar examples suggests that we may reasonably take many

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graciousness, with etiquette will recite, for the dissolution of the problem will recite three Ihlâs and one Fâtiha to his pure spirit, give [the reward] to his noble spirit, and no sooner than leaving the türbe the solution to that person's problem will present itself to the heart, with God's permission, and provide the person's confidence is pure.' Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Ḥasan Ünsī Halvetī ve Menāḳıbnâmesi,* ed. by Mustafa Tatçı (Üsküdar, İstanbul: H Yayınları, 2016), 353.

[575] While drawing upon examples from Ottoman Aleppo, Wilkins' description of neighborhood dynamics is broadly applicable in our context as well: 'Residential quarters, on the other hand, were in many ways natural administrative units and as such had considerable advantage when it came to organizing collective action. Living in close proximity to one another, residents of the same neighborhood could be mobilized rapidly for self-defense. They had common concerns of security, morality, and economic welfare, and these concerns no doubt were reinforced by kinship ties as immigrants from one part of the countryside tended to congregate in one area of the city, and as neighbors intermarried. No less important, persons appointed to office within a quarter administration had the benefit of social knowledge, of long-term contact with residents of the quarter and familiarity with their habits and customs…' Charles L. Wilkins, *Forging Urban Solidarities: Ottoman Aleppo 1640-1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 111. Istanbul neighborhoods seem to have generally been more fluid and hence more heterogenous than those Wilkins examines, though the other means of forging solidarity and closeness would have applied. While not an appointed official, a prominent şeyh like Ḥasan Ünsī would have possessed similar knowledge to neighborhood officials, albeit turned towards different ends.

[576] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 231-234.

of these accounts as relatively accurate renderings of real interactions as they were remembered first, by the people of the neighborhood, and then entered into hagiographic form. In the process they retained numerous traces of social realities that do not in themselves reinforce the hagiographic image Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ sought to bolster. The very language of this text points to its origin in the milieu of the neighborhood at large, and not just the tekke: Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, while reasonably educated in lettered Ottoman culture, did not embellish his account of the saint's life with intricate prose or swathes of poetry, but instead often approached a vernacular register in his writing, both reflecting the registers of his informants while also making the ensuing text more widely accessible.[577]

After standardized hagiographic preliminaries, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ opens the *menāḳıb* with an account of his şeyh's conversion to the sufi path,[578] an account I have reproduced below, with my comments interspersed. Not only does this story come first chronologically in the *menāḳıb*, it provides insight into many of the tensions, relationships, and spatial practices that structured Ḥasan Ünsī's own later career as well as those of many of his contemporaries. Having briefly noted that upon coming to Constantinople from his native Kastamonu in pursuit, like so many young men of the seventeenth century, of a career in the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ writes that by the age of twenty—hence, around 1662—the şeyh was teaching Bayḍawī's *tafsīr* in the

[577] Compare the prose stylings and poetic interludes of Sâkib Dede's *Sefīne-i nefīse,* a work quite clearly intended for in-house consumption by Mevlevī dervishes, themselves frequently drawn from the more rarified ranks of Ottoman society.

[578] My usage here in the medieval sense of *conversio*, the transition into monastic life, often in the hagiography marked by a dramatic rupture; that said, there are traces of the sort of early modern conversion that the word also suggests, and as Baer uses it in his study: 'conversion is a decision or experience followed by a gradual unfolding, dynamic process through which an individual embarks on religious transformation… In both cases, a person becomes someone else because his or her internal mind-set and/or external actions are transformed.' Baer, *Honoured*, 13.

Ayasofya[579] as well as holding a Tuesday teaching session on the *Mes̱nevī*.[580] While Ibrāhīm avows that 'many among the 'ulama' attended these sessions, it is equally clear that Ḥasan had not progressed particularly far in the *ʿilmiye* hierarchy, remaining a sort of adjunct instructor and continuing to inhabit a medrese cell.[581] As such, it seems likely that his ensuing entrance upon the sufi path was not quite as spontaneous as his hagiographer makes it out to be, but may well have reflected a reconsideration of his career choice—in which he would have hardly been unique among his contemporaries. At any rate, it was in such a setting that Ḥasan's conversion story begins:

> The cause of the venerable şeyh's coming under divine grace was that there was in a neighboring resident room [of the medrese in which Şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī lived] a member of the 'ulama named ʿAlī Efendi, who was from the same town as Ḥasan [that is, Kastamonu], and whom this poor one [that is, the author, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ] also knew quite well. This ʿAlī Efendi frequently came to visit the holy şeyh, and told the following story about him: 'One day I was in Üsküdar, where I met with someone from my town. That person said to me, "There is a şeyh from our town, Şeyh Karabaş ʿAlī Efendi, living in Üsküdar's Eski Vālide Tekke," and he went on to describe his greatness. But when I went I did not get to see him. When I returned to Istanbul, I went to Şeyh Ünsī Ḥasan's room, I told him, "A şeyh has come from Kastamonu to Üsküdar, one who is learned, virtuous, abstinent, and his ascetic exercise and struggles are without equal; he is a master of spiritual states (*ḥāl*) and of divinely-granted disposal (*taṣarruf*), whom they call Karabaş ʿAlī Efendi. His written works are many. Let's go—I'd like to go and see him with you," I said. "Sounds good!" said Ḥasan Efendi, so together we went to Üsküdar.[582]

As the still numerous *türbe*s that dot the streets of the city even today reveal, early modern Istanbul was suffused with saints, departed, living, and aspirational, such that we might well

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[579] Bayḍawī's *tafsīr* of course being *the* standard *tafsīr* for early modern Ottomans.

[580] A detail which suggests the continued prevelance of this text among the learned classes, even in the midst of the Kāḍīzādeli effloursence of mid-century; ʿAbd al-Ghanī's description of the popularity of Mevlevī sessions among his father's generation, while no doubt exaggerating the scope of participation, also suggests wide-spread interest in Rūmī's magnum opus among 'ulāmā, at least until mid-century.

[581] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 187.

[582] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 188-189.

wonder what led individuals to affiliate with one şeyh over another, or to seek the *berekat* of one saint in particular. This introductory section of the story suggests a very practical rationale, as well as logic guiding the formation of other types of social relationships: in a city that was then as in much of its history dependent upon migrants from elsewhere to sustain its population,[583] a resident of the city might seek out holy men with a shared place of origin, just as migrants then—and now—often navigate the challenges of a new home by locating people of same or similar geographical origin, particularly in a city in which neighborhoods were often ethnically and religiously heterogeneous.[584] For just as Istanbul was, like most large urban areas in human history, a population sink, dependent upon human from outside in, it was also a sort of 'sanctity sink,' attracting şeyhs and other aspirants to sainthood from all over the Ottoman lands, especially Anatolia and Rumelia. The connections that ultimately lead to Ḥasan Ünsī encountering Karabaş ʿAlī (also known as Karabaş Velī) were predicated upon local identity, as his friend ʿAlī Efendi learned of Karabaş from yet another migrant from Kastamonu, 'our town.' And while it is somewhat obscured by the hagiographic rendering, we get the sense that for ʿAlī Efendi and his friend, traveling to Üsküdar (during this period very much its own place distinct from Istanbul proper) and visiting a saint had the overtones of a recreational outing, a means of satisfying curiosity, and not necessarily fervent piety or belief in the given saint. At any rate, 'ʿAlī's reported description sets up in miniature not just the sort of saint Karabaş ʿAlī was but the sort of saint Ḥasan Ünsī would become: 'learned, virtuous, abstinent, and his ascetic exercise and struggles are without equal; he is a master of spiritual states and of divinely-granted disposal.'

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[583] On the population dyamics of Ottoman Istanbul and the diversity of inhabitants of given streets and neighborhoods, see for instance Fariba Zarinebaf, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul: 1700-1800* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2011), 35-39.

[584] On neighborhood diversity, see Zarinebaf, *Crime and Punishment, 39;* Behar, *Neighborhood,* 5, as well as the story of the doctor Mikel related further along here.

> When we came to the Eski Vālide Tekke we sought out Şeyh Karabaş ʿAlī Efendi's presence, and when he saw us the first thing he said was, "Ḥasan Efendi, I have often wished for you! Thanks be to the Guide [ie God] who has facilitated this meeting!" He then said, "Attendant, summon ʿOs̱mān Efendi!" One of his dervishes went and called, and when ʿOs̱mān Efendi came, [Şeyh Karabaş ʿAlī] said to him, "ʿOs̱mān, here is the one I talked to you about!" So saying, he pointed at Ḥasan Efendi and smiled broadly. ʿOs̱mān Efendi, having kissed the holy şeyh's blessed knees, sat down. Then for a while we talked with the holy şeyh. Ḥasan Efendi remained silent. In such manner we sat in the presence of the şeyh for half an hour.'[585]

Here our hagiographer makes it clear that Ḥasan Ünsī's visit to Şeyh Karabaş was in fact divinely preordained and revealed to the great saint from Kastamonu who occupied (in accordance with the founder's endowment stipulations) the hill-top mosque complex of Eski Vālide (also known as ʿAtik Vālide as well as by the name of its founder, Hāṣekī Nūrbanu Sulṭān).[586] Once again, aspects of ordinary practice are revealed—the presence of attendants regulating access to the şeyh and acting as his messengers, acts of veneration of the saint, and expected deportment and practice of visitors in the şeyh's presence.

> The aforementioned ʿAlī Efendi then said, 'When I arose to go I said to Ḥasan Efendi, "Come, let's go—it's almost mid-afternoon!" The two of us together rose, and I saluted and said goodbye to the şeyh. Ḥasan Efendi kissed the şeyh's hands and knees, which astonished me since this had not been Ḥasan Eendi's practice (*zirā bu ʿedā Ḥasan Efendi'nin meşrebi değil idi)*. We went forth from the şeyh's presence, and I said to Ḥasan Efendi, "How remarkable that you kissed the şeyh's hands and feet, since you'd never done such to anyone before!" Silently Ḥasan Efendi stopped. I said, "Come on, let's go!" But he said, "You go on—I'm not going from here, I'm staying!" I said, "There's no need to stay here! You have a room in the medrese, books and

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[585] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 190.

[586] 'The first shaykh appointed to her convent in Üsküdar was Vişne Meḥemmed Efendi (d. 1584) of the Halveti order… The queen mother's waqfiyya stipulates that her convent in Üsküdar [attached to the mosque] would be entrusted to a righteous shaykh who would not transgress the bounds of the shari'a and who, in addition to providing spiritual guidance to resident dervishes, would preach inside her Friday mosque.' Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sina: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 283-284; and ibid., 280-292 for a description and history of the complex as a whole from origins through the sixteenth century. For its somewhat later history, see the description in Ayvansarayî, who notes its association with a Kaderî saint and his encounter with Khiḍr (a reminder that saintly topography shifts in meaning and emphasis over time, particular absent active 'work' on behalf of a saint and his memory!), Ayvansarāyī, *Garden of the Mosques*, 489-490.

> lots of other things there—and what's more, quite a few students, how will you give them up? We can't stay here, but come let us leave and later we can come back again." He said, "However many of my books and things there are in my room, I give them to you!" Having said that, he gave me the key to his room, adding, "Tell my students to find another teacher! After today I am not returning to Istanbul!" Rather if permitted he was going to stay in Üsküsdar in the service of Şeyh Karabaş ʿAlī. I pleaded with him, but it was no use." This is what ʿAlī Efendi related [to me].[587]

Reading between the lines, in this overall account we can discern the continued role of the *ʿilmiye* system as a point of contrast for the pursuit of sainthood, as well as some of the ways in which the limits of the *ʿilmiye* continued to structure the tensions between sufis and puritans. First, Ḥasan Ünsī's dramatic rejection of the life of the medrese indicates the totality of his new commitment: it is a total transformation and a total transference, as he must abandon his living space in Istanbul in order to remain in the presence of the saint in Üsküdar, a movement whose symbolic distance here is much greater than the geographic distance involved. His story indicates that the dramatic tension we saw in chapter three between participation in the *ʿilmiye* and the serious pursuance of sufism remained very much alive in the second half of the seventeenth century, in ways that were generally not true outside of the core lands of Rūm and Rumelia. That said, our narrative also has the suggestion that Şeyh Ḥasan's career was rather stalled: the number of available positions for a provincially-formed scholar were limited, and his chances of moving up not particularly spectacular.[588] As such, pursuing a new career under Karabaş ʿAlī might not have been so disruptive or strange a choice as our hagiographic account suggests. That said, while it is certainly here meant to demonstrate the drama of the moment, ʿAlī Efendi's surprise at his friend's kissing the hands and knees of Karabaş ʿAlī suggests that like many other

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[587] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 190-191.

[588] On competition for preaching posts for those at the 'bottom' of the religious hierarchy in Istanbul, see for instance Zilfi, 'Discordant,' 266-267.

medrese students and low-ranking functionaries at the time, Ḥasan Ünsī at the very least maintained a certain distance from, if not an outright critical attitude toward, contemporary claimants to sanctity.[589] His apparent previous reticence towards visiting living şeyhs is a rather mild attitude compared to the positions of the Kāḍīzādelis, but it might well be seen as being on a continuum with more radical stances, another reminder of the diversity of possible positions given individuals could take on such things as veneration of saints—as well as the possibility of change.[590]

Whatever the exact factors that led to his change of life, having taken the *bey'at* from the saint, under Karabaş ʿAlī's guidance Ḥasan Ünsī quickly advanced on the sufi path, engaging in asceticism and struggles with his lower self, with ascetic deportment—a defining feature of Ḥasan Ünsī's later career—a feature of the training and practice instilled by Karabaş ʿAlī, whose sufis were known for, among other things, all-night prayer sessions in mosques.[591] As Ḥasan

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[589] The aforementioned puritan Yūsuf al-Kurdī relates a story that typifies the puritan scorn for living saints, here rendered as little more than grifters: a blind, grifter 'pseudo-shaykh' showed up at his door and interrogated the servant girl, then spoke with the author: he is Shaykh, he reported, So-and-So of Iraq, along with other titles he has given himself, and his speciality is powerful intercessory prayer, such that he can give his client anything he wishes. 'What's your need? What do you lack? What's your misfortune?' and so on. All he needs is a generous donation, he says as he stretches out his right hand and repeats his request a few times. He then adds that the author should bring forth anything of this world or the next that concern him or leap to mind. A donation will secure these things. One can even be released from the obligations of prayer and fasting through an offering, to which he then added the promise of protection against any evil. Finally, he suggested that if the author wasn't currently in need of his services, if he gave something then in the future when trouble hit he could call out the name of the shaykh from anywhere, which would do the trick: the shaykh would receive his cry graciously, no matter where he happened to be. And so forth. al-Kurdī, *Taḥrīm,* fol. 4b-5a. Cf. for a somewhat similar take on 'pseudo-saints,' but from an otherwise committed hagiophile, 'Abdallāh ibn Ḥusayn al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha al-miskiya fi al-rihla al-Makkiya,* ed. by'Ali 'Umar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafah al-Diniyah, 2009), 245.

[590] It is worth noting the degree to which many individuals moved back and forth along this continuum: Birgivī himself began his career as a sufi, and could well have taken the path to sainthood (despite his protestations in the *Vaṣiyetnāme* against taking his tomb as a shrine, that is precisely what happened over the long run!). For Niyazî-i Mıṣrī's early formation in the Birgivī canon and sympathies for some aspects of puritanism, see Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissident,' 58-59.

[591] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 187

Ünsī advanced, according to his hagiographer, through spiritual stations at a rapid clip, he was also becoming integrated into the social relationships and patterns of practice radiating out from Karabaş ʿAlī and his tekke. One of the most prominent sufi şeyhs of the period, spatially centered on one of the most important mosque complexes in Üsküdar, Karabaş ʿAlī maintained a vigorous public profile, giving the *beyʿat* to virtually all takers, as Ibrāhīm Hāṣ explains in language that suggests such spiritual promiscuity was not universally well-received.[592] To sufis who had already taken the *bey'at* in a different *ṭarīḳat,* while Şeyh Karabaş would not initiate them into his *ṭarīḳat*, he did not turn them away. As he explained to a Mevlevī şeyh seeking *bey'at* from him, 'whatever *tarîk* you are a part of, it is always possible for you to see and converse with me for your instruction (*irşād)*!' These connections were maintained not just through personal contact with the şeyh but, like many other sufis of the era, through a network of *halīfe*s distributed throughout Istanbul proper.[593]

Şeyh Karabaş' public was not limited to other sufis, of course: it included dissolute people described by Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ as '*fāsıḳ'* and '*ehl-i hevā*,' who would, however, our hagiographer hastens to add, soon repent and undertake a new life through the saint's spiritual influence. Karabaş' public also included none other than Sultan Meḥmed IV (1642-1693), presented in the *menāḳıb* as a devotee of the saint, to the extent that he would sometimes come to Friday prayers in the Eski Vālide Mosque, listening to Şeyh Karabaş's entire sermon (implying that sultans did not necessarily make a habit of staying for the whole thing), and reputedly

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[592] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ explains that it was part of Karabaş ʿAlī's '*evṣāf-ı kerīmler'* that he did not turn away anyone wishing to take the *beyʿat* from him, not even pointing out their sins (which he could perceive through his saintly powers of course) but would instead simply give them the *bey'a*t—then that '*fāsıḳ'* or *ehl-i hevā* after a short time would repent and seek forgiveness, and, driven by the fire of love of God, would speedily seek further instruction from one of the saint's *halīfe*s. Ibid., 192-193. There is almost certainly an aspect of anti-puritan stance here, the policing of public morals a key part of the Ottoman puritan 'program' as noted above.

[593] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 192.

saying, 'This şeyh's sermons affect me so much that, like Ibrāhīm bin Edhem I want to throw away crown and throne and take to the mountains!'[594] That Meḥmed was, to put it mildly, hardly unwavering in his support of sufi preachers like Karabaş goes without comment in the *menāḳıb*: instead, his connections with the living friends of God are underlined, while his excursions in other directions are passed over in silence.[595]

As Ḥasan Ünsī advanced in his instruction and discipline, his şeyh sought to deploy him into these various social relationships and publics, making him a *halīfe*, and allowing his disciple to wear the black turban (the primary material sign of this Halvetī sub-*ṭarīḳat*) in his presence (Şeyh Karabaş's disciples normally were required to wrap a white cloth around their black turbans when entering into the saint's presence). This was followed by Ḥasan Ünsī's temporary dispatch to the Topkapı Palace where for two years he would lead Halvetī rituals within the Enderūn itself, after a previous first visit in which he healed, through his *nefes*,[596] one of the Sultan's *çuhādār*s, Kara Meḥmed Ağa, acting as a delegate for Karabaş ʿAlī.[597] Again, the puritan-precipitated tensions within the court are not explicitly raised, no reason being given for

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[594] Ibid., 198.

[595] On Meḥmed IV's reputation for personal piety—his commemoration of the Prophet's birthday (itself hardly popular with puritans), his devotion to ritual prayer, his interest in preaching and discussing theological questions, see Baer, *Conversion*, 108-109; for his relationship with the puritan preacher Vani, see Baer, *Conversion*, 195-121; for his connections with other sufis, ibid., 69, 112. It is notable that in Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' rendering Meḥmed is a positive presence, or, at least, not a negative one; this despite the general transformation of his image in the eighteenth century into a failed and deplorable sultan, addicted to hunting. Perhaps his inclusion here should be seen as part of a post-humous contestation of the sultan's memory; instead of the recipient of puritan sermons, he is enthralled by the sermons of a saint, going so far as to cross over to Üsküdar to enter into the saint's space (quite different from having a puritan preacher tag along on his journeys).

[596] Literally 'breath,' the term is most strongly associated with Bektāşī poetry, due to Yūnus Emre having been inspired to produce his poetry through the outpouring of saintly breath upon him—the usage implied here, though echoes of the Bektāşī and otherwise sense should probably be heard too. Tevfik Rüștü Topuzoğlu, 'Nefes,' in *Encyclopedia of Islam*^{2}.

[597] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 205-209.

Ḥasan Ünsī's permanent departure from the palace. Istead, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ describes how, in 1664, Ḥasan Ünsī was sent by his şeyh to take up residence in the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque, located in a neighborhood just to the northwest of the Aya Sofia. Converted to a mosque in the fifteenth century from a Byzantine church, St. Mary Chalkoprateia, it would become a contested space again under Ḥasan Ünsī's occupation.[598] Before describing the struggles that his şeyh would undergo there, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ notes that in preparation for leaving on the *ḥajj* in 1685, which would be Şeyh Karabaş' final journey (he would die on the way in Qal'a al-Nahr, in the Sinai), the saint instructed his other *halīfe*s to look to Ḥasan Ünsī as an authority, entrusting them to him, though not precisely appointing him his successor (Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ certainly smoothing over tensions and ambiguities that lurk just behind the hagiographic text).[599] We may also see in this ambiguity our hagiographer's attempt to reconcile whatever investment Karabaş ʿAlī actually made and Şeyh Ḥasan's own later tendency to diverge from some of the signature practices of his initiating şeyh—a divergence hinted at in a story in which Karabaş ʿAlī must gently encourage his protégée to appoint and send out *halīfe*s, a practice which previously he had been reluctant to undertake, suggesting a reticence towards an overtly public and outward persona, a reticence that would become much more evident and central later in his career.[600]

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[598] Ibid., 211. On St. Mary Chalkoprateia, a small but important church with a long and complicated history, which once contained the reputd Girdle of the Theotokos, see Cyril Mango, 'Notes on Byzantine Monuments,' *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24 (1969), 369-372; Mango notes the presence of a range of chapels and other structures connected with the church, which, if still extant in Ḥasan Ünsī's time, might have served as accomodations and work spaces for the competing factions present there. Ayvansarayî describes its Ottoman history: '[It] was made from a church. Its original founder was the barley commissioner Lala Hayreddin. Because at one point an ağa of the Janissary recruits (*ʿacemi ağa*) named Ahmed Ağa, who was a patron of charitable works and in time became *babüssaʿade ağası*, placed a thirty-volume of the Qur'an in the mosque, the abovementioned mosque is named after him…. the abovementioned mosque has a quarter (*maḥalle*).' *Garden of the Mosques,* 165. Despite its close spatial connection with Aya Sofia, the mosque does not appear to have been of great importance, and seems to have fallen into decline by the nineteenth century and into ruin by the twentieth.

[599] Ibid., Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 213-214.

While living near the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque and using its space as a sort of center of operations in lieu of a proper tekke, Ḥasan Ünsī was forced to be very publicly visible and to engage in open combat in order to preserve his position in the mosque, in a sequence of events that provide an invaluable view into the on-the-ground dynamics of the seventeenth century struggle between sufis and puritans. For, as Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ explains, 'In that time (*ol es̱nāda*) there were many people of denial (*ehl-i inkār*) in Istanbul,' people who sought the destruction of *ẕikr* and of the very physical structures in which they performed. Students (*suhteler*, that is, *softalar*) dwelling in the rooms of the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque—some of whom had previously been students of Ḥasan Ünsī, a reminder that the parties involved in these conflicts were hardly unknown to one another—had become affiliated with this tendency and began opposing the şeyh, at first only verbally. But since they could not defeat him in debate, they decided to forcibly bar him from the mosque, even going so far, our hagiographer avers, as to contemplate murdering him; this being impractical, they instead began oppressing and tormenting him in other ways. One day one of these students organized a sort of posse and collectively they confronted the şeyh 'with all manner of slanderous words and accusations.' The şeyh tried to instruct him with council drawn from the Qur'an, but the student would have none of it. So 'with *celāl'* the şeyh thundered, 'You speak so many things that are against us and our *ṭarīḳ*! Denying the *ṭarīḳa*, you harm and torment the folk of the *ṭarīḳ*, saying, 'I'll kill.' Are we not a burning ember to you?' And sure enough, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ reports, in that very hour, this student's 'spirit departed him.' The other students, having washed and buried him, had a great fear fall upon them, only to see several more of their number die in mysterious accidents over the following days, the victims, we are made to understand, of the unleashing of the saint's *celāl*. When one of Ḥasan Ünsī's dervishes asked

[600] Ibid., 211.

him about these incidents and suggested moderation, the şeyh replied, 'Occupy yourself with your own matters,' at which the questioning dervish went pale, 'all my being went shaky and my mind was thrown into disorder.' Within a week's time the mosque was emptied of the offending students, being 'purified' of the *ehl-i inkār*.[601] The şeyh's saintly power had triumphed, the mosque being secured for the dervishes and their practices.

Here we may expand upon the insights that Madeline Zilfi presented in her seminal study of the Kāḍīzādelis: the competition between different factions was not just for *positions* such as preaching appointments in mosques, but also for the use and definition of Islamic *space* more fundamentally, at the level of everyday institutions and practice, neither side having extensive access to the prestigious ranks of the *ʿilmiye*, competing instead for other spaces and sources of support and patronage.[602] This competition for space and position certainly had its practical, functionalist aspects, but it also went beyond pragmatic concerns to the deeper conflict over how to constitute a properly Islamic community and how to define the proper use of Islamic spaces (and who should get to make those definitions). The *menāḳıb* suggests that the Acem Ağa Mosque had previously been a shared sacred and functional space, providing lodging and perhaps also teaching space for the *softalar* as well as ritual and instructional space for Şeyh Ḥasan and his Halvetī dervishes, while also acting as a legitimizing space for each faction, so long as they occupied it and could shape its usage. It was only when the students turned against

[601] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 217-221.

[602] The competition for the palace should be seen as a subset of this larger phenomenon, as an attempt to laim claim to particular symbolic sites that could then give access to supportive publics, to income, to symbolic capital, and so forth. As the mosque of a quarter, control of the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque would have given access, as it were, to the residents of the quarter, similar on a much smaller scale to the struggle for control of the space of the palace.

the ‘Devrânîs’ and sought to purify the mosque of ‘innovation’ that the possibility of co-existence broke down.

While Ḥasan Ünsī is presented in these interactions as operating in a decidedly public way, his conflict with the *ehl-i inkār* was limited to those in his immediate geographic ambit. Unlike his contemporary al-Nābulusī, who, as we will see in more detail later, launched literary and other forays against the ‘zealots’ not just in his home of Damascus but across the empire, Şeyh Ḥasan was content with a geographically limited struggle. This range of vision is also reflected in the ties, or lack thereof, that Ḥasan Ünsī had with other holy people in and beyond Istanbul. His relationships with other saints did not really extend beyond that with his initiating şeyh Karabaş Velī, from whom, however, he did receive after the latter’s death some of his clothing and his staff which he kept as objects endowed with *bereket*.[603] If anything, Şeyh Ḥasan could undertake a decidedly critical attitude towards other claimants of sanctity.[604] For instance, while he is never described as attacking or undermining the claims to sainthood of others, or of critiquing the practices of other sufis *qua* sufis, according to his hagiographer, he did express his discomfort with Şeyh Naṣūḥī Efendi, a prominent Istanbulî saint of the period, over the latter’s habit of smoking tobacco, a substance to which Şeyh Ḥasan was strongly opposed.[605] This did

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[603] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 260. On the role of similar Prophetic ‘relics’ in Ottoman piety during this period, see Gruber, 269-285; as with *şemâ’il*, there is a productive overlap and interchange between objects, texts, and practices associated with Muḥammad, on the one hand, and saints, on the other.

[604] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ follows him in this regard: witness his decidedly ambivalent take on the *ümmî ve meczûb-meşreb* Tatar Derviş Aḥmed, who, along with his friend ‘ʿAlī, made a bid of sorts for control of the tekke after Ḥasan’s death, Aḥmed passing himself off as a saint through false reports of *kerāmāt*. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 306-308.

[605] The story is itself interesting for other reasons: In 1715, during the Seventh Ottoman-Venetian War (1714-1718), various religious figures came together to offer prayers (a practice disliked by puritans, by the by, cf. Zilfi, ‘Kadizadelis’, 264-265), including Ḥasan and another ‘descendant’ of Karabaş-ı Velī, Muhammed Naṣūḥī. Ḥasan, ‘in accordance with the way of the saints,’ and in complete adherence to the pillars of the *ṭarīḳat,* says Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, did not allow smoking or coffee drinking in his tekke, saying, ‘I never saw a cup of coffee in my şeyh’s hand, and now there is no benefit to me in smoking tobacco.’ Naṣūḥī, while he himself did

not rise to condemnation of Naṣūḥī as a saint, however: for all of his personal asceticism and rigorism, unlike the Kāḍīzādelis, the şeyh did not translate his positions into public polemical critique of other saints or into social activism. But it did entail a deliberate distance from most other holy people, a distance that perplexed our hagiographer and which remains a rather perplexing component of the saint's identity, as shown by the story of Selīm Dede (d. 1713) and his non-encounter with Şeyh Ḥasan. Selīm Dede, usually resident in Temeşvar (now Timişoara, Romania), was a saint of 'great inner states, ascetic discipline, and was well-known for his miracles both in the *Devlet-i ʿOs̱māniyye* and among the infidel rulers,' such that 'there was no one who didn't know of him.'[606] One year he came to Istanbul, attracting crowds of people wishing to see him; he dispatched a dervish to Ḥasan Ünsī (who by this time was ensconced in the Aydınoğlu Tekke, as discussed below) asking to meet with him and 'hold *sohbet*.' But Ḥasan Ünsī declined such a meeting, which befuddled Selīm Dede's dervishes, though, we are told, Selīm Dede himself understood that Ḥasan Ünsī feared the interruption his relative solitude with the rush of fame that might come should Selīm Dede have come to visit him.[607] Despite this explanation, it is clear that Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ—like Selīm Dede's dervishes and, no doubt, Ḥasan

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not smoke, allowed his sufis to smoke—or at least, he overlooked it. Now, after the prelimaries of greeting, Naṣūḥī's sufis took out their pipes and began smoking. Ḥasan was not pleased, and asked Naṣūḥī whether he, their şeyh, or Ḥasan himself smoked, to which Naṣūḥī said no, Ḥasan replying, 'Why have you given permission for smoking, for what have you permitted something that is not in the *ṭarīḳat*? Shame, shame! (*Utan utan*!)' Naṣūḥī did not say anything but he was visibly agitated. On his way to the prayers he passed by the window of Ḥasan's *türbe*, which he already had built, and remarked on its loveliness, adding, but it is not appropriate to be without a master/unoccupied.' When told about, Ḥasan simply said that because of this Naṣūḥī's life would be five years shorter than his own, which came true. Naṣūḥī died in 1717, while Ḥasan died in 1722. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 253-256. On Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī's opposition to smoking, shadow theatre, (non-sufi) music, and other such practices, see Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissident,' 271.

[606] He was the instructing şeyh of the Ottoman scholar and geographer Ibrāhīm Ḥamdi Efendi, and was indeed visited by sultans and others among the elite. See Vedat Çalışkan, '18. Yüzyilda Bir Osmanli Coğrafyacisi: Bartinli İbrahim Hamdi Efendi (1680-1762?) Ve Atlasi (1749-1750),' in *Türk Coğrafya Dergisi,* 70 (June 15, 2018), 145.

[607] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 272-276.

Ünsī's own dervishes—did not entirely know what to make of Şeyh Ḥasan's outright refusal to cultivate saintly ties and thereby expanding his reputation, his own public, and reinforce his own sanctity, all common enough practices before and during this period.[608]

To summarize this portion of the saint's life, the image of Ḥasan Ünsī that emerges out of the first third of his *menāḳıb* is of a saint whose combat with the Ḳāḍīzādelis and their successors took place quite literally at the level of the street, and which, while it involved argument over matters of doctrine and practice, was very much about the use and control of particular symbolically-charged public spaces. Yet simultaneous to his struggle with the puritans over the control of both sacred and functional space (the two as often as not being one in the same), Ḥasan Ünsī embraced, with qualifications, aspects of their program, namely, opposition to smoking, as well, to be discussed below, a decidedly ascetic, luxury-rejecting stance; and while he defended the prerogatives of sainthood and of wider sufi practice, he made little to no attempt to cultivate ties with other sufis or other claimants to sainthood. His complex saintly repertoire stands as a necessary reminder that the culture wars of the Ottoman seventeenth and eighteenth century were quite complex, and cannot be reduced to two or even three or four sides. Rather, different individuals, groups, and even towns and regions took different positions in all manner of configuration. Movement among tendencies was often markedly fluid; Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, for instance, studied Birgivī's works, while later Ottomans of a puritanical, Birgivian tint such as Ebū Saʿīd Meḥmed Hādimī (d. 1762) might embrace coffee-drinking (though not tobacco[609]) and

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[608] Perhaps, left unsaid explicitly, we are to see a turn in Ḥasan Ünsī's attitude towards and engagement with holders of power, either as a critique of Meḥmed IV's support of the puritans or as part of a more general attitude of critique towards the Ottoman center, particularly during Aḥmed III's reign—or simply as part of the 'inward turn' Ḥasan seems to have taken as part of his ascetic practice, retreat from interactions with power—and, perhaps, with şeyhs deeply embedded in that power—a type of renunciation in this regard.

[609] His is one of the later treatises against tobacco: Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā al-Khādimī, *Risāla fī l-dukhān*, Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett Collection, 3225Y, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fols. 48b–49a.

pen works on the Nakshbandī path.[610] Each local flare-up, such as that over the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque (a conflict no doubt more complicated and protracted than our hagiographer presents), would have involved its own distribution of positions, taken on its own profile, with shifts and adjustments, often occurring in the same individual.

The *menāḳıb* points to, and itself helped to realize, another function of this polemical context and especially of memory of the religious conflict of the seventeenth century: struggle with the puritanical *softelar* made Ḥasan Ünsī's sainthood publicly manifest, providing a dramatic counter-point to his performance of sanctity, as well as a field of operation for his saintly *celāl*. In any given period and context, what a given saint is *not*—that which the saint defines himself against within his cultural and social world—matters as much as anything else he or she may be or do. As such, the struggle to define Ottoman Islam and Islamic space was also an opportunity for people like Ḥasan Ünsī to distinguish themselves in their combat with the enemies of the friends of God. The potency of this milieu of conflict as a proving ground of sainthood remained even after the political failure of the Ḳāḍīzādelis, both because puritanical tendencies and occasional direct actions persisted, but, perhaps more importantly, because works such as Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' *menāḳıb* preserved the (hagiographically crafted) memory of those struggles and their role in realizing and publicly demonstrating Ḥasan Ünsī's friendship with God.

[610] On Hādimī (i.e. al-Khādimī) and his profile, see Allen, 'Reading Meḥmed Birgivî,' 156-157. His stance on sufism and sainthood was decidedly complicated: in his commentary on *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, for instance, he cautiously defends aspects of 'classical' sufism and makes allowances for sainthood, but within strict confines, dependent upon adherence to 'Book and sunna' and mostly expressed in ascetic practices and without claims of special authority: Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā al-Khādimī, *al-Barīqa al-maḥmūdiyya fī sharḥ al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya wa-sharīʿa nabawiyya fī sīra aḥmadiyya* (Istanbul: Şirket-i Saha ye-i Osmaniye, 1900), vol. 1, 134-154. His stance on coffee was that there were two wrong extremes in his contemporaries' positions: one, that it is filthy and intoxicating; the other, that drinking it is itself an act of worship and proximity to God. The truth, al-Khādimī argues, is that it is only bad for certain humoral dispositions. Unlike opium, it does not disfigure the mind. Ibid., 113. Cf. his *Risālah fī al-qahwah*, Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett no. 3225Y, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fol. 49a.

iv. Scripting sainthood by making space and place: the neighborhood and beyond in the life of Ḥasan Ünsī:

As Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates it, four different spaces, and transference from one to the other, structured Ḥasan Ünsī's career: his original medrese, Karabaş ʿAlī's tekke, the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque, and finally, his own tekke, the Aydınoğlu Tekke[611] in the Hoca Paşa neighborhood, just west of the walls of the Topkapı. In the aftermath of the contest for the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque, we learn that the *ehl-i inkār* did not in fact leave the şeyh alone, but one of them went to the then *Ḳa'im-i makām* of Istanbul, Mustafa Paşa Karaḥasanoglu, and said to him, 'My Efendi, there is a Devrānī şeyh in the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque, called Ḥasan Efendi, a *halīfe* of Karabaş el-Hāc ʿAlī Efendi. His *tahallüṣ* is Ünsī, and he dances.' But when the pasha intended to evict the şeyh, he was tormented by a dream of a flaming pillow, which a member of his retinue interpreted as being a warning from God against harming the saintly Ḥasan. All of this ultimately lead, the story runs, to the pasha not only reversing course but also offering Şeyh Ḥasan the use of a tekke, the Aydındoğlu (so called after its last inhabitant, the Ḳādirī Şeyh Aydınzāde Meḥmed Efendi), an offer which the şeyh accepted reluctantly, almost under duress.[612] Upon establishing himself in the tekke, Ḥasan Ünsī's public repertoire of practice and saintly self-presentation underwent a change. No longer forced to contest the shared (or *not* shared, as it turned out) space of the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque, the şeyh was able to seclude himself within his own ritual and domestic space and to regulate entry into his presence, almost never leaving the confines of the tekke again.

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[611] For a history and architectural analysis of this space, see M. Baha Tanman, 'Aydinoğlu Tekkesi,' in TDVIA.

[612] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 224-231.

Despite this self-imposed inward seclusion, the *menāḳıb* reveals numerous ways in which the saint worked to establish his own saintly territory in the Hoca Paşa neighborhood adjacent to his tekke as well as cultivating a saintly public elsewhere in the city, whether through the usual dispatch of *halīfe*s or through ordinary Muslims (and non-Muslims) who came to the şeyh as supplicants, disciples, and in other roles. Unlike the subject of the following chapter, ʿAbd al-Ghanī, or even his own precepting şeyh Karabaş ʿAlī, Ḥasan Ünsī by and large remained a neighborhood saint—Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' *menāḳıb*, while claiming in the introductory material more grandiose titles and status for the saint, does not try to argue for Ḥasan's importance or role in trans-imperial happenings. Strikingly, there are no accounts here (or elsewhere in the hagiography of the eighteenth century for that matter) of saints using their powers of translocation to ride out into battle before the armies of the padişah, stories that, as we have seen previously, were both ubiquitous and central to hagiographic imagination during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. While Ḥasan Ünsī is shown interacting with Meḥmed IV early in his career, and with some members of the ruling hierarchy later on, these relationships and the spaces of the elite do not dominate the narrative; despite its boundary walls lying literally across the street from the Aydınoğlu, the space of the Topkapı no longer figures into Ḥasan's story.[613]

[613] A few members of the elite, from up and down the ranks, are shown as either disciples or interacting with the saint. For example, one of the şeyh's followers, Meḥmed Ağa, is described as a *zā'im*, who was dispatched to Rumelia 'for service,' falling into the clutches of bandits (*ḥaydūdlar*) from whom the saint rescued him miraculously. In other account, a *kethüdā*, ʿOs̱mān Ağa, seeks divine aid from the saint through an intermediary, an Aḥmed Efendi, Şeyh Ḥasan however limiting his intervention to having Aḥmed carry out istihâre and then report the results to him for interpretation, which he does, with the unhappy answer that Kethüdā ʿOs̱mān is going to be executed. The highest profile person described as interacting with the saint is Baltıcı Meḥmed Paşa, the commander of the Pruth River Campaign who was sent into exile afterwards over his perceived failure to follow-up Ottoman military successes against the Russians. He is described repeatedly trying to meet with the şeyh but always being turned down, finally showing up one night and waiting outside until let in! Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 234-240; 242-247; 277-280. There is a suggestion of very deliberate distancing from the elite, perhaps out of a desire to avoid dangerous political entanglements during a fraught period; alternatively, this might be a device on Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' part to positively reframe his şeyh's relative lack of elite support and contacts.

Instead, decidedly more domestic settings predominate, though the exact nature of those settings varies from the household of the saint to the households and families of others in his vicinity.

On the whole, the image that emerges from the rest of the *menāḳıb* is of the saint firmly ensconced within his tekke, and in fact often within the *ḥarem* of his home, itself a part of the tekke, deliberately avoiding displays of luxury and the robust socio-cultural life that marked the beginning of the eighteenth century in Istanbul.[614] Where the first third or so of the *menāḳıb* drew upon the memory of Şeyh Ḥasan as a combatant in the struggle with puritanism, the remainder of Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' account situates the saint as ascetic, interiorly-facing, and of restricted, but hardly exclusive, access, centered on the people and places of the Hoca Paşa neighborhood. Chronologically, this portion of the saint's life encompasses a period from the late 1680s until 1722 (and slightly thereafter since some of the stories have to do with posthumous manifestations of the saint's power and presence), one in which the large-scale political threat of puritanism largely receded, appearing in the context of Şeyh Ḥasan's life as a lingering subculture into which a dervish might be drawn, but which no longer posed so dangerous a threat as it did before 1683. The political transformations and events of this period enter into the narrative of Ḥasan Ünsī's life only at the edges, as it were, through the odd person connected to the *devlet* who entered into the saint's orbit (for instance, the story of Kırımī ʿAbdü'n-nebī Ağa related below). Otherwise, the rhythms visible in this part of the saint's life are those of the everyday, of quotidian problems like cheating furriers and poor street drainage, rendered significant through their contact with the local friend of God.[615]

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[614] For a discussion of the wider socio-cultural context, see chapter seven of this study, and in general, Elif Akçetin and Suraiya Faroqhi, *Living the Good Life: Consumption in the Qing and Ottoman Empires of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

[615] For the cheating furrier, see Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 327-332; for the poor drainage on the street between the tekke and the walls of the Topkapı, 317-322.

Ḥasan Ansa's space—that which he himself occupied, and that which fed into his presence, namely, the space of the neighborhood he inhabited—is remarkable for the degree to which it can be gendered, with certain qualifications, as feminine. It is the space of women as much as, and in some ways more than it is the space of men, such that Ḥasan Ünsī himself does not precisely fit within the category of an ordinary Ottoman man.[616] Not only was he rarely to be found outside of his inner, domestic space, the space of the *ḥarem* that was generally seen as women's space (though also a space in which political power, in the case of the palace and of many elite households, was concentrated and from which it radiated), but his *menāḳıb* presents a picture of a local public in which women were quite prominent, both as disciples and as visitors to the şeyh's inner precincts. As such, the stories that Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates—including from his own mother, a devotee of the şeyh herself—shed light on the wider social worlds and cultural contexts of these women. The relationships that prevailed between these women and the saint were not however always what the şeyh might have envisioned himself. The following story, related by 'the pious dervish ʿÖmer,' indicates both aspects of the place of women in Şeyh Ḥasan's saintly public as well as the range of responses that public might have to their saint, including such potentially less than ideal (but probably quite common) responses:

> There was a child from among our relatives in our household who became sick. My mother and the child's mother, along with a couple other women of our household, went to visit the şeyh of Aydınoğlu Tekke, Ünsī Ḥasan Efendi, in order for him to read over the child, saying to him, "Read over this child." The venerable Şeyh read over and blew upon the child, then my mother with the other women came home, and in that very moment the child became well.
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> After my mother returned from visiting the venerable Şeyh, in order to make the women and children in our household laugh said to them, "Şeyh Efendi read and blew like this upon the boy—come, let me read over you!" Saying this she summoned the women in the household and some came and sat down

[616] One potential productive route of analysis, which I will not explore further here, would be to explore the changing uses of space on the part of a saint like Ḥasan Ünsī and the developments in the spatial practices of Ottoman sultans, from changes of capital to shifts between seclusion and public self-display.

before her. My mother filled her cheeks with air then blew on them, and they all laughed. She did this a couple of times.

When evening came we performed the evening prayers, then put on our clothes for sleeping. There were no people from without the household (*nāmaḥrem*) among us. Our house being narrow, we all lay down in one room. We all went to sleep. At some point in the night from our midst there came a great groan and the sound of kicking about. Exclaiming, "Who is this, what's going?" we all woke up. I lit a candle and saw that it was my mother! She had turned a shade of deep purple and with great anguish she was kicking about, her eyes closed, saying nothing, her mind gone, hearing nothing of our words. We were all scattered about [the room], but we gathered to her, not knowing what to do. She kicked about in this condition for about an hour, struggling. This kept on until suddenly she went senseless and lay down. "Is she dead?" we cried, but checking we saw that she was fine. For about two hours she lay senseless. Afterwards she gradually grew paler, and a while after that her intellect returned and she opened her eyes, but she was confused. We said, "O mother, what happened to you? What changed your condition—this evening there was nothing wrong?"

With sorrow she replied, "This evening we all lay down. But while you all fell asleep, I was unable to sleep. I could not close my eyes. I saw before my eyes that the Şeyh Efendi that read over our child had appeared, and at that very moment with power he took hold of my throat and said, 'Why did you take me for a laughingstock—am I your laughingstock? Does anyone take me for an object of ridicule?' Saying this he gripped my throat such that while I wanted to cry out and shake it off, I was unable to do so; finally, I passed out. I don't know anything else."

Everyone else in the room said, "Don't you see? Yesterday you mockingly mimicked the Şeyh's reading and blowing—now see what trouble has fallen on your head! It was for this that this happened to you, to we thought you had died, but thanks be to God you didn't! Almighty God has given you your soul back again anew! Otherwise you would have perished." They added, "God willing tomorrow go to the Şeyh and kiss his noble hand, and in his presence repent of your sin."

When morning came, my mother went to the presence of the venerable Şeyh, taking a gift with her. My mother said, "When I came to the tekke, I went out towards the noble Şeyh's room; as my feet met the threshold of Şeyh's door, without giving the greeting the venerable Şeyh said, 'Does one take [me] as an object of ridicule?' I went shaky and was confused, and a great fear fell upon my heart. I said, 'Let me repent, my sultan, I did not know—I have come into your presence in order to repent!' Trembling, I sat my gift down before the venerable Şeyh. He looked at my gift, accepted it, and said to me, 'Take care! Never take anyone as an object of ridicule—even doing so to an infidel requires

> repentance!' He then gave much clarification, advice and good council, and my reason returned to my head after that."[617]

The first part of this story, which is related as an expression of an everyday practice, shows one of the most fundamental ways in which Ḥasan Ünsī's sainthood was socially constructed in his neighborhood: through the visitations of supplicants, including groups of women (or, further along in the same story, women by themselves), and the ensuing circulation of the şeyh's saintly reputation as an effeciaous source of *berekat*. The word of mouth of women—and perhaps also men, though the reports and recommendations of women take pride of place in many of these stories—was crucial in establishing Şeyh Ḥasan's social, publicly visible sainthood, particularly since he assiduously avoided leaving the confines of his tekke. In a lovely instance of parallelism, then, the social manifestation of Şeyh Ḥasan's sainthood moved between the inner, domestic world of his tekke and household, on the one hand, and the inner, domestic worlds of the women of his neighborhood,[618] worlds which were not sealed off from one another but which came together in part through the movement of women from home to the presence of the saint, and through their movement and the movement of their reports and stories and recommendations from one household to another. Yet even as this female public and the interconnected domestic spaces they inhabited and managed was crucial for Şeyh Ḥasan's saintly identity, he was not entirely in control of the relationships and attitudes towards him thereby generated, as this story also reveals.[619]

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[617] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 287-290.

[618] We might think back to the approach ʿAlī ibn Maymūn was described as taking with his female saintly public, as noted in chapter two.

[619] Kleinberg's remarks remind us of the reality of 'testing' a potential saint, as applicable in this context as in late medieval Europe: 'People approach the saint with certain preconceived ideas of what constitutes sanctity. Every encounter with a saint involves an effort to establish whether there exists a correspondence between the observers' expectations and the actual person they see before their eyes.' Kleinberg, *Prophets in Their Own Country*, 76.

The attitude of the unnamed mother was a rather ambiguous one. On the one hand, she did not contest the saint's power or his sainthood—she was no Kāḍīzādeli or other sorts of puritan, and did not contest the power of the saint's '*nefes*.' But whatever the precise nature of her belief in the saint, it did not preclude her taking the saint as an object of humorous imitation—nor did the other members of the household object, quite the contrary, the combination of the mother imitating the venerable şeyh and his very physical (and therefore well suited for humorous pantomime) practice of 'reading and blowing' provided the family with shared laughs. The humor worked perhaps precisely because of the presence of belief in the saint: that belief, and the possibility of the saint's power lying behind, gave such acts of humor their edge and charge, in a way that might not have been true had the mother and the rest of the family regarded the saint as merely a charlatan (which was also a cultural option). That such attitudes were probably not unusual would explain the inclusion of this story, in which the mother goes from soliciting laughs at the şeyh's expense to becoming an implicit object of humor herself, the scene of the tightly packed household being awaken by their matriarch turning purple another instance of physical, indeed slapstick, humor, at least in the distance offered by retelling. But while the mother is chastised, the story also argues that her impiety towards the saint was neither lethal nor ultimately destructive of her relationship with the saint. By re-entering into the presence of the saint, she receives face-to-face instruction, her reason, scattered by her dream-encounter with the saint previously, returning as a result.

As this story makes clear, the functional attitudes towards local saints that women and men might take could vary quite a lot, taking on forms that elide easy classification. Making use of certain claimants to sanctity as objects of humor need not entail a rejection of contemporary sainthood: in the contemporary Egyptian treatise *Hazz al-quḥūf bi-sharḥ qaṣīd Abī Shādūf* by

Yusūf al-Shirbīnī, for instance, would-be holy men (and some women), particularly of the deviant (and often rural) dervish type but also of more conventional saintly identities, provide far more transgressive and sexually charged humor than Dervish ʿÖmer's mother attempted, carrying on over a significant portion of the work.[620] This does not entail al-Shirbīnī's rejection of sainthood tout court—throughout his sprawling satirical work he unironically praises various saints and clearly accepted as normal and proper the centrality of sainthood in Egyptian Islam. His satirical critiques and ribald humor, instead, work because there are predicated upon the existence of real saints, of holy men and women who do not use their reputed holiness as cover for weekly orgies (a favorite theme of al-Shirbīnī). The same sort of discursive situation and potential for parodic humor—parody predicated for its effectiveness upon the existence and power of living saints—existed in early modern Istanbul. And of course unironic critiques and even rejections of the sainthood of certain people existed side-by-side with veneration of others. The cultivation of a reputation, of a public, and so forth were all fraught affairs, with unpredictable responses, as much as someone like Şeyh Ḥasan might have tried to regulate his or her self-presentation and modes of reception.

That reception could also include concepts and goals on the part of the devotee that were incongruent with the saint's self-perception in more subtle ways. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates the story of one such devotee, Kırımī ʿAbdü'n-nebī Ağa, the *mühürdār* of the vizier and son-in-law to Muṣṭafā II, Çorlulu ʿAlī Paşa (d. 1710), who fell out of favor and was executed, with members of

[620] Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad al-Shirbīnī, *Brains Confounded by the Ode of Abu Shaduf Expounded*, ed. and trans. by Humphrey T. Davies (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 287-343. The question of whether any of these stories should be understood as objectively true and reflecting actual social realities seems to me the wrong one to ask: whatever actual social realities they are rooted in, and whatever real personalities and groups they may reference, the parodic, the ribald, the grotesque, in inverse relationship with reverence and veneration of the truly holy, are paramount, these elements interacting in complex ways that are not always obvious to us in the present.

his retinue suffering as well, including ʿAbdü'n-nebī who was imprisoned, forcefully interrogated, then released.[621] Upon his release he went straight to speak with Şeyh Ḥasan, reporting afterwards: 'In the beginning, in my taking the *beyʿat* from the Venerable Şeyh I was looking for alchemy, because I had heard that what is called alchemy is something that is among the divine graces in the hand of the saints of God. I knew that his Venerable Holiness possessed divine disposition, but my goal in repentance was alchemy and wayfaring. I didn't tell the Şeyh this,' but of course Şeyh Ḥasan perceived it through *keşf*, and urged ʿAbdü'n-nebī to abandon his quest for alchemy since it was not 'the true purpose of the Way,' adding that he faced the stark choice of continuing to pursue alchemy or of dying. After this came his arrest and torture, during which 'fear of death fell upon my soul.' That night he beheld the şeyh in a dream who once again put the choice to him between abandoning alchemy and living or the alternative. Awakening, ʿAbdü'n-nebī, unsurprisingly resolved to abandon his quest for alchemy.[622] The message of the story is obvious enough: the saint perceived ʿAbdü'n-nebī's actual reason for entering into sufism under a saint's supervision, and rejected it. Implicit, however, is the reality that even a saint possessed of *keşf* might be the object of devotion for reasons quite at odds with the saint's own prescriptions. That alchemy and sainthood were in many imaginations closely related we have seen before in the accusations leveled against the Kurdish Şeyh Maḥmūd; in the case of ʿAbdü'n-nebī saintly possession of alchemy was a decidedly positive trait, even if the şeyh he settled upon in order to unlock the science's secrets ultimately disagreed.

Returning to the women of Ḥasan Ünsī's saintly public, the interactions of two quite different women—a Bosnian woman named Bedümli Uzun Havvā, followed by the mother of

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[621] Hatice Aynur, ''Ali Paşa Çorlulu,' in *Encyclopedia of Islam, Three*.

[622] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 247-252.

our hagiographer—reinforce the above themes while uncovering a further arena of interaction between the saint and local women. The story that Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates of a neighborhood Bosnian woman, a sort of local 'fixer,' points to the permeability of domestic space and the range of ways in which households might be connected to that of the saint, as well as, once again, ambivalence in individual attitudes towards and deportment with a saint:

> There was a poor Bosnian woman, named Bedümli[623] Uzun Havvā, who lived in a rented room below my [Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ'] home in the Hoca Paşa quarter. For a fee she looked after the affairs of her neighbors. One day a neighbor came to her with a sick child. [The neighbor lady] said, "Go and take this child to Şeyh Ḥasan Efendi in Aydınoğlu Tekke and have him read over [the child], and place these *parā*s in his presence," giving the Bosnian woman some *parā*s.
>
> Taking the child and the *parā*s, the woman went to the exalted Şeyh. After having pocketed two of the *parā*s she had been given to present to the exalted Şeyh for his reading, she put the rest before the exalted Şeyh. He said to her, "Look now, what of the other two *parā*s?" But the Bosnian woman said, "Only this much were given, only this much!" The exalted Şeyh replied, "Ah, but there are two *parā*s in your right pocket—did I not see how many *parā*s were given to you? And do I not know whether in taking the *parā*s you wanted to deceive me or to try me?" As he said this, fearfully the woman took out the *parā*s she had taken and placed them before the exalted Şeyh. He said to her, "You did this on account of your poverty, but take care not to speak untruthfully and do not try (*imtiḥān*) anyone. Be patient in the midst of poverty, and God, exalted is He, will provide you with the necessities of this life below!" Having said this he gave the woman forty *parā*s, then gave her the two *parā*s [she had pocketed]. The woman said, "My sultan! I took those *pâra*s thinking 'The Şeyh won't know.' And indeed by poverty is great such that as of tonight they would have been my entire livelihood. But now you have done such good!"
>
> The exalted Şeyh gave her some further good counsel, and the woman, having kissed the Şeyh's noble hands, departed. She returned the child home, then went home herself. This poor one [the author] learned of this story from the telling of his mother and from her neighbors living there.[624]

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[623] As the editor of the text Tatçı notes, this name is unattested from elsewhere; the voweling is uncertain.

[624] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 290-292.

As with the story of ʿÖmer's mother, the theme of the household as a space of saintly reputation generation appears again, with the added element of Bedümli Uzun Havvâ, a woman whose job would have regularly taken her from one household to another, acting as an intermediary among the residents of household inner spaces while also ranging into a wide array of other spaces and relationships in carrying out her assigned tasks. Despite—or perhaps, because of—being an ethnic outsider (there is no suggestion that Bosnians made up a sizeable population in Hoca Paşa) and economically and socially marginal, she would have found herself at the center of things anyway. In this story she also acts as an intermediary between a family and the saint, suggesting the everyday nature of visits to a local holy person, such that a handywoman would be entrusted with taking a sick child to the şeyh. It is precisely in these sorts of quotidian interactions that Ḥasan Ünsī's sainthood would have become socially manifest, in the interplay of interaction, reputation, and story-recounting, with women like Bedümli playing an important role in the process. There is no indication in this story or any of the others like it that a woman like Bedümli was unwelcome in the saint's presence, even with her low social standing and her decidedly unconventional lifestyle, one that was based in her work in decidedly public spaces. Not only is Şeyh Ḥasan depicted as welcoming her into his presence, he is shown excusing her act of petty larceny and offering her substantial financial support as well as the 'gift' of conversation (*ṣoḥbet*).[625] His interaction with the Bosnian lady and other women contrasts sharply with the attempts by several members of the *ʿaskerī* class to purchase a place in the saint's presence through donations or through appeals to position and lineage. Where prominent men are sometimes left literally at the şeyh's door, women of quite humble circumstance are

[625] We will recall that this sort of free interaction between şeyhs and women was precisely one of the things that angered puritans, particularly those marked by especial anxiety over gendered norms and boundaries.

freely admitted, and gifted with saintly discourse.[626] The şeyh's readiness to accept women and his reluctance to admit elite men ought, at least in part, to be seen as an expression of asceticism and of his critical stance towards luxury and power. Far from being a matter of apology or unease on our hagiographer's part, Şeyh Ḥasan's lack of interest in strict gender segregation and his incorporation of women into his saintly public emerges as a manifestation and proof of his sainthood.

We may consider one further woman connected with Ḥasan Ünsī in order to further expand our sense of the saint's relationships with female devotees and disciples: Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' mother, whose relationship with the saint is revealed in a long account in which the author describes his full entry into the sufi path under the şeyh's instruction. The following story, while ultimately about Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' initiation under the şeyh and the beginning of his closeness to the saint, is equally revelatory concerning his mother's practice of sufism and her relationship with Şeyh Ḥasan:

> It happened on the 15th of Ramadan, 1117 [December 31, 1705]. Up till then, I attended the *tevḥīd* sessions and busied myself with the discourses of the venerable Şeyh. I slept a lot during the daytime. One day while sleeping alone I began talking in my sleep. My mother came to my side and listened to what I was saying, and when I awoke, my mother said to me, "While you were sleeping you said some wondrous and strange things!" I replied, "What did I say?" My mother then repeated back to me one by one the things I had said.
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> Now, my mother had undergone repentance under the supervision of Şeyh Ḥasan, and she was a master of ascetic exercise and devotion, with great intensity. She never lay down flat, but rather only sat, night and day, sleeping in the place she would sit during the day, not sleeping through the night, though she would not light a lamp, maintaining purity, *ẕikr* constantly upon her tongue. She lived in this manner for some fifty years. She was a divinely-accepted elder sister to the Şeyh, and was a master of miraculous deeds, manifest after her death as well. Most people are incapable of doing the sorts of things she accomplished.

[626] Such as the aforecited story of Baltıcı Meḥmed Paşa, Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 277-280.

> So my mother, rising to go, said, “I am just now going to visit the venerable Şeyh—for I had a dream-vision, which I’ll relate to him, and I can also relate to him what you said in your sleep!” But, kissing her hand, I said, begging her, “Go to the venerable Şeyh but please don’t tell him about what I said in my sleep!” She assented to my request, and rising went to the venerable Şeyh. My mother reported [what happened next]:
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> “When I came to the şeyh I went in to him and kissed his hand, and he gave his leave. Sitting down, he interpreted my dream, then afterwards said, ‘Is there anything else you wanted to talk about?’ I replied, ‘No, not at all!’ But he said, ‘There is a word within you, come, speak it.’ I replied, ‘No, I’ve nothing else to say.’ So he replied, ‘Your son, Ibrāhīm, today said things in his sleep.’ At this I swooned and was bewildered. I said, ‘My sultan, the words that Ibrāhīm said while he was lying asleep alone at home are already known to you, so there is no need for me to repeat them!’ He said, ‘That is so, nonetheless, you tell them to me.’ So I said, ‘Today, sleeping at home, he said this and this,’ and so one by one repeated the words to him. The Şeyh asked, ‘Did he say anything else?’ I said, ’No, this is all he said.’ To which he replied, ‘Did he not say this word?’ I had forgotten that word, and so had been deficient in what I said to the Şeyh, but now it came back to my mind. I replied, ‘My sultan, he did say that but I had forgotten in and so made a shortcoming in what I told you—pardon me my heedlessness!’
>
> He said to me, ‘He will wear this turban-wrapping (*ṣarık*),’ pointing as he spoke with his blessed finger to the black turban-wrapping upon his head, then adding, ‘And he will become this,’ pointing with his blessed hands at his blessed chest, and in this connection spoke many other good tidings and of other things, some of which I did not understand but which I did not have the resolution to ask about further!” So my mother reported to this poor one, and in hearing this unveiling and miraculous deed of the venerable Şeyh and his good tidings to this poor one, I was bewildered and confused…[627]

When his mother related all this to him, the story continues, Ibrāhīm was confused and bewildered, for it seemed too good to be true, given, he confides in the reader, that previously he had had a rather low estimation of himself and his prospects (which perhaps explains his habit of sleeping a lot during the day). But in reality the şeyh’s predictions ultimately come true, as Ibrāhīm is not initiated by the şeyh but becomes an increasingly close disciple, following in the footsteps of his mother.

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[627] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 322-327.

While she does not live in the tekke itself, the image that Ibrāhīm presents in the above is one in which his mother effectively reproduced the practices of the tekke in her own home and daily life, while also frequenting the tekke itself and sitting in the presence of the saint, doing many of the things a male dervish resident in the place would have done. Her relationship and degree of intimacy with Ḥasan Ünsī finds parallels in the record of the slightly earlier Asiye Hatūn of Skopje, also a devotee of saintly şeyhs, who framed her relationship with sufi şeyhs in the language of intimacy and devotion, even as she struggled to maintain the emotional inner life and outward practice regime that she desired.[628] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ' mother is shown as following similar practices—particularly the relating of her dreams for interpretation—but with more consistent success. Her practice and relationship also contrasts with that of her son, who participated in the life of the tekke, but, he implies, at the edges, and rather passively. Where Ibrāhīm 'busied himself' listening to the discourses of the saint, his mother engaged in conversation with Şeyh Ḥasan—interactions that, as the story makes clear, were not simply monologues on the part of the şeyh but involved her speaking too, even when she was reluctant to do so, revealing, among other types of interaction no doubt, her dream-visions and receiving their interpretation, a process that required two-way communication.[629] And she followed an ascetic regime not unlike that of the şeyh, disciplining her body and embodying *ẕikr*, to the point that, on her son's testimony, she achieved the station of sainthood herself, becoming the spiritual elder sister of the şeyh (an appellation which perhaps suggests ways around gender strictures

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[628] See ʿAsiye Hatūn, *Rüya mektupları,* ed. by Cemal Kafadar (İstanbul: Oğlak, 1994), esp. 52-56.

[629] Cf. Mittermaier's remarks on dream narrating: 'A dream's narration is closely related to its coming true—at least according to a hadith that states, "a dream is hanging on a bird's foot. When you tell it, it happens." The dream is made real through interlocution, through language… By not telling a dream, its perfomative potential is contained… To some extent, the dream-telling makes the dream, which might also explain why the Islamic tradition cautions so strongly against the telling of invented dreams.' Amira Mittermaier, *Dreams That Matter: Egyptian Landscapes of the Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011)*,* 74.

concerning the interactions of unrelated men and women). Her relationship with the saint existed on a different level from that of many of the other women (and men) who made use of the şeyh's services: she maintained regular, if not quite constant, contact with him, to the point that her household can be seen as almost an extension of the şeyh's household, an identification that would have only been strengthened by her son's eventual incorporation into the şeyh's inner circle, in integration that is facilitated, according to this story, by the şeyh's own divinely granted access to Ibrāhīm's mother's household. He heard Ibrāhīm's momentous sleep-talking through his gift of *keşf*, only to hear it again in the words of Ibrāhīm's mother, in both cases, the private, intimate inner realm of family life becoming legible to the şeyh. Even as Şeyh Ḥasan remained secluded within his tekke and, much of the time, within the *ḥarem* of his own household, his presence was activated and distributed in non-physical ways within similar inner, often feminine-coded spaces elsewhere in the city (and occasionally beyond)—an archipelago of a saintly realm, not a contiguous one.

While it accomplished many things, at its root Ḥasan Ünsī's seclusion within his tekke as well as his differing standards of access for women and men were both expressions of his asceticism, a paramount aspect of his saintly persona and of his sufi teaching, an asceticism which he developed in depth under Karabaş ʿAlī but which he continued to cultivate and expand upon, particularly in the later part of his career, in a world that afforded new and expanded opportunities to perform ascetic deportment. The ascetic regime that Ḥasan Ünsī and the ascetic deportment he expected of others certainly drew upon long-established repertoires and practices. It was also contextualized within late seventeenth into early eighteenth century Istanbul, a world in which higher and more socially visible consumption patterns prevailed, and in which practices of public sociability, from the frequenting of coffee shops to promenading in the many leisure

grounds around the city, were accessible to a wide spectrum of society, transforming even the inner space of the *ḥarem*.[630] Ḥasan Ünsī's performance of sainthood worked through its being keyed to such social and cultural transformations of the period, even as it was keyed to them in dramatically different ways. Just as there was no single solution to confronting Ottoman puritans on the part of Ottoman saints and their supporters, there was no single solution to the social, economic, political, and general cultural changes the empire underwent. Rather, changing circumstances offered an array of possibilities in saintly self-fashioning and the fashioning of others, drawing upon traditional resources in the process.

Clothing was of particular importance in Şeyh Ḥasan's ascetic scripting, both in terms of his own clothing, and in terms of what he expected of others.[631] He himself dressed extremely modestly, wearing clothes until they fell apart. And while he did not place as high a standard upon his disciples, he discouraged recourse to finery, as several stories Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates indicate.[632] One such account will serve to illustrate this aspect of the saint's ascetic repertoire

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[630] 'Perhaps the harem itself, and especially its internal garden com-plete with kiosks and encircled by tall cypress trees, should be consid-ered, in a twist on Foucault's characterization of the prison, a "totalizing institution" dedicated to consumption. A visitor who witnessed the *çiragan* (tulip beds bedecked with lanterns) parties held at the palace of Esma Sultan (Ahmed Ill's daughter) toward the middle of the eigh-teenth century was astounded to witness the harem garden trans-formed into a nocturnal bazaar for the pleasure of the sultan's sisters, cousins, and nieces. Brimming with rare goods and luxuries provided by merchants on credit, stalls and boutiques lined its perimeters. Women attendants assumed the role of saleswomen.' Ariel Salzman, 'The Age of Tulips: Confluence and Conflict in Early Modem Consumer Culture (1550-1730),' in *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922: An Introduction,* ed. by Donald Quataert, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 91. Ḥasan Ünsī's ascetic domestic space and household can be seen as in part operating opposite such renderings of (usually, but not always, elite) space; for other non-elite reactions, see Avner Wishnitzer, 'Into The Dark: Power, Light, And Nocturnal Life In 18th-Century Istanbul,' in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 03 (2014): 513–31.

[631] Expanded clothing possibilities, and the (relative) breakdown in visible distinctions (on which also see n.149 below), did not just provoke an ascetic reaction in Ḥasan Ünsī, but aroused anxieties and attempts at recourse in governing authorities, on which see for this period, Donald Quataert, 'Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, no. 3 (1997), 403-410.

[632] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 258-260; 327-332; 317-322 (for Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ being rebuked for wearing a coat lined with fox fur).

and its context: once Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ procured a new *cullabi* and *hırḳa* for ʿEid, but he did not wear them into the presence of the şeyh knowing full well that he would not be pleased by the acquisition of new clothing. Ibrāhīm instead put on his 'everyday clothes' and went to the tekke where they performed the Bayram prayers and celebrated the feast with Şeyh Ḥasan. Afterwards he and another dervish, Aḥmed Ağa, decided upon a recreational excursion to Üsküdar the next day. In the morning Ibrāhīm put on his new festive clothes and the two headed out, passing near the tekke's gate on the way to visit the shop of one Dervish Halīl before crossing over to Üsküdar. At the entrance to the tekke they saw a servant girl of Ḥasan's mother (who also lived in the tekke as part of the şeyh's household), named Zeyneb, standing with a bundle of clothing on her head. She was still there when they passed by again, watching them, so they went up to her, she telling them that the şeyh wanted them to come in—which did not precisely thrill Ibrāhīm, who did not wish for the şeyh to see him in his new Bayram clothes! And sure enough, Şeyh Ḥasan told him that it is not appropriate for anything, exterior or interior, to be hidden from one's şeyh, an implicit rebuke to Ibrāhīm's expenditures upon clothing, which he elsewhere describes, in the course of another rebuke by the şeyh (delivered, in the second instance, through Şeyh Ḥasan's mother) concerning luxurious clothing, as having long been a passion of his that proved hard to shake.[633] And indeed neither the purchase of luxurious clothing nor a desire to be socially visible in that clothing (particularly in the context of recreational outings in the burgeoning public spaces on the edges of the city)[634] was unique to Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, but formed an

[633] Ibid., 262-266.

[634] See the discussions of the city's *décloisonnement,* including in the proliferation of outdoor pleasure spaces and practices, in Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 110-138.

important part of the culture of consumption available to an increasingly wide spectrum of Ottoman society, and not just the elite.[635]

Şeyh Ḥasan's personal ascetic strictures concerning clothing, as well as those he enjoined upon his dervishes, should be seen in the context of his rejection of coffee and tobacco and his personal seclusion within his tekke, as expressions of ascetic distinction cultivating and making socially manifest his authority as a shaykh and his expression of sainthood. These attitudes and practices were keyed against the prevailing cultural mood of the period, casting his saintly performance and the lives of his dervishes (his extensions, after a manner, into the wider social world) into sharp relief.[636] As such, while we may detect a surface similarity between Şeyh Ḥasan's ascetic profile and the positions of Kāḍīzādelis against social and cultural 'innovations' such as coffee and tobacco or gender mixing in public spaces, the differences are just as important. The Kāḍīzādelis—arguably breaking with the example of Meḥmet Birgivī—sought complete social transformation through 'activist' means. It was not enough for individual Muslims to eschew coffee and tobacco for ascetic reasons or out of pious scrupulosity. The entire community was threatened by these innovations, and they and other instances of social

[635] Cf. Zilfi's remarks on this topic: 'Of immediate relevance to Osman and Mustafa's sartorial sensibilities were the everyday effects of the contest. These could be seen—or imagined—under their noses… Among other things, the new fabrics opened the way for persons of middling wealth to enjoy, sometimes at lower prices, a version of the rare figured weaves worn by the upper classes… Muslim imitation of non-Muslims… was only one of the concerns of the period's regulations. Imitation of the perquisites and prerogatives of the offical (male) elites was another…. Like other regimes grounded in social regulation, the Ottomans treated sartorial imitation as a statement of identification. Madeline Zilfi, 'Goods in the Mahalle*:* Distributional Encounters in Eighteenth Century Istanbul,' in *Consumption Studies*, 300.

[636] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ relates the story of one dervish, Üsküdarlı Ahmed, who was in the habit of frequently going to the bazaar to play chess, which he knew would anger his şeyh; Ḥasan Ünsī knew of this habit, but did not intervene, and Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, who also knew, did not report him, though he did try and stage an 'intervention,' without success. The continuity and contrast with the puritan ethos is clear here: if, like puritans, Şeyh Ḥasan rejected frivolous luxuries and entertainments like chess (which could be played with ease, evidently, within the sociable space of the bazaar), he and his dervishes restricted their policing measures, even internally to their own community, to say nothing of outside. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 335-337.

corruption needed to be stopped, by force if necessary. Rather, his interventions appear limited to dervishes tied to his tekke, either as residents or as regular disciples. That he had no interest in the types of confessionalizations of space that not just Ottoman puritans but others pursued during his lifetime is made manifest in the following story, set late in Ḥasan's life:

> Near the door of the aforementioned tekke there lived a Christian (*Naṣrānī*) doctor, named Mikel, who was skillful and wise in the knowledge of medicine. It was his custom that if a sick person came to him and his treatment was not effective or treatment was not even possible, he would say to the patient, "The cure for this illness is inside this tekke, so go to the tekke, and find the Şeyh therein. His name is Ḥasan Efendi—go to him, he can treat this illness, its treatment will come from the Şeyh, so that you'll have no need of other than him." So saying he would send the sick person to the exalted Şeyh. This Mikel was consistent in this practice.
>
> One day this poor one [Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ] had gathered along with the other dervishes before the candle-like beauty of the exalted Şeyh, deriving abundant benefit from the sight of the saint. We saw that two people had come within the door. One had nothing upon his head but a wrapped around piece of cloth. He came up to the exalted Şeyh, kissed his blessed hand, and sat down. The exalted Şeyh said to him, "Have you come from afar?" He replied, "We are from afar." The man whose head was wrapped in a piece of cloth came before the exalted Şeyh, lifted the piece of cloth from his head and showed his head to the exalted Şeyh. As he turned we all saw that his head was entirely in boils (*çıbanlar*). Each one was jagged like the shell of a hazelnut and very red, without numerous individuals boils—they were about thirty in number, but each boil was very bad—we take refuge in God! This person said, "My sultan, thus with this sickness I have been tried. I cannot put anything on my head. I have sought someone to treat it in both Istanbul and Galata, but no physician understands this sickness, and they give no answer. Despite expending many akças I have neither cure nor respite. The physicians of this city are incapable of treating me! Finally, near this tekke's door there is a physician to whom I came and showed the boils on my head, and he said to me that 'We have no means of treating this illness. But the doctor for this illness is the Şeyh of this tekke, who is named Ḥasan Efendi. The cure for this is there.' Saying this he sent me to your side. Will you give me an electuary, or give me a pill? Or perhaps you will give me some other treatment—whatever you say, let it be upon my head! I remain without a cure!"
>
> The exalted Şeyh smiled and said, "Mikel has given you a good report; but you did not quite understand if you seek from us an electuary or pill." Having said this, he said to the man, "Come before me!" He came before him and uncovered his head. The exalted Şeyh said to him, "Bend your head towards

> me!" He bent his head, and the exalted Şeyh spit into his hands and placed them on the boils of the man's head, and then for a time gently hit them. He then said, "This is our pill, electuary, and *şerbet*! Go now, and henceforward you will be well, whether you believe or don't believe." The exalted Şeyh said no invocation, read no prayers, nor said the *Fatīḥa* over him. Then the man kissed the exalted Şeyh's blessed hand and left. Two days later that person came to the exalted Şeyh and we saw that the boils had gone, he was well, and was wearing a quilted turban (*kavuk*). He had brought many gifts and much praise. Afterwards he came face-to-face with the exalted Şeyh with his gift, but the Şeyh strongly enjoined him not to tell anyone, but [the story] was circulated among the poor ones [the dervishes].[637]

This must surely stand as one of the more remarkable stories in this *menāḳıb*, given not just the fact that no conversion to Islam occurs—even when hagiographic convention would almost demand that the doctor Mikel end up becoming a Muslim and an overt disciple of the şeyh—but that Ḥasan Ünsī foregoes explicitly Islamic ritual activity when he heals the diseased man (who, it is implied though not explicitly stated, is also non-Muslim, and, if so, does not convert either). Mikel is presented as another link in the formation and perpetuation of Şeyh Ḥasan's saintly reputation, as a source of referrals, confessional difference not seeming to matter to either party in the context. What are we to make of this story? In the first place, it is a reminder of the frequently shared—and sometimes contested—economy of sanctity maintained by members of all the religious traditions of Istanbul and indeed across the Ottoman world, in which holy people and places could and were approached and accessed in ways that activated their healing and otherwise prophylactic power, often without regard for particular confessional affiliation.[638] In

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[637] Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıbnâme,* 314-317.

[638] The Armenian chronicler Aṙak'el of Tabriz (d. 1670) gives a neatly parallel story in his hagiographic account of Vardapent Poghōs, an important early modern Armenian Orthodox saint and religious reformer whose life took place largely in the Ottoman-Safavid borderlands: while passing through a village, Vardapet Poghōs and his retinue are stopped by a Muslim man who begs them to spend the night in his home so that he can fulfill a vow he had made to God. 'They spent the night at that man's house and he received them very well,' the man asking the saint before leaving to pray that he and his wife might have a son, so 'the saintly vardapet lifted his habitually outstretched hands to the sky and prayed adamantly to the Lord to give the man a son.' When the man is indeed given a son, he comes to the saint while the latter is serving the Liturgy, thanks him, has the saint pray for him again, and then returns home. As in the story of Mikel and Şeyh Ḥasan, the

the story of Mikel and Şeyh Ḥasan, the source of sanctified healing power is recognized and indeed socially reinforced by someone from across the confessional divide, a situation that certainly had—and has—parallels elsewhere in the city.

This was not always the case: for instance, Evliyā Çelebi relates the story of a healing *ayazma* at the shrine of Merkez Efendi, describing how the entombed saint, during his lifetime, heard the voice of the buried spring calling out to him, 'Ya şeyh! I am a life-giving fountain of reddish water more delicious than pure flowing water (*zülalden leẕīẕ*) that has been imprisoned for seven thousand years, but on account of you I have been ordered to come to the surface of the earth, and God has made me to be a cure for those afflicted with the illness of fever (*ḥummā*). So certainly free me from this prison!' The saint and his dervishes dug the spring out, and up until Evliyā's day, he writes, 'This bliss-bestowing water, if drunk thrice in the morning after breakfast (t*aḥte'l-ḳahve*), cures, by God's command, both quartan fever and burning fever. The Merkez Efendi holy well *(ayazma)* is a water-feature known by name the world over!'[639] What Evliyā does not mention, but which is certainly pertinent to the 'discovery' of the Merkez Efendi *ayazma*, is the very close by *ayazma* known as Zoödochos Pege, known as Balıklı Ayazması in Turkish, a 'life-giving spring' dating back to Byzantine times but which remained a popular place of pious visitation, among Christians and Muslims, through Ottoman times and in fact

member of the 'other' religious confession nonetheless recognizes the sanctity of the holy man from an outside community, and has the 'vocabulary' necessary to interact with him; in neither case is there a suggestion of conversion or of impropriety. Aṛak'el of Tabriz, *The history of Vardapet Aṛak'el of Tabriz (Patmut'iwn Aṛak'el Vardapeti Dawrizhets'woy),* trans. by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2005), 202-203.

[639] Evliyā Çelebi, *Evliyā Çelebi Seyâhatnâmesi* (Beyoğlu, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları Ltd. Şti., 1996), vol. 1, 179-180. 'There is an exalted *ayazma* in the vicinity of Şeyh Merkez Efendi's tomb. One descends to it by steps. The abovementioned [Merkez Efendi's] subterranean *halvethane,* which is like a cave, is still extant, and it is a place of pilgrimage for the Faithful. The hamam located next to [Merkez Efendi's *zaviye]* is one of its *vakfs.* The aforesaid [Merkez Efendi] had a private room in the hamam for bathing. At present the sick and invalid bathe [there] with purity of purpose and are restored to health.' Ayvansarāyī, *The Garden of the Mosques*, 255-256.

down to the present. Strikingly, the story of its discovery tracks very closely to the story of the Merkez Efendi *ayazma*: in seeking to help a blind man he encountered without the walls, the saintly Emperor Leo heard a voice speaking to him from underground, 'saying, "Look, there's water here; don't worry!" When the future emperor heard the voice, he hastened to attain his goal. He was unable, however, to discover or find any water because the place was covered with slime, and because there was mud instead of water underneath it. As he was wondering whose voice it might be and where the water was, he twice heard the same voice… saying, "Emperor Leo, if you take some of this mud and slimy water and smear it on the blind man's eyes, you will discover who I am who dwell in this place, so that afterward you may prepare a dwelling for me to live in, and I will help everyone who comes to it."'[640] Leo uncovers the spring, constructs a structure to protect it, discovers that the voice is in fact that of the Theotokos speaking from within the spring, and from then on the spring was a place of recourse for those seeking healing. The Merkez Efendi *ayazma*, then, represented both Muslim participation in this local economy of sanctity and healing, here represented by the *ayazma* tradition, but also contestation and challenge, an attempt at Islamizing the tradition and of drawing off Muslim visitors to Zoödochos Page and instead orienting them towards an equally miraculous *ayazma*, this one connected with a properly Muslim saint instead of a saintly Christian emperor.

The interaction between Mikel and Şeyh Ḥasan, then, stands in contrast to the competition between the Zoödochos Page and the Merkez Efendi *ayazma* and other, similar examples that could be enumerated, even as the sense of a shared symbolic and praxical world remains. In the story Ibrāhīm relates, both the medical skill of the Christian doctor and the healing sanctity of the Muslim şeyh were mutually respected, without expectation of conversion.

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[640] Anonymous, 'Miracles of the *Pege,'* in *Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, translated by Alice-Mary Maffry Talbot (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012), 209-211.

Instead of underlining confessional boundaries, the interaction of the two figures (and the people connected with and through them) de-emphasized those boundaries, most explicitly in the şeyh's de-Islamizing of his usual ritual of healing. Why the difference? The story makes more sense when situated within the context of especially puritan-directed confessionalization and the Islamizing of previously non-Islamic or shared spaces as well as practices and markers of identity that were seen by some to collapse distinctions.[641] For instance, we saw earlier in this chapter the anxieties of Aḥmad Aqḥisārī over what he saw as the indistinguishability of Muslim from Christian practice in relation to saints' shrines (and saintly veneration in general—he would have no doubt been incensed by the story of Mikel!). To give but one further relevant instance, another Aqḥisārī, Ḥasan al-Kāfī (d. 1616), a 'proto-puritan' whose works, along with those of Meḥmed Birgivī and others of similar background, would contribute much to the Ḳāḍīzādeli corpus, expressed anxiety over boundary-blurring in his little treatise, written in a mix of Arabic and Ottoman Turkish, *Risāla fī taḥqīq lafẓ chalabī.*[642] Taking as his subject the meaning and proper usage of the Turkish title '*Çelebi*,' which al-Kāfī says is meant to indicate one who is 'the knower (*al-ʿālim*) of the *ḥudūd* of the prophetic *sharīʿa*, one cognizant of the matters of Muḥammadan religion,' the *ḳāḍī* laments the practice of 'our age' in which the title had become hereditary and not earned. Far worse, however, is its application to non-Muslim, as a marker of honor for them, which they do not deserve, al-Kāfī argues, adding, 'We take refuge in God from being among the ignorant!' Those who persist in using this title for non-Muslims must desist, and then renew their faith and marriage as they have placed themselves outside of Islam through such a practice, while the non-Muslims so addressed should be corrected, chastised, and, if they

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[641] See for instance Zilfi, 'Kadizadelis,' 264-5, for denunciations of boundary-collapsing practices such as communal prayers for rain.

[642] A detailed overview of his life and works is in Muhammed Aruçi, 'Hasan Kâfî Akhisârî,' in TDVIA.

continue to use the title, executed.[643] If, then, the saint's shrine represented a blurring into Islam of Christian practices, the wide-spread appropriation of the title *Çelebi* (and with it, we might add, precisely the sort of shared cultural reference points and interchanges visible in the story of Mikel the Christian doctor) blurred Islamic identity into non-Muslim, the title requiring, first of all, the work of Islamification. The space of discourse and its cultural effects demanded surveillance and policing. As for literal space, one further example of the process of contestation and Islamification can be seen in the final stages of the construction of the Yeni Cami in Eminönü during the 1660s, which, as discussed by Mark Baer, involved the forcible Islamification of the urban fabric around the mosque, as Jewish residents were cleared away to make room for the new imposing structure, while Baer also notes attempts during the same period at the level of the neighborhood to Islamify space by driving out non-Muslim residents.[644] The contestation of the ʿAcem Ağa Mosque earlier in Şeyh Ḥasan's career fits within such a paradigm of contested space, given that it involved, from the standpoint of the students, an attempt to Islamify a built space that had been corrupted by 'innovation.' In these actions, the sense of shared economy of sanctity was collapsed, in a way that was not true in examples of simple continuous competition: the Merkez Efendi *ayazma* did not obliterate the Zoödochos Page.

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[643] Ḥasan ibn Ṭurkhān ibn Dawud ibn Ya'qub al-Kāfī al-Āqḥiṣārī al-Bosnawī, *Risāla fī taṣḥīḥ* [sic] *lafẓ çalabī*, S. 2201, Kat. br. 8911, vol. 16, Ghazi Husrev Beg Library, fol. 1b-2a.

[644] Baer, *Honor*, 81-104. 'Local Muslims also sought to Islamize neighborhoods on their own initiative. The clerk of the imperial payroll register petitioned the sultan, stating that when the great conflagration occurred all churches and synagogues that burned accrued to the portion of state lands. A Muslim school and rooms to rent…were to be built on the lands of a church confiscated in this way. The church had been located in the neighborhood west of Eminönü, wehre the fire had started. But a sheikh who resided in the neighborhood, emboldened by a *fatwa*, urged the consruction of a mosque in addition to the school. Muslims turns to the sheikulislam for his legal opinion concerning the expulsion of Christians from Muslim neighborhoods…' Ibid., 103.

Might it be then that the attitude and stance expressed in the story of Mikel and the şeyh points towards a reaction against the activist 'confessionalization' of the city's space and of social and cultural relations? If so, this would mean that Şeyh Ḥasan continued to interact with and define himself by means of the polemical conflict, which itself persisted after the Kāḍīzādeli efflorescence (and indeed, Ibrāhīm describes the loss of one devotee of Şeyh Ḥasan, an Aḥmed Dede, a broker in the market, to the *ehl-i inkār*, in a story situated late in the şeyh's life). Such an anti-confessionalization approach, if that is indeed what we should discern here, was not unique to Şeyh Ḥasan. While, as we will see, at many points ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī staked out quite different routes from his contemporary in Istanbul, resistance to both the puritanical and to the confessionalizing currents of the empire marked his career in even brighter tones than that of Ḥasan Ünsī. It is to the great shaykh of Damascus that we now turn, our ensuing discussion allowing us to also better understand Şeyh Ḥasan as we will better understand the sheer range of possible responses sufi aspirants to sainthood could take in the complex and dynamic world of Ottoman early modernity.

Chapter VI

Sainthood in Spaces and Times of Siege and of Triumph, ii.: ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī and Greater Syria

i. For all the friends of God: ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's geographically extended defense of Ottoman saints:

As we have just seen, Ḥasan Ünsī's saintly realm was, for the most part, concentrated on his tekke and the neighborhood abutting it, while his saintly genealogy looked almost exclusively to his şeyh Karabaş Velī. His saintly repertoire drew heavily on the venerable practices of reclusion and asceticism, albeit integrated into the charged and often novel circumstances of the post-classical Ottoman world. The second figure in our diptych of saintly responses to the early modern transformations of piety, politics, and socio-cultural practices, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, presents on many fronts an almost diametrically different image to that of Ḥasan Ünsī. While undergoing a period of semi-reclusive retreat, al-Nābulusī constantly cultivated a large and geographically extended public, extending his saintly territory near and far through correspondence, dissimulation of short, accessible texts, and numerous extended journeys. He drew upon and sought to mainstream resources of sanctity and sufi practice from all over the Ottoman world, both practicing and advocating a decidedly freelance approach to both sufism and sainthood, a stance reflective of larger socio-cultural changes. Relatedly, both his defense and own performance of sainthood not only largely eschewed asceticism but in fact embraced established and new forms of sociability, consumption, and cultural production. All that said, Ḥasan Ünsī and ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī both sought to defend and enact sainthood in

contexts that demanded adjusted responses, and which drove new dynamics and opened new possibilities in the social making of saints. The differences in their responses is a further reminder of the sheer complexity of this period, different actors and communities drawing upon traditional and novel resources to respond to changing circumstances in ways that preclude neat typologies or predictive models.

This chapter will tackle ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's responses to the polemical context as well as the ways in which he shaped his theory and self-presentation of sainthood in light of those socio-cultural changes, placing his interventions alongside those of Ḥasan Ünsī and other figures contemporary to them both. We will focus in the first half of this chapter on al-Nābulusī's engagements with space in order to articulate and defend his vision of sainthood and of his own saintly identity. The second half will deal in depth with some of his practices of saintly self-fashioning and their historical context, as reflected in his own writings and in the hagiography devoted to him. As noted in the introduction to the previous chapter, al-Nābulusī's corpus is massive, while his work and historical significance have in recent years begun to attract increasing scholarly attention. While such a work is arguably due, I obviously cannot undertake anything like a comprehensive treatment of this seminal figure and his legacy here.[645] And while I have consulted a large swathe of 'al-Nābulusī's hundreds of works, there is much that I have had to leave out. My primary points of reference have been a selection of al-Nābulusī's more deliberately polemical works, such as his treatises in defense of tobacco, of shrine visitation, of music, and of gazing on beautiful women and young men, along with his *riḥla*s,[646] his collected

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[645] The best introduction to al-Nābulusī and chronological overview of his life and works remains Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: `Abd Al-Ghani al-Nabulusi, 1641-1731* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), the work's main limitation being a lack of wider Ottoman contextualization.

[646] *Riḥla* is generally translated as 'travel narrative,' though, as we will see in this chapter and the next, the genre was already expansive when it was picked up by al-Nābulusī and others, and would become even more

correspondences, and some of his extensive productions in the field of commentary (here *shurūḥ,* though he produced *tafsīr* as well). I have made these works my primary point of reference, while also drawing upon two of the hagiographies dealing with al-Nābulusī, Ḥusayn ibn Ṭu'mah al-Baytimānī's *al-Mashrab al-hanī al-qudsī fī karāmāt al-Shaykh ʻAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī*, contemporary to the life of the saint,[647] and Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī's later *al-Wird al-unsī wa-al-mawrid al-qudsī fī tarjamat al-ʻārif ʻAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī*.[648]

I have divided the following discussion of al-Nābulusī's spatial interventions into the conflict over sainthood into two halves, the first oriented around a selection of al-Nābulusī's short treatises and collected correspondence, the second drawing upon his copious *riḥla* productions. In both I detect two fundamental strategies at work: one, an additional sort of Ottomanization, as al-Nābulusī consciously sought to draw different threads of sainthood and sufi practice from across the Ottoman world together in his works and practice, with an eye to use by a wider public; two, an opening up of sainthood akin in some ways to what we saw in chapter four, a broadening of the parameters of who counts as a saint and of which discourses and sites and of communities ought be seen as legitimate arbitrators and producers of sainthood. Because this stance was taken in reaction to the attempts by puritans and others to restrict the boundaries of Islam, attempts often grouped under the moniker of confessionalization, al-

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so going forward; as such, to avoid the potentially narrow connotations of 'travel literature,' I have opted to leave the term untranslated here.

[647] The Damascene sufi Ḥusayn ibn Ṭu'mah al-Baytimānī (d. 1761) was an important disciple of al-Nābulusī and an author of short, accessible sufi texts intended for a wide audience. He participated as well, after ʿAbd al-Ghanī's death, in the Khalwatiyya. He wrote the first hagiographic text devoted to al-Nābulusī, a text that he composed and dissimulated during the shaykh's lifetime, in 1729—the only instance in this study of a hagiography written by someone else before the subject's physical death.

[648] Al-Ghazzī's large-scale hagiographic work, written at some point in the 1780s, reflects a similar situation some years later in which al-Nābulusī's struggle with his opponents carries a narrative and even mythical charge, but seems to have less immediate import than had been the case in the seventeenth century.

Nābulusī's response might profitably be termed an attempt at 'deconfessionalization,' a de-emphasizing (though not a total erasure) of boundaries.[649]

Much as confessionalization in the Turcophone world was facilitated in part by the production and dissimulation of short, accessible texts such as those of the *ʿilm-i hâl* genre, al-Nābulusī's interventions also frequently took the form of short, uncomplicated, tract-like texts produced in response to particular situations as they arose. Alongside such widely circulated stand-alone treatises, al-Nābulusī maintained correspondence with people all over the Ottoman world, correspondence that reveals important aspects of his defense of sainthood as an enterprise necessarily spanning the empire. The compilation can also be read in part as an autobiographical project of self-presentation and projection, both in terms of content and in terms of recipients.[650] Even a cursory examination of this correspondence reveals the determinedly Ottoman scope of this self-image. Along with letters to members of the Rūmī 'ulama, ʿAbd al-Ghanī corresponded with members of the *ʿaskerī* elite, the dissimulated reproduction of these selected letters demonstrating his ties to those elite and his position within the Ottoman world as someone recognized as saintly by prominent Rūmīs, while the nature of his responses to their requests and

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[649] My usage here is decidedly tentative, as 'deconfessionalization,' insofar as it has been used in existing scholarly literature, has been associated with processes of 'secularization,' confessional identities declining in importance and legal standing due to declines in the centrality of religious life and identity in Western Europe. In our context, not only is there no suggestion of secularization, almost the opposite is indicated: a flourishing of religious life and a renewed vigor to practices of sainthood and saint veneration.

[650] This correspondence collection is available in a recent edition: ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Letters of a Sufi scholar: the correspondence of `Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (1641-1731),* ed. by Samer Akkach (Leiden: Brill, 2010); the organizing principle behind this collection seems very much meant ot highlight and defend, one, al-Nābulusī's major doctrinal and controversial stances; two, to present in textual form an image of his far-flung relationships with other 'ulama, Ottoman officials, and saints (as discussed here), and three, to provide instructional templates for the sort of freelance spiritual wayfaring described in the final section of this chapter. On general Ottoman letter writing and compilatory practices, with a focus on a period slightly earlier than that of al-Nābulusī, see Christine Woodhead, 'Circles of Correspondence: Ottoman Letter-Writing in the Early Seventeenth Century,' *Journal of Turkish Literature* 4 (2007), 53-68. It is notable that unlike the compilations of many of his peers, al-Nābulusī's letters eschew anything like the inşa prose style popular among Ottoman elites; his Arabic prose in his letters, and in most if not all of his corpus, is accessible, lively, and usually succinct.

the instruction he proffers suggesting his own particular political vision.[651] However, it is his letters to members of the Rūmī ʿulama that are of most interest to us here. Like those to the ʿaskerī, in their very existence these letters demonstrate ʿAbd al-Ghanī's ties to the wider world of Ottoman Islam, the recognition of ʿulama in Rūm of ʿAbd al-Ghanī's significance, and the importance he placed on taking the polemical battle with opponents of sainthood beyond the confines of the Arabic-speaking provinces. His instructions to one such Rūmī *ʿālim* is a representative sample:

> That which I advise you, and the rest of our beloved ones and brethren… is abundance of belief (*kathirat al-ʿitiqād*) in contemporary holy ones… in your Rūmī region and land. Let not one of them be belittled, or his state slighted, nor let him be spied upon, nor his private matters be unveiled, and let all his words and states be interpreted spiritually in so far as a is possible. On the part of the ʿulama of the *sharīʿa* urge interpretation, and do not judge with mere probabilities, and forbid unveiling of states. Do not think, O brother, that the retention of exterior religious knowledge is a precondition for the station of sainthood and closeness to God—rather, the precondition is action in accordance with the dictates [of that religious knowledge.][652]

Embedded in these instructions is the recognition of sainthood existing across the empire, including in the Rūmī lands, alongside the recognition of the threats to saints and sainthood in those lands. That a saint might be 'veiled' from the view of others by external ignorance (that is, the appearance of ignorance) or by otherwise apparent incongruity with the *sharīʿa* is of course not original to al-Nābulusī, but took on especial centrality in his thought and work, here constituting a key argument for how his Rūmī correspondent ought to interact with potentially holy people. Far from enjoining a critical or inquisitorial attitude,[653] al-Nābulusī argues for just

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[651] Good examples in this regard include his letter of advice to Vizier Muṣṭfā Köprülüzāde (d. 1691), al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 273; and an exchange in 1698 with the then current Şeyhülislām, the ill-fated Feyẓullāh Efendi (d. 1703), Ibid., 337-342.

[652] Al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 140.

the opposite: a stance of openness and possibility towards the living presence of sainthood across the Rūmī lands. If for the Kāḍīzādelis Ottoman space and society were in need of conversion to a purified Islam, al-Nābulusī's stance suggests that such conversion was not necessary. If anything, it was the 'exoteric 'ulama,' of Rūm and of the rest of the empire, who were in need of conversion, a conversion that would transform their perceptions and allow them to see God's activity and outworking in wider Ottoman society, with both sin and sanctity as much in motion in the present as in the distant Islamic past.[654] The realization of God's ongoing activity in the world, and of the fundamentally Islamic integrity of 'the people,' had as its corollary al-Nābulusī's interpretation of things like coffee drinking and tobacco smoking as not just permissible but praiseworthy, even providential.[655]

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[653] Which, as we saw in previous chapters, was not restricted to puritans, but could be found in claimants to sainthood themselves, as was the case in Ḥasan Ünsī's interactions with Şeyh Naṣūḥī. Al-Nābulusī repeatedly urged maximum interpretive leeway in response to the actions of saints or even possible saints, while also urging the minimum of moral policing and negative evaluations towards all Muslims and even non-Muslims.

[654] For instance, al-Nābulusī traces in one of his letters the continual interplay of 'deniers' and those who participate in divine reality, a cycle ongoing since the beginning, up to the present, the shaykh here linking this historical reality to the ever-varying human responses to the same divine manifestation. Al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 228. Elsewhere in response to puritan claims that the Islamic community was in an especially degenerated state (which in this sense they were congruent with Birgivī's position) al-Nābulusī notes that every age 'does not cease from being composed of what is blameworthy and what is praiseworth in the generations of all the people—the good and the bad remain to the Day of Resurrection!' One cannot generalize blame to all the people of a given era. As one hadith, narrated by Abū Hurayra, goes: 'If a man says, the people are ruined (*halaka*), he is the most ruined of them!' Meaning, al-Nābulusī, expressing contempt against the people. One treats the people as bad because one does not know the secrets of God, and preachers who rail against the special evil of the age are in fact contributing to the ruin of the people. ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥadīqa al-nadiyya sharḥ al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya*, 2 vols (Lalpur: al-Maktabah al-Nūrīyah al-Riḍwīyah, 1977), vol. i., 156. I develop al-Nābulusī's critique of the *O tempora* trope further in Allen, 'Reading Meḥmed Birgivī,' 161-163.

[655] To be sure, at times al-Nābulusī let flag his opposition to the O tempora trope: in a rather pessimistic mood, in his *sharḥ* on a *qaṣīda* of al-Jīlī, he wrote: 'How many saints there are in the earth—no town is empty of them, and no village in every time. Yet it is predominantly the case in these times that they remain hidden and obscure, due to the coruption of the intentions of many people and the rottenness of their desires, and their thinking evil of people. When saints are manifest, these people contend against their spiritual states and deny their deeds, and attribute to them things they are free of.' Yet even here, while expressing a sense that the present is especially inundated with deniers of the saints, he argues for the ongoing presence of saints across the Islamic community. ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Sharḥ qaṣīdat al-nādirāt al-ʿaynīyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1988), 182.

ʿAbd al-Ghanī did not just enjoin recognition of the saints of the Turcophone lands upon others: he practiced such recognition himself. Alongside his defense directed at the Rūmī ʿulama of sainthood and of other related practices were other letters in which al-Nābulusī sought to form and demonstrate his personal ties with particular holy men of Rūm, including two important figures we have already encountered, Muḥammad Naṣūḥī Üsküdarī and Karabaş ʿAlī. His letters to these two saints of the Ottoman core are not especially long, consisting primarily of encoministic language stressing the holiness of the recipients and of the bonds tying them to al-Nābulusī, or, as he puts it in his letter to Naṣūḥī, 'the love of brethren stands apart from the bonds of places, and is free from the ties of time and place.' The sequence of letters between the two—Naṣūḥī evidently initiated the correspondence—served to locate both claimants to sainthood within a shared community of sanctity, their correspondence not just identifying that community but helping to maintain it.[656] In his short letter to Karabaş ʿAlī, al-Nābulusī suggests much the same thing: he desired through his letter the 'continuation of connection by stirring the chain of the epistle.'[657] By including these letters in his collected correspondence and so reproducing his defense of sainthood in the Rūmī lands and demonstrating his relationship, if at a physical distance, with important saints in the imperial center, al-Nābulusī demonstrated to his readers the interconnected nature of both the polemical struggle and of expressions of sainthood. Far from being 'anti-Turk' as has sometimes been suggested, al-Nābulusī sought to reinforce expressions of sainthood in the Rūmī lands as part of a larger Ottoman community of sanctity, a community threatened by puritanical manifestations at many geographic points and not just in

[656] Al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 287.

[657] Ibid., 290.

the center.[658] Not only that, but in demonstrating his ties to saints of the imperial core al-Nābulusī subtly reinforced his own performance and self-presentation of sanctity, his identity as a saint existing in mutuality with other holy people, not in competition. Correspondence provided one outlet for reinforcing an Ottomanized defense and projection of sainthood. The venerable genre of commentary (*sharḥ*) provided another.

If the genres of commentary, gloss, and super-commentary in pre-modern Islam have only recently begun to attract serious contemporary scholarly attention, it is not for their lack of importance in pre-modern Islamic contexts. Rather, as is increasingly recognized across the field of Islamic history, commentaries (*shurūḥ*) lay at the heart of late medieval and early modern intellectual and cultural production.[659] Like other scholars of the Ottoman world, a range of *shurūḥ* constituted central components of al-Nābulusī's œuvre; for instance, it was an orally produced *sharḥ* upon an intricate poem in praise of the Prophet that, according to al-Ghazzī, helped in 1664 to cement a young al-Nābulusī's place in the eyes of the Damascene literary elite as well as serve as early evidence of his sainthood, as perceptively noted by Sirriyeh.[660] In the

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[658] For a concise rebuttal of charges of 'anti-Turkishness' (in the sense of anti-Ottoman) see Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary,* 92. It is certainly true that at time al-Nābulusī sets up 'Turks' and generic Hanafīs as opponents: for instance, in a treatise confronting puritans and defending the diversity of sufi practice and of saints' styles of life, al-Nābulusī opens with a fatwa describing a (probably) hypothetic man who 'claims to be a Ḥanafī,' a description that hints at a Rūmī identity, the Ḥanafī slandering sufis who dance and play music and seeking legal action against them. However, at the same time the Ottoman judge who responds rejects the puritan's claims; and later in the treatise, al-Nābulusī singles out the Khalwatī *ṭarīqa*—one most closely associated with Rūm, as we've seen previously—for defense. Rūmīs, in other words, are recognized as complex and not redicable to a puritan stereotype. ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Jamʿ al-asrār fī radd al-ṭuʿn ʿan al-Ṣūfīya al-akhyār ahl al-tawājid bi-al-idhkār* (Damascus: Dār al-Maḥabbah, 2001), 72, 94.

[659] For recent approaches to *shurūḥ* of different sorts, see see Matthew B. Ingalls, 'Zakariyyā Al-Anṣārī and the Study of Muslim Commentaries from the Later Islamic Middle Period,' in *Religion Compass* 10, no. 5 (May 1, 2016): 118–30; and Joel Blecher, *Said the Prophet of God: Hadith Commentary across a Millennium*, (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017).

[660] To counter people who believed that his poem, *Nasamāt al-asḥār fī madḥ alNabī al-mukhtār*, had been written by someone else, al-Nābulusī arranged for a prominent Damascene literatus, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Efendi, to take down his sharḥ, which he dictacted in three successive majlis-style gatherings at ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's house. Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī, *Intimate invocations: Al-Ghazzī's biography of 'Abd al-Ghanī*

years afterwards he would compose many commentaries, several of which were intended primarily as defenses of sainthood and rebuttals to puritans. Perhaps his most important commentary (or work in general) was his *sharḥ* upon Meḥmed Birgivī's *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, the most important and influential Arabic work Birgivī produced.[661] Al-Nābulusī's commentary is no mere gloss, but frequently involves extended arguments in what are essentially short treatises, in some cases building off of Birgivī's stance while more frequently essentially rewriting the commented-upon text if not subtly undermining it entirely. Al-Nābulusī recognized the text's semi-canonical (and officially verified and defended)[662] status and sheer popularity in the northern tier of the empire, a popularity that was not at all limited to puritan circles.[663] As such, it required serious engagement, redirection, and careful neutralization, as al-Nābulusī laid out in extensive detail his own vision of Islam, of the person of Muḥammad, and of the role of the saints, while also articulating in depth his positions in other contemporary debates. That this *sharḥ* circulated in the Rūmī lands with a diverse range of receptions is indicated by a sequence of correspondence in which a Rūmī *ʿālim* asked al-Nābulusī if he might

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al-Nābulusī (1641-1731), ed. by Samer Akkach (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 89; Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary*, 13-15. For a discussion and partial translation of the ensuing commentary, see Pierre Cachia, *The Arch Rhetorician or the Schemer's Skimmer a Handbook of Late Arabic Badīʿ Drawn from ʿAbd al-Ghanī an-Nābulsī's Nafaḥāt al-Azhār ʿalā Nasamāt al-Asḥār* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998).

[661] For an overview of this text, see Jonathan Allen, 'Al-Ṭarīqa l-Muḥammadiyya Wa-l-Sīra l-Aḥmadiyya,' in *The Encyclopedia of Christian-Muslim Relations 1500 – 1900* (Leidin: Brill, 2015); on ʿAbd al-Ghanī's *sharḥ* on this text, see Jonathan Parkes Allen, 'Reading Meḥmed Birgivī with ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī: contested interpretations of Birgivī's *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya* in the 17th-18th century Ottoman Empire,' in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd Al-Ghani Al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts)*, ed. Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019).

[662] See Zilfi's discussion, 'Discordant Revival,' 262.

[663] Copies of *al-Ṭarīqa* could be found virtually everywhere, even in the collections of Bektāşī tekkes, evidence in itself of the considerable openness that was really the default position of Ottoman Islam during our period; the work of people like ʿAbd al-Ghanī can in part be credited for maintaining that openness and making a text like *al-Ṭarīqa*, and Birgivī's wider corpus in fact, accessible and palatable to many, diverse publics. See Allen, 'Reading,' 155, n6.

consider removing a passage defending tobacco, it having caused offence to otherwise sympathetic readers (al-Nābulusī, unsurprisingly, rigorously rejected the request).[664]

If his *sharḥ* on Birgivī's magnum opus aimed at defending his own particular stance in the Turcophonic Ottoman context, al-Nābulusī used other works of a commentary nature to advocate 'Rūmī' models and routes of sanctity and sainthood for his fellow Arabic speakers. He composed treatises dealing with both the Naqshbandī and Mevlevī *ṭarīqa*s, his treatment of the Naqshbandī taking actual *sharḥ* form,[665] while his treatise on the Mevlevīs was an independent work which explicated, in a fashion akin to *sharḥ*, distinctive practices of the Mevlevīs. Both works functioned as introductions to sufi paths and saintly genealogies which had remained relatively isolated in the Arab provinces, being patronized primarily by Turkish-speakers resident in the major cities of those provinces.[666] In treating these two *ṭarīqa*s and participating in their practices and genealogies, al-Nābulusī worked to draw otherwise disparate components of the extended Ottoman community of sanctity—or, rather, to present a unified community of sanctity, of shared practices and paths to God. His 1685 treatise on the Mevlevī *ṭarīqa, al-ʿUqūd al-lu'lu'iyya fī ṭarīq al-sāda al-Mawlawiyya*, which followed an earlier *sharḥ* on the three rhymed

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[664] Al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 190-191.

[665] As we have seen already at times, and will be seen further here and in the next chapter, Naqshbandī techniques and texts were circulated and used far and wide beyond the bounds of formal or continuous affiliation to the *ṭarīqa* itself; the articulation of Uwāysī transmission, a hallmark of Naqshbandī identity and practice, would contribute much to the development of Ottoman spiritual freelancing, discussed further below. Both the *ṭarīqa* and even more so the techniques that lay at its heart were quite capacious; Le Gall for instance discusses a figure whom she interprets, not inaccurately, as 'Naqshbandī Ḳādīzāde li,' Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism*, 150-156; while the puritan-adjacent eighteenth century scholar al-Khādimī was in some way affiliated to the order and wrote a short treatise on the Naqshbandī path, which he describes as centered on repelling evil and innovation and holding fast to the obligatory, upon which one can build constant remembrance of God. Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafá Khādimī, *Risāla fī māhīyat al-ṭarīqa al-Naqshabandīya*, Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett no. 3329Y, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fol. 115a.

[666] For Le Gall's discussion of the fairly limited 'institutional' Naqshbandī presence in the Arabic-speaking lands, see Le Gall, *Culture of Sufism*, 87-105.

Arabic prose introductions of the *Mathnawī*,[667] defended the *ṭarīqa* and its practices by explicating the Mevlevīs' various practices, from Qur'an recitation to ecstatic dance, supporting each practice through citation of canonical authorities.[668] In so doing, al-Nābulusī emphasized the properly Islamic quality of the Mevlevī and identified divine inspiration as being at the very center of their practices, by way of their attachment to the *Mesnevī* and to the person of the great saint Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī. Not only did al-Nābulusī defend the practices and status of full initiates into the *ṭarīqa*, much of his defense is aimed at absolving people who were simply 'present' (*ḥuḍūr*) at Mevlevī auditions, indicating members of the wider public who were simply watching and enjoying the *samāʿ*.[669] Here it is a matter not of necessarily being initiated into the *ṭarīqa* (though al-Nābulusī himself was technically an initiate) or of regular attendance at Mevlevī sessions, but of selectively adapting and consuming its practices, rites, and texts as part of a larger veritable buffet of sufism and saintly presences.

Even though this treatise was clearly oriented towards a specifically Damascene audience, copies of *al-ʿUqūd* also circulated in the Rūmī lands, including in Ottoman Turkish translations, a reminder that despite its origin in and close identification with the Turkish-speaking parts of the empire, the Mevlevīs faced the most opposition in the imperial center and

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[667] Titled *al-Sirāṭ al-sawī sharḥ dibājat al-Mathnawī*, on which see Ahmad Sukkar, ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi of Damascus (d. 1143/1731) and the Mawlawi Sufi Tradition,' *Mawlana Rumi Review*, v.5 n.1 (2014), 153-156. ʿAbd al-Ghanī also wrote a treatise, which does not seem to have survived, on the ney and its inner meanings, traces of which can be found in *al-'Uqūd* however. al-Nābulusī, *al-ʿUqūd*, 55; Sukkar, 'Mawlawi,' 147. Cf. his citation of Persian verse by Mawlānā Rūmī in his Naqshbandī work; 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl al-Nābulusī, *Miftāḥ al-ma'īya fī dustūr al-ṭarīqa al-Naqshabandīya: sharḥ risālat Sayyidī al-Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn al-Naqshbandī,* ed. by Jūdah Muḥammad Muḥammad Mahdī and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Naṣṣār (Cairo: al-Dār al-Jūdīyah, 2008), 43.

[668] For an overview of the treatise's contents and aspects of its reception history (including multiple printings since the nineteenth century), see Sukkar, 'Mawlawi Sufi Tradition,' 156-163.

[669] ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Kitāb al-ʿUqūd al-lu'lu'īya fī ṭarīq al-sāda al-Mawlawīya,* ed. by Bakrī 'Alā' al-Dīn (Damascus: Dār Nīnawá, 2009), 21, 51.

elsewhere in Rūm.[670] As al-Nābulusī suggests in the final pages of the treatise, the very fact that such a treatise needed to be written was due to the circulation of puritanical ideas and practices from Rūm south into Syria during the second half of the seventeenth century: even during his childhood prominent members of the Damascene ‘ulama, including al-Nābulusī's own father, had attended Mevlevī sessions, al-Nābulusī attending with him, though there is no indication that they became initiates or had beyond a passing familiarity with the *ṭarīqa* and its literature and practices. More recent years had seen a marked uptick in ʿulama condemning the *ṭarīqa* and eschewing (public) attendance at their sessions.[671] If al-Nābulusī's work to defend and naturalize Mevlevī practice and teaching can be seen as a form of cultural Ottomanization, the polemical context which precipitated al-Nābulusī's intervention was itself also part of the greater cultural interconnectivity and cultural coming-together of the empire as well. Ottomanization and the Mevlevī *ṭarīqa* was on display elsewhere in Damascene society in other ways, too: he points obliquely to the special cultural role of the Mevlevī in elite Ottoman circles, and the tacit acceptance of that culture on the part of Syrian ‘ulama eager to maintain good connections with those Rūmī elite:

> Among the extraordinary things is that some of the deficient so-called *fuqahā'* enter the houses of the elite and listen with them in their houses to Mawlawī *samā'* and other [music] played on instruments, taking pleasure from it and enjoying it, manifesting joy and satisfaction to the master of the house for it, not disavowing any aspect thereof. But when they are present in the mosque for teaching or preaching they forbid just that and stress upon the people the absolute rejection of listening to musical instruments, and declare as sinful anyone who is present in the session of the Mawlawiyya…[672]

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[670] See Sukkar, ‘Mawlawi Sufi Tradition,’ 159.

[671] al-Nābulusī, *Kitāb al-‘Uqūd,* 75-76.

[672] Ibid., 58-59. On the relative popularity of the *ṭarīqa* in Syria as a means of connecting with Ottoman elites, see Bruce Alan Masters, *The Arabs of the Ottoman Empire, 1516-1918: A Social and Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 113.

Elsewhere al-Nābulusī notes the accusations made by some that less-than-pious people attended Mevlevī sessions which therefore besmirched the sessions as a whole, and that some of these attendees provided assistance to the 'folk of oppression,' probably indicating members of the Ottoman military class.[673] Those accusations, along with the above passage, point to the status of Mevlevī *samāʿ* in Damascus as a component of elite culture in a rather denatured form, at least in terms of reception and performance outside of the setting of a mosque or tekke. Even prurient jurists might affectively participate in the *samāʿ*, albeit only behind closed doors. Al-Nābulusī was not opposed to such a cultural profile, and he notes that while the greatest benefit derived from attending *samā'* accrues to the one who can truly hear the ney's expression of inner, divine meanings, those who are ignorant of such meanings can still be 'blessed by being present in the assemblies of the folk of presence.'[674] However, al-Nābulusī hoped for much more than the continued qualified tolerance of Mevlevī music as an expression of Ottoman refinement. His goal in this work and in other works dealing with the *ṭarīqa* might be described as two-fold: one, to defend the practices of the *ṭarīqa* as not just legitimate but praiseworthy, demonstrating the sanctity of the *ṭarīqa* conveyed through its eponym and his writings, while, two, encouraging both participation in Mevlevī ritual as well as the selective use of Mevlevī practices and texts.[675] The Rūmī origins and connotations of the *ṭarīqa* were no impediment but in fact a feature to such a program.

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[673] al-Nābulusī, *Kitāb al-'Uqūd,* 27.

[674] Ibid., 55.

[675] 'I have composed this treatise through God's help for the aid of the *fuqarā'* of the *ṭarīqa* standing in love and allegiance towards the saints and holy ones, without intending explicit rejection of any one individual from among the people.' al-Nābulusī, *Kitāb al-'Uqūd,* 76.

Alongside his writings in defense and explication of the Mevlevī and Naqshbandī, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī himself participated directly in the spaces and practices of these Rūmī *ṭurūq*, participation he presented in his own works. He describes in *al-ʿUqūd* having attended Mevlevī sessions as a young child in the company of his father, while in adulthood he often visited Mevlevī communities, the Mevlevīs, while not an especially large *ṭarīḳat*, being widely spread around the empire.[676] For instance, during one of his sojourns in Jerusalem, he and his companions visited the Mevlevī tekke in the north of the walled city, where, in the third and final of a set of nesting courtyards, they were treated to a *samāʿ* performance, which 'filled us with joy.' al-Nābulusī's account continues, in a fashion reminiscent of episodes in the life of Mevlānā Rūmī himself, describing how going outside they heard women melodiously calling their doves home to their dovecotes, then, passing through the market, they came across a coffee-house full of people, with music being played with all sorts of instruments, and so 'our *samāʿ* was perfected.' The Mevlevī ritual passed, in ʿAbd al-Ghanī imaginative experience, out of the tekke and into the everyday soundscape of Jerusalem's streets.[677] And while evidently never physically visiting the tomb of Mawlānā Rūmī, al-Nābulusī recorded a 'dream pilgrimage' to Konya in 1678, which he undertook with a group of his companions, whom he outpaced, coming to the

[676] Their ubiquity during this period is described, with some degree of hyperbole, by Rycaut, in language that displays his own confessional background and preoccupations: 'These [Mevlevīs] have Monasteries in the most famous places of the Turkish Empire, which serve the travelling Pilgrims of this Order for Inns and places of entertainment: for they above all other Religious Turks, journey and travel from one place to another, where the Religion is professed, under pretence of preaching and propagating their Faith; and thus they travel upon Charity of their Monasteries and Alms of others into Persia, China, and the Dominions of the Mogul, by which means they become the best spies and intelligencers of any that are found in the Eastern parts of the world.' Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire Containing the Maxims of the Turkish Politie...* (London: Printed for John Starkey and Henry Brome..., 1668), 140.

[677] 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya*, 241-242. Cf. his also glowing description of the Mevlevī tekke in Tripoli and its beautiful gardens and the devotion of the inhabitants to Rūmī: 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa wa al-mijāz fī riḥla balād al-Shām wa Miṣr wa al-Ḥijāz* (Damascus: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1998), vol. 1, 209.

saint's tomb and touching his left side against the wall of the tomb complex, at which point a 'humble state' 'took' him. There were many people there whom he did not know—Turkish-speakers, perhaps—but who received his same spiritual state when he looked upon them. He hurried ahead to Mawlānā's tomb intending to do *ziyāra*, saying to himself that the door was locked, but that if he came up to it the saint would open it for him, which is precisely what happened. Mawlānā himself appeared and opened both panels of the door. The two gazed upon one another, then embraced, and 'he was swallowed up in me, and I was swallowed up in him.' He next saw men 'making display of their passionate love,' so al-Nābulusī joined in with them, dancing after 'their fashion' in the midst of them. Then he woke up overjoyed.[678] In undertaking and recording such a pilgrimage, ʿAbd al-Ghanī was participating in a practice that had become, as Alberto Favio Ambrosio notes, *de rigueur* in the lands of Rûm, particularly but not only for Mevlevīs, and a necessary element in their hagiographic productions.[679] Al-Nābulusī's pilgrimage, then, worked to draw his own life and performance of sanctity both into the orbit of Mawlānā and into conformity with a decidedly Rūmī scrip of saintly self-performance. This dream-pilgrimage to Konya—which, it should be stressed, was for al-Nābulusī as real as a pilgrimage in the body on the ordinary plane of physical existence—appears in somewhat

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[678] Recorded in al-Ghazzī, *Intimate invocations,* 444.

[679] 'Le voyage á Konya… et, par conséquent, la visite au tombeau de Rūmī apperaissent á cette époque un fait assez courant pour quelqu'un qui manifestait un penchant soufi important. Le pélerinage á Konya était á la fois un élément propice pour des changements, et un élément hagiographique essential. Tout bon derviche et tout bon mevlevî doit se rendre sur le tombeau du fondateur. La canon de la littérature hagiographique prévoit, par conséquent, un passage obligé á Konya… Cette visite peut donce correspndre á la vérité des faits, mais répondre aussi á des exigences hagiographiques (menakıb) de l'époque et de la confrérie mevleviye.' Aberto Favio Ambrosio, 'Lorsque le derviche tourneur était un mystique nomade: Ṣabūḥī Aḥmed Dede. Du marquage territorial et des personnalites marquantes,' *Oriente Moderno*, vol. 93, (no. 1, 2013), 132. On the integration of pilgrimage to Konya into Ottoman elite practice, see also Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography,* 17-18, and for the place of the shrine in Ottoman imagination and architectural practice, see Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire (*Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 63-65.

different form in another context, in an biographical entry in al-Ghazzī's hagiography concerning one of ʿAbd al-Ghanī's student-disciples, Muṣṭafá Ṣafī al-Dīn al-ʿAlwānī (1696-1779):

> On one of the days of his studying this book [*al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq*] with the Master, after their completing the lesson, a man with a ney entered. He sat down by the Master and began playing the ney, the Master listening. [Muṣṭafá] thought to himself: "It's as if the Master has taken to adhering to the Mawlawiyya *ṭarīqa* such that he permits listening to the sound of the ney!" When the man finished playing, kissed the Master's hand, and left, the Master turned to [Muṣṭafá] and said, "Ya Sayyīd Muṣṭafá, among the things that have occurred to me is that when I traveled to Rūm and came to Konya I desired to visit Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī, the master of the Mawlawiyya *ṭarīqa*. I said to myself: 'If he accepts my visit I will find the door of his tomb (*ḍarīḥ*) open,' but when I came up to the door I found it locked. At the moment of my approaching it, however, the locks fell away, the door opened, and I entered. I stopped to recite the *Fātiḥa*, and found the spiritual presence *(rūḥāniyya*) of Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn in the form of a great white bird alighting upon the tomb. And as I watched it got smaller and smaller, which did not stop until it became like a small sparrow. Then I opened my mouth and it flew inside and I swallowed it." By means of [that story], [Muṣṭafá] was taken by an immense spiritual state, by humility, and trembling, and stood to kiss the hands and feet of the Master, then departed. Before that the Master had not spoken to him about any other matters besides the appointed lesson.[680]

The story here is somewhat different in details, though the significance is very much the same: al-Nābulusī traveled to Konya in Rūm, where he directly encountered, within the space of Mawlānā Rūmī's shrine, the great saint's spirit, with which he entered into intimate communion. More significant in terms of added context is the suggestion that others perceived certain practices of al-Nābulusī's—such as his listening to the playing of the ney, the quintessential Mevlevī instrument—as being based upon his adherence to the decidedly Rūmī Mevlevī *ṭarīqa*. Al-Nābulusī's answer in this context does not disabuse such a notion, but it does suggest that his appropriation of Mevlevī practice and identity was selective, his singular one-on-one encounter with the spiritual presence of Jalāl al-Dīn the source of his authorization in drawing upon the practices and discourse of the Mevlevī, that same encounter also providing evidence for the

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[680] Al-Ghazzī, *Intimate invocations,* 338.

validity of Rūmī's own sainthood and his ensuing authority. Notably, unlike the Turkish-speaking Mevlevīs' pilgrimages to Konya that Ambrosio describes, in which a meeting with the living Çelebi head of the *ṭarīḳat* was a central component, al-Nābulusī presents himself encountering Mawlānā alone, face-to-face, without an intermediary from the *ṭarīḳat* itself.[681] In sum, in all of these encounters and interventions (including those with the Naqshbandī *ṭarīqa*, not discussed here but similar to his interactions with the Mawlāwiyya), al-Nābulusī sought to erase or at least lessen the distance between himself and others in the Arab province, on the one hand, and, on the other, what had been distinctly Rūmī saints and practices of sufism and sanctity. At the same time he drew upon these activated resources of sanctity in ways that stressed, or at least did not undermine, his own agency and sanctity. His dream-encounter with Mawlānā Rūmī is perhaps the most literal of these interventions, but his commentary work did something similar, incorporating the practices, vocabulary, and saintly lineages of the Mevlevī and Naqshbandī *ṭurūq* into an Arabic-speaking context with an eye to wide distribution and the lessening of particularist attachments to individual *ṭurūq*.[682] It should also be pointed out that in these works al-Nābulusī engaged in literal acts of translation, from Persian to Arabic—though it is not entirely clear to what extent he himself was able to read Persian, or whether there was a collaborative process producing the translations and references to Persian texts he incorporates, such as extensive translations from al-Kāshifī's hagiographic compilation on Naqshbandī saints, *ʿAyn al-ḥayāt*, in his commentary on Tāj al-Dīn's *risāla* on the Naqshbandiyya.[683]

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[681] Ambrosio, 'Ṣabūḥī Aḥmed Dede,' 132.

[682] It is this emphasis upon widespread use, in a decidedly freelance fashion—to be discussed further below—that in part distinguishes al-Nābulusī's approach from the equally Ottomanizing stance of someone like al-Munāwī earlier in the seventeenth century, or the approach of al-Nābulusī's disciple and successor Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī, whose affiliation with the Khalwatiyya did much to cement that *ṭarīqa* in the Arab provinces.

[683] al-Nābulusī, *Miftāḥ al-maʿīya,* 50. Unfortunately, al-Nābulusī does not specify whether he translated the material in question, had it translated for him, or found it elsewhere already translated into Arabic.

Not only did al-Nābulusī, in such striking contrast to his predecessor in sainthood and saintly theory ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī embrace, and not attack, *ṭurūq* of Rūmī provenance, and work to integrate them into the cultural sphere of Ottoman Syria and beyond, he argued for the saintly verity and authority of specific Rūmī saints, and not just safe ones.[684] In his *sharḥ* upon the *Wāridāt* of Meḥmed Hüdayī of Üsküdar, one of the most important Rūmī saints of the early seventeenth century, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī both introduced the saint's work to a wider audience—once again, drawing together different parts of the empire into a shared community of sanctity—and reinforced the authority and indeed inspiration of the saint by using Hüdayī's 'inrushings' of divine inspiration as launching boards for excursions upon diverse topics in sufi thought and practice.[685] More daringly, al-Nābulusī waded into the controversy over the bold proclamations of another contemporary claimant to sainthood, Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, whom we encountered briefly in the previous chapter. In his treatise *al-Ḥāmil fī l-falak wa-l-maḥmūl fī l-fulk fī iṭlāq al-nubuwwa wa-l-risāla wa-l-khilāfa wa-l-mulk* al-Nābulusī fielded a query from a Rūmī correspondent about a statement of Niyāzī's in which he said that al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn were prophets and messengers of God—a provocative utterance, to say the least, and one which contributed further to the already ambiguous position Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī occupied in the eyes of many contemporaries.[686] Al-Nābulusī's ensuing treatise, besides being an important instance of

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[684] This latitudinarianism applied to sufi *ṭurūq* of all sorts: see for instance al-Nābulusī's defense of the odd and sometimes disturbing practices of groups like the Rifā'iyya and others, al-Nābulusī, *Jamʿ al-asrār fī radd al-ṭuʿn*, 134-152.

[685] For a not especially well done edition (the distinction between commentary and the commented upon text is not made clear at all, less so than would have been the case in a manuscript usually!), see ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Sharḥ al-Tajalliyāt al-ilāhīya wa-al-kushūfāt al-rabbānīya* (Beirut: Kitāb Nāshirūn, 2013).

[686] ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥāmil fī l-falak wa-l-maḥmūl fī l-fulk fī iṭlāq al-nubuwwa wa-l-risāla wa-l-khilāfa wa-l-mulk*, ed. by Samuela Pagani, in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd Al-Ghani Al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts*), ed. Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 330. For other examples of Niyāzī's provocative ideas, see for instance a

his outworking of political theory (in particular his unique conception of the caliphate),[687] defends Niyāzī, arguing for various possible readings of his controversial utterance, marking Niyāzī out as a friend of God whose words invite, not opprobrium, but, at a minimum, sympathetic interpretation.[688] Better by far, al-Nābulusī argues, is to simply receive Niyāzī's utterances 'for blessing,' and not as objects of either imitation or rejection, given that the speaker was from among 'the lords of cardial states and lordly ecstatic conditions.'[689] ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's support of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī through this treatise indicates both his awareness of developments in the northern tier of the empire as well as his willingness to throw his lot in with a figure as controversial and even potentially politically dangerous as Mıṣrī. Despite the not inconsiderable differences between Mıṣrī's career and that of al-Nābulusī in terms of claims, asceticism, networks, and political stances, al-Nābulusī did not stress such divergences or differences, but rather placed Mıṣrī within the same framework as Meḥmed Hüdayī or Şeyh Naṣūḥī—as a true friend of God possessed of divine inspiration and blessing and deserving of

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short Ottoman Turkish treatise of his in which he argues for the necessity of cursing Yazīd, and why Abū Ḥanifa's words on the matter need not restrict such cursing (the madhhab epnonym was under duress, Niyāzī argues!): Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī, *Kullīyāt*, Cod. Arab. 057, University Library of Leipzig, 131a-b.

[687] 'Know from all of this that Imām al-Ḥasan, and likewise after him his brother Imām al-Ḥusayn, succeeded as caliph after the caliphs of the Messenger of God, peace and blessing be upon him, becoming hidden and veiled after the diminishing of the time of the four outward caliphs, God be pleased with them. As for Mu'awiya ibn Sufyān, God be pleased with him, he was not a caliph of the Messenger of God even though he was called as such, but rather he was a king and a sultan, the first of the kings and sultans of the Muslims.' al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥāmil fī l-falak,* 341. For more on this aspect of the treatise see Pagani's accompanying commentary.

[688] 'If this is established and known, then how can a person desist from interpreting (*ta'wīl*) the word (*kalām*) of his Muslim brother and regarding it in the best possible light, especially if his Muslim brother is known for his piety and religion, occupied with fear of God in accordance with the way of the peopel of the sunna and consensus among the monotheists?' al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥāmil fī l-falak,* 333. Niyāzī himself was very much in accord with ʿAbd al-Ghanī in this regard ('When you see someone do something you think is wrong you must think well of them, saying to yourself: perhaps his deed is perfect in God's eyes, while his error is in relation to my perception,' Niyāzī, *Mā'ida*, fol. 20b), though it is unclear to what extent ʿAbd al-Ghanī was familiar with the majority of his contemporary's works.

[689] al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥāmil fī l-falak*, 333.

honor, not condemnation, even if such a saint's external appearances (or the evident meaning of a saint's utterances and texts) seemed to demand condemnation.[690]

The exact logic of these various interventions—all aimed in some way at either drawing together sufism and sainthood from across the Ottoman world or rendering defense against the opponents of the saints—varied from case to case. However, perhaps the most central concern lay in al-Nābulusī's implicit realization that the most effective defense against the puritanical, anti-saint tendencies in Ottoman Islam was an approach that refused to cede any ground at all, and which presented a unified, interlaced front. To combat the 'zealots' in Rūm was to combat them in Syria, and vice versa. Such a recognition was rooted in an awareness of (and indeed, active participation in) the interconnectivity of the Ottoman world, an interconnectivity that during this period was culturally and socially reinforced even if the political ties between center and province ebbed and waned. Anti-saint factions and individuals projected their own vision of an Ottoman space cleansed of innovation and of the extra-textual authority and presence of the living friends of God. Al-Nābulusī response to such a vision was a counter-vision in which diverse threads of sufism and sainthood from across the empire could be brought together as sources of practice and knowledge, regardless of one's particular geographic position or *ṭarīqa* affiliation. In such a rendering Ottoman saints near and far were equally objects of veneration and of spirited defense, mutually constructing an Ottoman space suffused with sanctity, only the willfully ignorant exoteric ʿulama in need of spiritual correction and conversion.

[690] In his commentary on the *wāridāt* of Meḥmed Hüdayı, al-Nābulusī further argues that one ought to beware lest one deny a saint for outward reaons and so fall under God's warning against taking His friends as one's enemies. If one perceives something in a saint that seems to warrant denial, one is better suited veiling it—it may be that God 'created' that apparent sin in the appearance of the saint as a trial for him. al-Nābulusī, *Sharḥ al-Tajalliyāt al-ilāhīya*, 26.

ii. Opening up Ottoman Islam in al-Nābulusī's riḥla*s*:

If, through the the above cluster of works and other interventions al-Nābulusī sought to render a broadly Ottoman community of saints and sanctity, and to wage a defensive struggle against opponents of the saints wherever they might be found in the Ottoman world, other works of the Damascene saint reveal another, related embrace of local saintly topographies, a stance tied into al-Nābulusī's own vision of sainthood, one most thoroughly developed in the great shaykh's *riḥla* works. The following section will consider the uses to which al-Nābulusī put his travel narratives by exploring specific renderings of space of in his *riḥla* works, his sympathetic attention to local knowledges of sainthood, and the autobiographical voice evident in these works, which will transition us into the final section of this chapter, a closer look at ʿAbd al-Ghanī's overall personal performance of sainthood.

One of the longest—and nonetheless still frequently copied—texts in ʿAbd al-Ghanī's corpus was his *al-Ḥaqīqa wa al-mijāz fī riḥla balād al-Shām wa Miṣr,* one out of his four *riḥla* texts, works which comprise not just 'travel narratives' but everything from botanical observations to short lessons in local history to discussions of questions of *fiqh*. However, as al-Nābulusī himself notes in the prologue to *al-Ḥaqīqa*, one of the animating purposes, if not *the* purpose, for his journeys was a desire to seek out the presence of the friends of God, living and departed, and to benefit from the presences of those saints.[691] The *riḥla* accounts themselves

[691] '[B]y the blessing of visiting the pious among his saints one reaches one's object of hope, and by the apprehension of wonders of His making and His grace in all the lands there is majesty and reception… I had previously… wanted to take hold of pious visitation of the holy pious ones among the living and the dead, to be blessed by the breath of their company and those presences, and to seal the journey with visit the Prophet…' The prologue goes on to describe in brief the contents that will follow: reports of encounters with saints both living and departed, scholars, and the inhabitants of villages; the overall safety of the journey; the reception of bblessing from the saints; meeting with local elite in various places; and the enjoyment of gardens as well as the beauty of wild country (al-Nābulusī's aesthetics of wilderness—discussed further briefly below—is particularly worthy of further exploration); and, in a very specific inclusion, the magnificence of the Nile, and the wondrous Nilometer, the only structure so mentioned in this part of the prologue! Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa*, 35-38.

ought then to be seen as the textual reproduction of these saintly presences, of their *baraka*, and of the wider topographies in which they inhered, a reproduction which made it possible for others throughout the Ottoman world to encounter those saints as well. The ensuing Ottoman topography of sanctity that al-Nābulusī drew is one in which the saints were not simply present as geographic or architectural features, but as pervasive, structuring, living presences, integrated into place and daily life. This was as true of long departed saints as much as those still alive. He also provides some of the richest and sympathetic portraits of everyday religious life and saintly devotion to be found anywhere in our sources.[692] Far from being defensive or apologetic, ʿAbd al-Ghanī revels in descriptions of people, events, spaces, and other entities certain (and whose inclusion he perhaps intended) to raise the hackles on his puritanical foes. For, if as noted previously, the puritans aimed at bringing about the full Islamization (as they understood it at least) of the Ottoman lands, activated in the lives of every subject, al-Nābulusī tried to demonstrate that the Ottoman world of the present was *already* genuinely Islamic and suffused with sanctity—not just in the lives and presences of the saints but in other contexts too. An example from one of his journeys to Jerusalem demonstrates this aspect of al-Nābulusī's vision: one evening during his stay in the city, he and his companions celebrated the birthday (*mawlid*) of Muḥammad in the al-Aqsā' Mosque, with a large group of people from all ranks of society, men, women, and children together, something al-Nābulusī notes explicitly and without disapproval. The candles and lamps were lit as night fell; the effect was marvelous he notes. An

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[692] As will be noted below in reference to Bashō, al-Nābulusī's engagements with and depictions of ordinary people, including villagers and nomadic people, is decidedly unusual, but not unknown among his contemporaries elsewhere in Eurasia. That said, his careful attention to non-elites, including peasants and drovers and Bedouin guides and the like, is exceptional. Compare, for instance, the perceptions of another internal traveler exactly contemporary to al-Nābulusī and Bashō, the Englishwoman Celia Fiennes (16620-1741), whose travel narrative, composed in 1704, makes at most passing reference to the peasants and villagers she encountered along the way. Celia Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle: In the Time of William and Mary* (London: Field and Tuer, 1888).

elevated chair (*kursī*) was set up before the mihrab for the leader of the *mawlid*, a prominent sayyid. There was wonderful singing all about as the *mawlid* began, sweets and rose-water next being brought for all those present. The atmosphere throughout was one of 'humility and witnessing.' After everyone had left 'with decorum,' al-Nābulusī composed a poem celebrating the occasion, describing the beautiful lights, the sprinkling of the rose-water, the illumination of the hearts, and so on.[693] Almost everything about this beautifully rendered scene would have been repulsive to an Ottoman puritan should he have stumbled upon it in person or in text: the celebration of a ritual marked as an illicit 'innovation' the mixing of genders, the centrality of music, the employment of candles and lamps—in imitation of Christians—and the generally sensual mood of the entire proceedings, such that one can almost smell and taste it all in al-Nābulusī's prose and poetry.

Al-Nābulusī's encounters with saintly spaces and presences take on a similar tint, and while examples could be proliferated for many pages, I have chosen two encounters as illustrative examples:[694] first, ʿAbd al-Ghanī's visit with a *majdhūb* named Shaykh Zā'id, illuminative of his interactions with living saints, which is followed by consideration of 'al-Nābulusī's visit to the shrine of ʿAlī ibn ʿAlīm on the Palestinian littoral near Jaffa, a visit which also reveals some of the practices ʿAbd al-Ghanī engaged in at shrines of physically departed saints. ʿAbd al-Ghanī's encounter with Shaykh Zā'id occurred in the vicinity of Yaʿbad, a village in northern Palestine in the *sancāk* of Nablus:

> And it reached us in that village [of Yaʿbad] that there was close by a black [freed] slave from among the divinely attracted lovers of God, whose name was Shaykh Zā'id, and he is in a cave there, at the foot of a small mountain.

[693] Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa*, 386.

[694] Both are also described by Sirriyeh, who was clearly struck by them as well: Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary,* 116-117; 123-126.

> And it was reported to us that there used to not be a cave there, but one day he was present on the mountain and the cave appeared for him.[695] So we went to visit him, and we entered into his cave. It is a small cave, with lots of niches all around the walls, none of which open to the outside. And he was inside sitting on the ground, and he had a small mortar made of wood with which he ground coffee "beans," and a small iron coffee roaster. No one who visited him leaves without him giving them coffee to drink. And he makes the coffee from anything that he has on hand, from wheat, barley, from scraps [of coffee], and chickpeas—but no one who visits him drinks it without it being excellent coffee![696] And it was related to us that if he needs firewood, he will, with little effort, pluck out a great tree and break it down with his own hand, bring the wood back and place it in his cave.
>
> And when we entered we greeted him, and he returned the greeting. He is a black freed slave who prefers silence and solitude; Shaykh Muṣlaḥ of the aforementioned village had told us that he used to be the slave of some of the people of that village, and he used to shepherd animals for them. But then this divine attraction (*al-jadhb*) occurred in him, he abandoned shepherding, and his master manumitted him. He used to return at times the village after the death of his former master, but then he settled in this cave and the people began paying visits to him in it. People from every place seek him out, believe in him, seek blessing from his words, and ask advice from him about their affairs. I asked him about the condition of my brothers and of the group of people traveling with me to Jerusalem, and he replied: "They are in grace and good through you." And he mentioned to us many words in which were good tidings to us and favorable end for our goal, and peace and safety.
>
> And when we went in to visit him there was with us a young divinely attracted man from among the divinely attracted folk of Damascus, whom we have mentioned previously. When that divinely attracted one went in to him and spoke with him, he laughed greatly. He then said that he was tired, so we recited the *Fātiḥa*, paid our regards, and departed.[697]

Visible in this interaction, first of all, is al-Nābulusī's habit of collecting hagio-biographical information from local people, a theme discussed further below, and of reproducing it in his

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[695] The story is slightly different in *al-Ḥaqīqa*: there, ʿAbd al-Ghanī relates that Shaykh Zā'id had sat outside the site of his cave for two years until one day the first crack appeared, which he then forced open using his saintly *himma*. Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa,* 302.

[696] ʿAbd al-Ghanī notes on his second vist to Shaykh Zā'id that he 'cooks' these odds and ends down in his tagine in the fire, resulting in 'beans' which he then roasts and grinds. Ibid., 303.

[697] al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya*, 66-67.

riḥlas. Having learned of the presence of a local holy man—a *majdhūb*, a sort of saint with which the Damascene traveler was in frequent contact seemingly everywhere he went—al-Nābulusī sought him out himself, and enjoyed Shaykh Zā'id's saintly presence directly, partaking of his miraculous coffee thereby physically ingesting the saint's *baraka* while also benefiting from his gifts of special knowledge. In the process of such an encounter his own saintly status was mutually reinforced, as it were, by that of others (including, notably here, a 'young *majdhūb'* traveling in al-Nābulusī's own retinue).[698]

Al-Nābulusī's attention to local knowledge and to detail points us, in this case, towards other components of Shaykh Zā'id's life and identity which become at least partially visible in his sensitive rendering, in which the fact of African enslavement, of manumission, and of an African slave becoming a saint are all presented as entirely unremarkable in themselves. As such, like the overwhelming majority of enslaved people in Ottoman society—or anywhere else—we are given very little about the origins of the man who would become known as Shaykh Zā'id al-Majdhūb, other than that he was of Sub-Saharan ('black,' or, as al-Nābulusī puts in *al-Ḥaqīqa* on his second visit, 'Sudanese') African descent and that he somehow ended up being owned by a man in Yaʿbad.[699] Was Zā'id born in the Ottoman Empire, inheriting his enslaved condition, or had he, like many others, been enslaved and undergone the long passage down the Nile to the slave markets of Cairo?[700] Such questions cannot be answered out of al-Nābulusī's saintly

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[698] As Sirriyeh notes, 'these comments [by Zā'id stating that al-Nābulusī's companions were 'in a state of grace due to their being with him] not only assert Zā'id's knowledge of the spiritual states of others and foreknowledge of their immediate future, but also serve to promote the idea of Nābulusī's own person sanctity.' Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary*, 116.

[699] For different terminology, in an Ottoman Turkish context but in ways analogous to Arabic usage, used for slaves of African descent, see Ronald C. Jennings, 'Black Slaves and Free Blacks in Ottoman Cyprus, 1590-1640,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 30, no. 3 (1987), 288-291.

[700] On the diverse origin points of African slaves in the Ottoman world, Jennings notes that '[a]lthough the most likely origin of black slaves in Cyprus would have been the Sudan and Ethiopia, important trans-Saharan

encounter. What we can learn, however is that at some point Zā'id began a journey from enslaved herdsman to Muslim saint, having well discerned the local script of sainthood. That his career as a local saint changed over time is made quite explicit, in that for a while he would come and go from the village, but that perhaps because he was becoming increasingly well-known he was able to settle permanently without the village, in the uninhabited (at least by other respectable people) forested uplands beyond, the people now coming to him. While he carried with him his past as a black slave—it remains for al-Nābulusī a salient, though not disfiguring, feature—his new saintly identity overlaid that past and redefined it, an excellent instance of the possibilities that Ottoman understandings of ethnicity and race could contain, as much as they might at times also reinforce unfree status.[701] The oral *manāqib* that had been articulated around Shaykh Zā'id and which expressed this new identity drew upon elements that were probably of particular local purchase: his extraordinary strength in ripping up trees and the miraculous opening up of the mountain both speak of mastery over the wild country beyond the village, the wild country of the forest, a dangerous and threatening expanse sheltering brigands and outlaws who might prey upon the peasantry without. Al-Nābulusī's discussion with him points to the

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slave routes connected Wadai, Bornu, Chad, and Kano to Bengazi and Tripoli on the Mediterranean, or even ultimately to Cairo by routes north of the Sahara. Other slaves must have entered the Ottoman world via Tunis and Algeria. Ibid., 292. The exact routes of transmission and selling, however, as he notes at ibid., 294, tend to remain opaque in the case of provincial locations like Cyprus—or, in our case, Palestine. For a discussion of contemporary perceptions (or suppression of such perceptions) of African origins among Palestinians, see Susan Beckerleg, 'African Bedouin in Palestine,' *African & Asian Studies* 6, no. 3 (August 2007): 289–303.

[701] On issues of race broadly, see Baki Tezcan, 'Dispelling the Darkness: The politics of 'race' in the early seventeenth century Ottoman Empire in the light of the life and work of Mullah Ali'in, *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz, e*d. by Baki. Tezcan, Karl K. Barbir (Madison: Center for Turkish Studies at the University of Wisconsin, 2007). Other saints of black African origin are rare, but not unknown, from our period: al-ʿUmarī in Mosul some decades later records several saints of 'Ethiopian' origin, such as ʿAnāz al-Asūd, who was especially venerated by people of African descent in Mosul, and whose tomb was well known as a place dangerous to swear false oaths. Muḥammad Amīn ibn Khayr Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Manhal al-awliyā' wa-mashrab al-aṣfiyā' min sādāt al-Mawṣil al-ḥudabā'* (Mosul: Maṭba'at al-Jumhūrīyah, 1967/8), 104-106.

saint's role as a protector of travelers in a region of uncertain safety, while his gathering the oral *manāqib* of the saint and setting it to paper exemplifies how al-Nābulusī drew together encounters with saints in places from across the empire, drawing local dialects of sainthood together into a cohesive whole.

All of these elements find parallels in al-Nābulusī's many encounters with departed saints at their shrines, such as the ocean-hugging shrine of ʿAlī ibn ʿAlīm. The *Mashhad* of Sayyidnā ʿAlī, as it is known today, dates back probably to the twelfth century, the entombed saint having died in 1081, though like most such shrine complexes the existing fabric is more recent.[702] Al-Nābulusī begins his account of his encounter with this shrine by noting that when they came up to the place the door was opened to them by the caretaker, 'and we entered with the *bismillah*,' coming before the tomb itself, built from marble.[703] In the *qubba* that rises behind the tomb there was a mihrab 'filled with hidden and glorious secrets.' They stood before the tomb and prayed, breathing in the pleasant scent of sanctity that wafted along. Al-Nābulusī recorded specific prayers that he and the others prayed in the saint's presence, such as his prayer that his son Ismāʿīl, who had been compelled to return to Damascus to tend to his mother, might be able to return to the *ḥajj* with his father (on that very day, al-Nābulusī would later discover, Ismāʿīl set out from Damascus). In addition to this prayer, they were met by an already existing prayer: 'one of our companions found a piece of paper upon the tomb of ʿAlī ibn ʿAlīm, on which was written: "Welcome to you, *ahlan wa sahlan*, God, exalted is he, make your plans turn out

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[702] For an overview of the medieval history of this important shrine as it inhered in hagiography, iterations of cultural memory, and in its architectural form, see Hana Taragan, 'The Tomb of Sayyidnā ʿAlī in Arūf: The Story of a Holy Place,' in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 14(02), July 2004, 83-102.

[703] According to Taragan, a wooden cenotaph was replaced with the marble one ʿAbd al-Ghanī saw in the fifteenth century. Ibid., 92.

successful, meet your needs, bear you with safety, in traveling and staying!" And so on. Shaykh Amīn al-Dīn al-Khalīlī, God preserve him, took it up and read it to us, and this is what I remembered of it.'[704] Despite this evidence of a previous recent visitor, al-Nābulusī noted that the shrine was 'far from habitation, solitary upon the sea-shore. We did not see anyone, women or men. We ourselves came upon it inadvertently,' the remoteness of the place further indicated when they discovered that a box near the head of the shaykh, designated for votive offerings, bees had entered in through a hole and had made honey combs! Al-Nābulusī took this as a gift from the shaykh in order to raise their flagging energy, so they ate it and 'were refreshed through its *baraka*.' After *ṣalat* before the mihrab, they sat and rested while ʿAbd al-Ghanī began work on a *qaṣīda*, which he included in his account. Finally, ʿAbd al-Ghanī ends his account with an instance of contemporary *manāqib* precipitated by a small misfortune that befell one of his companions:

> Among the things that happened to a man from among our brethren is that he lost his brass inkwell among the weeds while we were on our way to visit Shaykh ʿAlī ibn ʿAlīm—God sanctify his spirit—and he did not recall it until we reached the noble shrine. He gave up hope of it in himself, but said: "Oh Sayyidī ʿAlī ibn ʿAlīm, this inkwell was lost to me as I was on my way to visit you, let it be in your care!" Afterwards we went on our way to well-protected Cairo, as will be mentioned, God willing. Someone came to this man and said to him: "Take this your inkwell!" So his inkwell was reunited to him through the *baraka* of the aforementioned shaykh, God sanctify his spirit![705]

While parts of al-Nābulusī's account simply describe the shrine's architecture or replicate long extant hagiography, this account like many others is also marked by personal details. Rather than simply note that prayers in this place were effacious, al-Nābulusī described his own prayer and its outcome; he both ingested the saint's *baraka* through the honey and offered it to the

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[704] Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa,* 412.

[705] Ibid., 417.

reader as sort of *manāqib*, while his companion's recovery of his inkwell even more strongly underlined the abiding charisma and power of the saint they had visited. The page with the prayer for travelers' safety is another intimate, particularizing detail, al-Nābulusī suggesting, really, that it was the saint himself communicating with them, offering them prayers for safe travels. Like Evliyā Çelebi earlier in the century (and many other people), al-Nābulusī himself frequently left short poetic inscriptions on the walls of shrines, or in other formats, such as that of the anonymous writer who produced the above message, a loose piece of paper left upon the cenotaph of the saint or attached to the wall by some means. Just as frequently, as in the above account, al-Nābulusī would record such pious graffiti that he encountered, resulting in a deliberately detailed reconstruction of the physical space and inner experience of a given shrine, often times further supplemented by a record of the saint's *manāqib* as related by the shrine's custodian or some other local person.[706] Not all holy places received this treatment, to be sure, but quite a few did, such that both the production and consumption of one of these *riḥla*s amounted to an imaginatively mediated *ziyāra*, with the saint's presence in all its material density actualized remotely.[707] The cascade of emotional and sensory interactions, the record of

[706] Sometimes he recorded the exact circumstances in which the graffiti was left: on a visit to the tomb of Mūsā above the Dead Sea, al-Nābulsuī composed on the spot a *qaṣīda* in praise of the Prophet Mūsā, 'then we wrote these verses on the *qibla* wall so that their trace (*athar*) might remain there.' In addition, there was a pious but illiterate Egyptian man with them, Shaykh ʿAlī ibn ʿAlī al-Dayṣṭī, from rural Egypt originally. He asked al-Nābulusī to write upon the *qibla* wall two verses of his own composition, in a very colloquial Arabic, which the great shaykh did. He then reported to the group that he had prayed to God that he learn to read—and indeed upon returning to Damascus with al-Nābulusī, we are told, he began devoting himself to the reading of the Qur'ān, and after four months God 'opened' to him the ability to read, and he subsequently memorized the Qur'ān. This is evidence of the power of supplication in holy places, al-Nābulusī notes. al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya,* 224-225.

[707] With, it should be pointed out, the crucial addition of proper 'intention,' the factor that for al-Nābulusī vitalized material objects and places *even if* they did not possess the actual physical remains of a saint. The attitude of devotion on the part of believers was sufficient, applied to physical sites; it is not too much of a stretch, then, for such pious intention to be applied imaginatively via textual mediation of a physically distant site. Intention for al-Nābulusī is a decisive factor across the board: in one of his most radical interventions, he argues that gazing at beautiful faces of people who are sexually *ḥaram* to one is permissible when it is done with sound intention, intention that is known only to the actor and to God. Yet there are many who confused

deeds performed by the saint for him and his companions, even al-Nābulusī's starting work on a *qaṣīda* in praise of the saint, all underlined that despite the fact that ʿAlī ibn ʿAlīm died in 1081, and that his shrine was by the late seventeenth century overlaid with century upon century of palimpsests of cultural memory, the saint remained very much alive in the present, and not simply in the pious past.

One of the most striking aspects of 'al-Nābulusī's interactions with local saints' shrines and cults is the respectful tone he adopts towards local religious knowledge, including that of people who would have counted as marginal in most elite Ottoman estimations.[708] For instance, during his journey in the Lebanon and the Baqaʿa Valley al-Nābulusī traversed terrain often marked by other Muslims and by modern scholars alike as redolent of heterodoxy, yet under al-Nābulusī's gaze the mountains were suffused with sanctity, from the reputed tomb of Noah in Karak Nūh (replete with ship models inside!)[709] to the shrines of local saints like Shakyh ʿAbdallāh al-Yūnīnī, for whom al-Nābulusī wrote some praise-poetry.[710] At one point he and his

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raw desire with love, he contends, and so love has come to often be associated with unlawful desire and other actions, which leads people to mock and vilify lovers and beloveds. This is error and contrary to the *sharīʿa* and is without excuse. 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl al-Nābulusī, *Ghāyat al-maṭlūb fī maḥabbat al-maḥbūb,* ed by Bakrī 'Alāʾ-al-Dīn and Shīrīn Maḥmūd Daqūrī (Damascus: Dār Shāhrazād al-Shām lil-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī', 2007), 23.

[708] Steve Tamari expresses surprise at this quality of al-Nābulusī's: 'It is especially striking given the intellectual stature of someone like al-Nābulusī, particularly because he repeatedly demonstrates his acceptance of the beliefs and practies of common people, *al'amm.*' 'The Bible Came from Lebanon: Sacred Land and Worldly Delights in a Seventeenth-Century Journey to the Valley of the Prophets,' in *In the House of Understanding: Histories in Memory of Kamal S. Salibi*, ed. by Abdul Rahim Abu Husayn, Tarif Khalidi, and Suleiman A. Mourad (Beirut: American University in Beirut Press, 2017), 417.

[709] ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Ḥullat al-dhahab al-ibrīz fī riḥlat Ba'labakk wa-al-Biqāʿ al-ʿazīz,* in *Riḥlatān ilá Lubnān* ed. by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Munajjid, Stefan Wild (Beirut: Dār al-Nashr Frānts Shtāynar, 1979), 92-94.

[710] While he does not specify, the unadorned nature of the verse and its devotional cast suggests al-Nābulsuī intended it for local use. 'We call upon him, he is generous, who meets the request for the poor one/ Without exception the brethren are given their desire/ and upon them he is generous with protection/ And with preservation from every ill and evil/ and trial and discord and groan/ For the one who goes around his grave selected from among graves/ It towers over over the proud and haughty…' Ibid., 74-76.

companions pass by the tombs of the 'prophets' ʿAzz al-Dīn and al-Rashādī, who, al-Nābulusī notes, are in fact saints, not prophets in the usual sense, it rather being the custom of the people in the area to bestow prophethood upon saints, in that they deny miracles to mere *awliyā'*, calling anyone who so manifests miracles a prophet, something that al-Nābulusī was informed about by 'knowledgeable people' in the region. He suggests that this curious semantic and theological move on the part of the locals could be due to their ignorance and lack of instruction—or it could be because it really is the case—God knows the intention best! At any rate al-Nābulusī and his companions prayed the *Fātiha* before the tombs before passing on.[711] Continuing along the slopes of Mount Lebanon, they passed blessed springs, more holy tombs, and even a holy holm oak. The very land itself seemed to al-Nābulusī to be suffused with sanctity, he noting that 'it is said' by locals that wolves show no enmity towards sheep on 'that blessed mountain,' and indeed their cantankerous mule didn't bray at all during their passage through the high country. While not the only reason for such an attitude, al-Nābulusī's conviction concerning the sacredness of these mountains as a whole helps to make sense of his deep appreciation expressed here and elsewhere of nature and of wild country, not just gardens and cultivated lands as was more typical of his day.[712] At the end of this particular day's journey they encountered an encampment of Turkmen, who put them up for the night in their domed felt tents, treating the Damascene saint very hospitably, and, perhaps, providing him with further information on the holy people of the mountain.[713] Further along on the journey our traveler learned more about local sainthood

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[711] Ibid., 90.

[712] Tamari notes aptly that al-Nābulusī's descriptions of nature—sunsets, springs, groves of trees, hills, meadows, mountain summits and passes, to name but some of the features the great shaykh singles out for mention—'reveals the soul of a man who genuinely delights in camaraderie and the sensual experiences offered by nature.' Tamari, 'Sacred Land and Worldly Delights,' 419.

[713] al-Nābulusī, *Ḥullat al-dhahab*, 104-105.

from the *khaṭīb* of the village of Kafraiya on the edge of the Baqava Valley, who told him that he would often find 'in the heart of the mountain,' around the tomb of the local holy shaykh, new graves whose occupants were unknown but which were in fact the graves of mysterious ascetics who roamed out among the mountains. He also told al-Nābulusī a story of going up to the grave for *ziyāra* and encountering a mysterious group of saints who are silent and eye him in amazement, their company leaving a profound effect upon his heart.[714]

In all of these encounters and in many others like them al-Nābulusī positioned himself as the one *receiving* knowledge of local saints and practices from a range of informants. Yet even a practice as distinctly odd—and seemingly heterodox, if not extra-Islamic—as referring to local saints as 'prophets' did not necessarily cross the line into heresy in al-Nābulusī's estimation. Rather, as was the case in his defense of Niyāzī, the great saint of Damascus offered an interpretative possibility in order to avoid condemnation. More subtly, as his experience of the sacred landscape of the Lebanon reveals, al-Nābulusī engaged in and made textually manifest his imaginative participation in local approaches to and topographies of sanctity and sainthood, not just registering local knowledge or passively venerating local saints, but emotionally and physically entering into these local communities of sanctity. Such immersive participation in local communities of sanctity went hand-in-hand with al-Nābulusī's positive stance towards other iterations of religious knowledge on the part of 'the people' (as distinct from 'the exoteric 'ulama'): on his visit to the village of Dariyya south of Damascus, besides noting the story of the miraculous discovery and commemoration of the tomb of a Shaykh Ḥarb, al-Nābulusī found the village to be quite the locus of learning, as the inhabitants counted many who had memorized both the Qur'an and the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn,* both of which they could discuss at length he happily

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[714] Ibid., 108-112.

discovered.[715] This sort of religious virtuosity would be the case in more villages were it not for the exactions of rulers forcing people to spend more time on agriculture than they would otherwise, al-Nābulusī argued, upon noting the village's remarkable profile in exoteric religious knowledge. Indeed, closely related to his respect for local religious knowledge is the attention al-Nābulusī showed to the ordinary people he encountered in his journeys, and who no doubt served as informants for the local knowledge he includes in his accounts, such as the already mentioned Turkmen of the Lebanon or the *khaṭīb* of Kafraiya. In crossing the difficult desert terrain south of Gaza, for instance, al-Nābulusī includes not only the name of their Bedouin guide, one Ḥisballāh, but adds a poem that he wrote for the guide in praise of his services;[716] on his journey through the Lebanon he wrote a poem for one of his local guides there, a man named Barakāt, as well.[717] If in most travel accounts, early modern (or modern for that matter), people like Ḥisballāh get rendered as anonymous background presences if they are rendered at all), al-Nābulusī frequently included them as living presences and integral parts of the narrative.[718]

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[715] al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya*, 44-45.

[716] Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa,* vol. ii, 13. It also seems likely that Ḥisballāh provided ʿAbd al-Ghanī and his companions with information about the saint's shrine they passed along the way, of one Shaykh Zuwayd, venerated by the local Bedouin, who 'place deposits of gold, silver, jewelry, and goods beside his tomb, and need not fear for their goods. The door of his *mazār* is always open, but no one is able to steal from it, though many have tested this.' Sadly, Shaykh Zuwayd's *qubba* was destroyed by ISIS militants in 2014.

[717] al-Nābulusī, *Ḥullat al-dhahab*, 96.

[718] Even more daringly, al-Nābulusī engaged with non-Muslims in a number of ways, and which should probably be seen in light of his commitment to Akbarian thought, his resistance to 'zealotry' and (most) forms of boundary policing, and, albeit less obvious, his own articulation of sainthood. His knowledge, his hagiographers aver, was such that Christian monastics (al-'Īsawiyya!) came to talk with him about theological matters, and he would discuss the Gospels in ways they had not encountered before. He benefited them 'in the religion of Jesus.' Ḥusayn ibn Ṭu'mah al-Baytimānī, *al-Mashrab al-hanī al-qudsī fī karāmāt al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī*, Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett no. 1808Y, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fol. 13-14 [consecutively numbered from opening page]. Al-Nābulusī's engagement with Christians extended even to the dream-world, in which space he discussed theology with various Christian interlocuters; he also, in the more mundane physical world, engaged in theological correspondence with a Christian metropolitan (for a brief overview see Abdul-Karim Rafeq, ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi [sic]: Religious Tolerance and "Arabness" in Ottoman Damascus,' in Camille Mansour et al., *Transformed Landscapes:*

While there were diverse personal and theological rationales behind his respect for local religious knowledge and for individuals from among the 'common people,' al-Nābulusī's approach in this regard must be understood in light of the theoretical positions taken up elsewhere in his corpus. In his universal vision of sainthood—a vision which seems to have been quite stable across his life and work, even if some of the details fluctuate'—not only was sainthood geographically distributed, as described above, in the Rūmī lands equally as in the Arab lands, but it was chronologically dispersed and widely diffused throughout society, both in terms of the existence and activity of saints and in terms of their recognition by 'the people.' In short, al-Nābulusī argued that no period of history could lay claim to priority in terms of the presence of the friends of God, or, for that matter, of the enemies of the friends of God. Variability lay primarily in whether the exoteric 'ulama accepted this reality or not. Or, as he put it in hi commentary upon a *qaṣīda* of al-Jīlī,

> how many [saints] there are in the earth—no town (*balda*) is empty of them, nor any village (*qariyya*), in every age, in accordance with their diversity of practice and divine knowledge. Yet it is predominantly the case in these times that they remain hidden and obscure, due to the corruption of the intentions of many people and the rottenness of their desires, and their thinking evil of people whom they know and who they don't know. When saints are manifest, their spiritual states are contended against and their deeds denied, and they are attributed things they are free of.[719]

Essays on Palestine and the Middle East in Honor of Walid Khalidi (Cairo: American Univ. in Cairo Press, 2009), 6-8) and visited Christian monastics, as at Bethlehem (al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya,* 297-299). His overall stance (and really much else about his career and thought) can be summarized in the following brief anecdote, recorded in both hagiographic accounts consulted for this study: once, he and his disciples were walking through the Jewish quarter on their way to a picnic-ground when one of his disciples said, 'O sayyīdī, this is the Jewish quarter!' To which al-Nābulusī replied, 'Oh my son, it is the quarter of the prophets also!' Al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 109. Per personal communication, Lejla Demiri has a forthcoming volume that will explore al-Nābulusī's interactions with and understanding of non-Muslims, oriented by his inclusivist soteriology. On the controversy that al-Nābulusī stoked with remarks that came close to universalism (which may well have been his own, albeit not explicitly publicly exposed, position), see Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary,* 92-94.

[719] al-Nābulusī, *Sharḥ qaṣīdat al-nādirāt*, 182-183.

In this bromoimide against the corruption of the age al-Nābulusī descried two realities at work: on the one hand, saints are present everywhere, at all times. Yet the full manifestation of the reality of a sanctified community and of a landscape suffused with the friends of God is often stymied by the opposition and stubborn refusal of the exoteric ʿulama to perceive things as they actually are.[720] It is the common people who embody genuine Islam and the awareness of God's actual dispensation in the world. The program that the foes of the saints followed is revealed to be not just counter-productive but fundamentally flawed. Or, as al-Nābulusī puts it in his treatise defending tomb-visitation, *Kashf al-nūr ʿan aṣhāb al-qubūr*, these 'obstinate' opponents of the saints claim that their fear is that if the common people venerate saints they will confuse the saints with God or imagine that the saints act independently of God, which is why 'we'—al-Nābulusī reporting their own defenses of themselves—'raze the tombs of the saints, lift off the structures place on them, take the veils from them, and display visible disdain for the saints so that the ignorant masses will know that if the saints were able to effect things in the world alongside God then they would make this disdain which we carry out stop.' Yet it is these zealot activists who have strayed into unbelief, both failing to 'imagine the good' of other Muslims and failing to recognize the rights and potencies of the friends of God. Not only that, but even if their stance was the correct one, they ought to instruct the people, not fight them by engaging in hostile attacks on popular saints' shrines![721]

Elsewhere in the same treatise, al-Nābulusī pushes back against claims that people took

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[720] Lest one imagine that the puritanical currents he faced were totally novel, al-Nābulusī notes that 'they themselves are nothing new—they've been around since the beginning!' Ibn 'Arabi mentions them in his *Rūh al-quds*: people who imagine that everyone is awful, that there are no good people left. Al-Nābulusī, *Gāyat al-maṭlūb,* 34.

[721] ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *Kashf al-nūr ʿan aṣḥāb al-qubūr*, Islamic Manuscripts, New Series no. 1113, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, fol. 122b.

saints as 'replacement Ka'bas':

> all of the common people know that the *qibla* is the Ka'ba only, and that it is in Mecca. But they go to great lengths in venerating and honoring these graves because they are the graves of the saints of God, the graves of His beloveds, the people of His attributes. This is the measure of what we know of their states, and the believer should only think the best of other believers.[722]

In other words, al-Nābulusī attests, not only are the common people *not* guilty of gross theological and ritual error as his opponents claimed, they are acting in accord with the *sharīʿa* in a way that the self-appointed guardians of doctrine and public morality are not. The common people, by virtue of their obedience to God and their love of His friends, are worthy of imitation and respect in a way that many of the exoteric 'ulama, despite their learning and their strident activism, are not—such is the explicit message of much of al-Nābulusī's controversial literature.

Finally, al-Nābulusī's *riḥla*s also acted as projections and performances of the self, as configured within his own project of sanctity. Each of his *riḥlas* functions in part as a textual reproduction of his encounters with holy people and places, reinforced with descriptions of al-Nābulusī's own interior states as he partook of the *baraka* of those people and places, drawing their sanctity into his own. Al-Nābulusī became a part of the story of sainthood in the places he visited, while explicitly or implicitly making those places and people a part of his ongoing struggle against puritanism. The intersection of polemical concerns with descriptions of inner, subjective states can be seen especially well in his description of his experiences at the shrine of Ibn al-Fāriḍ in Cairo, though many similar examples could be added:

> That mosque was so full that if someone was seized by a spiritual state (*al-ḥāl*), he would stand up and throw himself upon the others, and they would all shout out together as the inner meaning of that verse of Shaykh ʿUmar's speech pervaded them. A man came in from outside, then two more, then three, and they entered with great spiritual fervor and deep humility, stepping on the people while the latter found a place for them to sit. If a thousand people had come, a place would have been found for them all! That session expanded for

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[722] al-Nābulusī, *Kashf al-nūr ʿan aṣḥāb al-qubūr*, fol. 125a.

> all while their space diminished. Everyone was humble, weeping and sighing from the intensity of the spiritual state, great ecstasy, humility, and presence. So someone would shout, "Again!" And so, the singer would repeat what he had said. Then another would shout it, and he would repeat it and so on, until I, Shaykh Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, may God, exalted is He, protect him, and those from the group with us were seized by an intense spiritual state and by weeping, sighing, humility, and presence, and the secrets of the divine audition pervaded us to the point where we nearly melted away. No human being there could ever restrain himself from the intensity of that spiritual state which suddenly falls upon one. At times, some of the critics from among the Rūmīs are there, but they are unable to constrain themselves from the spiritual state that suddenly falls upon them, or from the humility which overwhelms them. Once, I met one of them on another Friday after I had previously attended this audition along with some of my group. He said to me, "Sayyidī, this thing that they do here, is it permissible or prohibited?" But I would not talk to him, and I calmly endured him until the audition (*al-samāʿ*) began. Then he was seized by a spiritual state, and I have not seen him since.[723]

In this description, the reader is transported to the living, active presence of the saint, a presence entered into through physical proximity to his tomb but also through the sung words of the saint, words with immense power and presence of their own, particularly when activated in a social setting. Al-Nābulusī's own personal experience is subsumed within that of others, even if it is his personal voice that lends the description authority and credence. Second, there is a very particular polemical argument rooted in al-Nābulusī's personal encounter in this space. The anonymous critic's arguments remain unanswered per se: rather, his arguments are literally swept away by the intense emotional experience of the saint's *ḥadra* (here, spiritual presence), such that al-Nābulusī need only abide in silence and wait. Finally, this account points towards an additional function of al-Nābulusī's autobiographical voice: the usually subtle expression of his

[723] Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqa,* vol. ii, 249-250, translation from Th. Emil Homerin with some slight modification: Emil Homerin, '"On the Battleground:" Al-Nābulusī's Encounters with a Poem by Ibn al-Fārid,' *Journal of Arabic Literature* 38, no. 3 (2007): 356-357. For a discussion of this shrine and associated practices, see Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and his Shrine* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2001), 78-83 et passim.

own sanctity and authority as a living saint.[724] Unlike, say, the auto-*manāqib* of al-Shaʿrānī, the auto-hagiographic aspect of the *riḥla*s is relatively subdued, and emerges gradually across the breadth of each journey. At its broadest, each narrative presents al-Nābulusī as linking himself to a vast range of saints and holy places, the sanctity of each accumulating in his own person as he travels.

This autobiographic, indeed subjective voice that emerges in al-Nābulusī's *riḥla*s and other works can be seen as the outcome of a concoction of factors, including to be sure his own personal agency and creativity. We would be amiss to see in al-Nābulusī's performance of self (or in the performance of self of any of the subjects of this study) the expression of autonomous liberal individualism, or some sort of avant lettre expression thereof. Like his contemporary at the eastern end of Eurasia, the famous haiku poet Bashō (1644–1694), also a prolific producer of travel narratives and poetic compositions, it would perhaps be easy to see in al-Nābulusī's autobiographical accounts something akin to modern subjectivity and expression of emotion as manifestations of an autonomous and independent self, and to miss the socially embedded and mutually reciprocal nature of those expressions in the pre-modern world.[725] As Haruo Shirane has argued in the case of Bashō, expressions of self, of subjectivity, of emotion, and creative transformations of traditional forms should all be seen in light, not just of the social situations in which they emerged, but the communal, participatory, and distributed contexts in which Bashō's performance of self and of subjectivity were embedded and which made them both possible and

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[724] At various points in her study Sirriyeh registered this aspect of al-Nābulusī's writings, including a helpful discussion of of the role of dreams in underlining al-Nābulusī's sanctity. Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary*, 117-121.

[725] Setting aside, for the moment, the question of how accurate such concepts of an autonomous individualist self are in *any* world—it is perceptions that concern us here.

legible to others.[726] In any historical setting, the senses and performances of self that are possible (but not necessary, nor monolithic) are dependent upon a certain range of factors.

For al-Nābulusī and his peers in the Ottoman world, three interlocking contexts seem to have been crucial for the sense and projection of self that emerged (and which was paralleled in other early modern societies, from the Japan of Bashō to European outposts in the Americas): the context of conflict, negotiation, and counter-polemic; the givens and the transformations of early modern materialities and (increasingly dynamic) social structures; and the vast array of traditional resources, received, modified, and reworked in all manner of forms and formats. Al-Nābulusī's textual performance of autobiographical detail and of inner, subjective states (and of other innovative features which elude the scope of this study)[727] was very much directed outwards, as a social and indeed rhetorical and polemical act, underlining his own sanctity and that of others, sanctity which was living and operative in the contemporary Ottoman world. Like Bashō, and in fact no small number of other early modern travel narrative writers across Eurasia, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's travels primarily took place within familiar territory, places with which he was deeply, in some cases quite intimately, familiar, both in terms of actual personal experience but more importantly in terms of cultural knowledge and memory, which by the seventeenth century had accumulated to great depth in much of the core lands of Islam, especially Syria and Egypt. This inward journeying permitted and indeed encouraged the application of the (already very open) genre of travel narrative to new and innovative uses,

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[726] Haruo Shirane, *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), esp. 116-159.

[727] For instance, al-Nābulusī's *riḥla*s involve a remarkable degree of humor, a feature not unknown from earlier travel literature in the Islamicate world, but of a different quality and prominence than had been true before. Other authors—see the following chapter for instances—contemporary and slightly later also drew upon humor, though in different ways, in their travel narratives.

particularly the autobiographical, which itself would encompass many permutations, in the process transforming the perception of the cultural landscapes through which he traveled.[728]

Al-Nābulusī's example—which quickly took on a semi-canonical status across much of the Ottoman world—was followed by later writers in the genre, for whom the *riḥla* genre functioned as a vehicle of pro-saintly polemic and autobiographical self-representation. In our final chapter we will consider further examples from later in the eighteenth century. Overlapping with al-Nābulusī's life was that of his sometime disciple Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī (d. 1759), who made prodigious use of the *riḥla* format in his own struggles against opponents of the saints and in arguing for his own saintly authority and position within his adopted Khalwatiyya *ṭarīqa*. Examples from his *Burʿ al-asqām fi ziyārat Barza wa al-maqām*, a relatively short account of a pilgrimage to the shrine of Ibrahīm west of Damascus, and from his account of a Jerusalem pilgrimage, *al-Khaṭra al-thaniyya al-unsiyya,* will suffice to suggest the nature of al-Bakrī's use of the *riḥla* genre in imitation, conscious or otherwise, of his master's productions. Al-Bakrī made his polemical intention very explicit in his account of his pilgrimage to the shrine of Ibrahīm, a significant portion of which is made up of an extended argument with the 'Zādiliyya' over the appropriateness of venerating the tombs of holy people.[729] Just as al-Nābulusī had done

[728] '[Bashō's travel magnum opus] *Narrow Road to the Interior*, in short, embodied the inherent tension between Bashō's pursuit of the past, especially the exploration of the traces of earlier spiritual and poetic figures… and his pursuit of the haikai spirit, with its oppositional, inversionary movement, its roots in popular, hybrid cultures, its humor, and its discovery of new vistas and new poetic partners… Travel was also a means, to use Bashō's own words, of "awakening to the high, returning to the low," of reaching the spiritual and poetic heights of the "ancients," while returning to and facing the everyday realities of commoner, contemporary life…. The poet was ultimately able to envision the new in the old, to recuperate, revive, and refigure the cultural memory as embodied in the landscape. Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* 252-253.

[729] Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī, *Burʿ al-isqām*, 102-117. Al-Bakrī's defense of seeking intercession from saints is worth summarizing here: he begins my proposing the question, why do we seek aid from this saint (*walī*) instead of seeking it from God? The answer is that anyone who seeks help from the saint and not from God is ignorant and outside of Islam—all help is ultimately from God. Rather, people come to recognize saints who are closer to God than themselves. Then it is similar to someone seeking aid from the sultan but doing so by going through one of his viziers, first securing a means (*wāsiṭa*) to connect with the vizier, who then connects the

with his accounts, al-Bakrī included arguments derived from personal experience for the ongoing presence and power of entombed saints on behalf of pilgrims, expressing a similar 'openness' to local manifestations of sainthood as well.[730] His visit to the *maqām* of Ibrahīm brought to his mind an encounter at another holy place associated with a prophet, the tomb of Mūsā east of Jerusalem, which al-Nābulusī had also visited and graced with some lines of praise-poetry etched into the mihrab.[731] Before visiting Mūsā's tomb for the first time, in the course of a stay in the holy city, al-Bakrī was delayed in setting out and developed an awful headache, which increased until he entered the saint's presence, prayed two r*aka'a*s, took hold of the covering of the tomb, kissed it, then rubbed his head upon it, at which moment the headache suddenly dissipated. His second visit was like the first, delayed and with a headache resulting, but on the third he hastened to the shrine, and therein had the beginnings of a poem come to him (the same as al-Nābulusī on his visit), as he smelled the scent of wormwood and lavender—a scent which he confirmed in asking one of those also present in the shrine whether he smelled it or not as well. He also found that when he brought up worldly topics in the presence of the holy prophet, the candles in the

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supplicant with the sultan. When someone says 'Ya Sīdī ʿAbd al-Qadir!' or the like, his intended meaning is 'Be my intercessor before God in the reception of what I asked of my Lord, for I believe that you are closer (*aqrub*) than me to Him.' Or, 'You intercede for me before [Muḥammad]!' In fact, al-Bakrī concludes, seeking aid is incumbent, as the following example illustrates: if you fall into a pit, and someone passes by you above, and you recognize that the person is passing by, if you do not seek help and cry out 'Take my hand and get me out of this hole!' then you will perish. So this seeking of help is incumbent upon you, for if you don't, then you will have essentially committed suicide. Ibid., 102-104.

[730] For instance: on the way to the *maqām*, al-Bakrī and his companions passed the tomb of a saint named ʿAlī Ṣāḥib al-Baqra, so named, al-Bakrī learns from a local, because Shaykh ʿAlī had a cow who plowed fields, but one day he sought to get milk from her as well. She spoke, saying, 'Either milk or plowing!' He took her to town and asked her to speak again, which she did, saying the same thing. He replied: 'Go! Neither milk nor plowing!' Then he fell down dead, and she followed, and the villagers buried both in one spot, which became a place of *ziyāra*. Al-Bakrī reports while practicing dhikr at their graves having experienced 'perfect good fortune (*al-ḥaẓẓ al-tāmm*)'. Nearby they also visited the tomb of a Shaykh Mamdūd, about whom it was said that he used to go about in this countryside in the form of a snake! Al-Bakrī does not register disapproval over either of these decidedly odd local saints' cults. Ibid., 100-101.

[731] See above, n.324.

shrine almost went out—which he tested the second time he was present, with the same results, confirming that even permissible worldly speech was not approved by the saint.[732] This sensory concatenation served as ample proof, in al-Bakrī's eyes, of the ongoing presence and power of the Prophet Mūsā by means of his entombed body and the devotional atmosphere generated by visitors to his shrine. As with al-Nābulusī, al-Bakrī's autobiographical rendering of this holy place underlined the vitality of this presence in the present-day: it was not simply a matter of hearsay or even of traditional and canonized authorities from the past, but of living, intimately attested experience.

iii. Asceticism and otherwise, embracing sociabilities and advancing spiritual freelancing: al-Nābulusī in the midst of early modern transformation:

As we saw in the previous chapter, Ḥasan Ünsī's repertoire of sainthood, like that of others in this period in Rūm and beyond, was primarily keyed to critical rejection of many of the trends and movements around him, be they the vogue for puritanism or, at the other end of the spectrum, the rise to social prominence of coffee and tobacco and accompanying social institutions. Underlying his saintly performance was a thorough-going asceticism, one that drew upon much older models of Islamic ascetic practice while also adapting to changing circumstances. Al-Nābulusī stands, for the most part, in sharp contrast to such an ascetic profile. His practice of sainthood, particularly after he underwent a period of partial retreat (*khalwa*,

[732] Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī, *Burʿ al-isqām*, 114-116; see also his description in his actual account of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, during which he and his companions spent nearly two weeks sojourning at the shrine of Mūsā (despite its remoteness—it is literally in the middle of the barren desert!), as well as his encounter with a Maghribī named ʿAbdallāh al-Sharīf, who ran about the shrine of Mūsā reciting loud *dhikr*, rapturously singing, and proclaiming, 'No god but God, my heart is aflame with Him!' This had much effect on the listeners, al-Bakrī adds. Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī, *al-Khaṭra al-thāniyya al-unsiyya lil-rawḍa al-dāniyya al-qudsiyya*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Mughrabī (Ramallah: Jāmiʿa al-Quds al-Maftūḥa, 2015), 44.

though not in the Khalwatī sense) at the significant age of forty, far from rejecting the contemporary world, positively embraced it, de-emphasizing most forms of asceticism and putting conviviality and even outright consumption at the heart of his saintly self-performance. Emerging from inward retreat he carved out a resolutely public and outward spatial profile, at home in Damascus and during his travels. Simultaneously, he cultivated a vast and socially expansive public both in person and by means of texts, articulating in the process a defense of spiritual freelancing, an approach to sufism and sainthood that was gaining increasing ground during this period, not just with al-Nābulusī and his circle. This final section will explore this interplay in al-Nābulusī's life and historical context of spatial practice, asceticism and post-asceticism, engagement with emergent forms of sociability and consumption, and the articulation of an effectively freelance approach to sainthood and sufism.

Before examining the wider historical context and the development of al-Nābulusī's specific repertoire and social profile as revealed in his own works, it is helpful to consider the image of the saint as sketched, late in his life, by his hagiographer disciple al-Baytimānī (d. 1761), who completed his *manāqib* of the saint a few years before al-Nābulusī's death, featuring numerous signs of al-Nābulusī's sainthood enacted in both the physical world and the world of dreams.[733] Al-Baytimānī opens his *manāqib* with a long description of the saint's general

[733] Al-Baytimānī explains in illuminating detail the circumstances that led to the writing of this treatise: 'I was sitting one day with my household in our house in the al-Maydān neighborhood in front of Damascus the protected. It was a little before *maghrib*. It occured to me to stand up and go to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ghanī. So I hastened to answer the call by going on foot, for it was my custom to never ride upon an animal when going to the presence of the shaykh. I reached his house in the Ṣālaḥiyya district of Damascus, just as the muezzin was calling the *maghrib*. When I reached my brother and friend Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Shaykh Muṣṭafá, *khādim* of the presence of the Teacher. He said to me, 'O brother! We desire from you that you write for us an abreviated *tarjuma* in which you will mention some of the *karāmāt* of our shaykh ʿAbd al-Ghanī so that we can speak about them for *baraka* through remembrance of him.' When I heard that from him—and that idea had in fact occurred to me a couple of days before—passion stirred up in me for that, and desire drove me to do that, so I answered him immediately in the affirmative without hesitation, and began the work with the aid of the Knowing King. I named it *al-Mashrab al-hanī al-qudsī fī karāmāt al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī.'* Al-Baytimānī, *al-Mashrab,* fol. 5-6.

deportment and social profile, a description which he introduces as being part of his *karāmāt*, his saintly acts of charisma, but which we can understand in this case as the public performance of his sainthood. Al-Baytimānī begins with the shaykh's contrasting saintly moods: if someone entered his home and encountered the shaykh 'sitting in his usual place,' the visitor would 'find him to be like a ravenous beast of prey, thinking that he was incapable of speech,' but when he descended from it to talk with the visitor, 'he would find him like a small child, gentle, pleasant, and smiling.' While from time to time a special spiritual 'state' (*ḥāl*) would seize him and plunge him into divine contemplation and silence, normally, 'he did not flag day or night from talking about the knowledges of the *ḥaqīqa*, for once he started talking he could hardly become silent, as if an ocean of knowledge was pouring forth from his mouth!' He was possessed of a great dignity and honor such that he could put pious fear in the hearts of the elite of society, but on the other hand he could be kind and gentle, eating with the poor and the wayfarers, sweet of discourse, and kind to children whose presence he enjoyed. Even the jinn attended his teaching sessions, al-Baytimānī providing several stories to this effect. 'Word of him went out into all the lands of Islam (*sā'ir bilād al-Islām*),' such that everyone—men and women, high and low—sought him out 'for his *baraka* and for entrance into the protection of his sanctity (*ḥurma*).' The elite too sought him out and sat before him with proper *adab*. He did not distinguish among social classes in those who came to him. 'In his presence they rose to the world of their spirits, becoming occupied with that world, and ceased to be occupied with the affairs of their lower selves.'[734]

In short, the saintly performance that al-Baytimānī sketches here and which runs throughout his *manāqib* is one of social openness, gregariousness, and wide repute, with

[734] Al-Baytimānī, *al-Mashrab,* fol. 11-12.

particular stress on both the scope and the accessibility of al-Nābulusī's teaching. Al-Baytimānī—unlike al-Ghazzī and his much larger and more structured *manāqib*, written decades later—renders a generally static image of the saint, making no mention, for instance, of the shifts in al-Nābulusī's attitude toward public teaching or of the saint's period of semi-ascetic retreat during the 1680s. To be sure, across al-Nābulusī's public career some things remained quite consistent. The works, thought, and person of Ibn 'Arabī were always central for al-Nābulusī, for instance. Relatedly, much of al-Nābulusī's career involved, in one way or another, struggle against puritan polemic and social activism, even as his stances in opposition to the puritans developed over time, eventually reaching a decidedly radical pitch, to the point that he essentially foreclosed the possibility of any meaningful performance of 'commanding the right and forbidding the wrong.'[735] In other ways, however, al-Nābulusī's stances and saintly self-performance were quite dynamic, undergoing changes in response to developments in Damascus and the rest of the Ottoman world—the rate and content of his polemical engagements with puritans one instance of this dynamism. Perhaps most crucially however, the deeply social and public profile that al-Baytimānī saw as fundamental in understanding his shaykh was something that al-Nābulusī developed over the course of his career.

[735] Over and over again in his corpus al-Nābulusī stresses the need to 'interpret' the actions of others in the best possible light and to avoid 'spying' and other forms of moral policing, particularly in relation to saints (and possible saints), but also to Muslims *and* non-Muslims in general. His inclusion of non-Muslims should probably be seen in light of puritanical attempts to regulate and police those communities and their institutions, often in quite draconian ways. See for instance his remarks in a letter to his Rūmī correspondent Mullah Muḥammad concerning interpreting the acts of others and avoiding slander, mockery, defamation, and thinking evil of others, 'as well as what tends towards that from spying and uncovering the private affairs of Muslims and of people of the pact': al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 139-142. Perhaps his most thorough and restrictive reading of 'commanding the right and forbidding the wrong is in his commentary on Hüdayı's *Wāridāt*: al-Nābulusī, *Sharḥ al-Tajalliyā,* 28-30. On his stance in general and its relation to previous interpretations see Michael A. Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 325-328.

The distinctive profile that al-Nābulusī's saintly career would ultimately take, and which al-Baytimānī's *manāqib* reflects, in terms of asceticism, publicness, and related polemical stances frequently stands out in sharper relief when set against the careers of other claimants to sainthood in his world. Ḥasan Ünsī—whose life almost exactly paralleled ʿAbd al-Ghanī's—provides one such point of comparison of course. In Syria itself, we may additionally consider the career and literary production of another sufi shaykh and claimant to sainthood, but slightly al-Nābulusī's elder, Qāsim al-Khānī (1619-1697), an influential freelance[736] shaykh whose treatise on the technics of *taṣawwuf* for the unaffiliated seeker, *al-Sayr al-sulūk ilā mulk al-mulūk,* proved to be of great enduring interest down to the present as evidenced by the many copies, citations, and printed editions, noted by Rachida Chih in a recent study of al-Khānī.[737] The shaykhly and saintly styles of al-Khānī and of al-Nābulusī present many striking parallels as well as important divergences and disagreements that can help orient us towards the shared contexts and possibilities available to both men. In reconstructing al-Khānī's practice of sainthood we have recourse to his *al-Sayr al-sulūk*—which is replete with person observations and interjections—and to a short but highly suggestive auto-*manāqib* reproduced by the eighteenth century Damascene biographer al-Murādī:

> I was born [in Aleppo] in the year 1028 [1619], then I traveled to Baghdad in the month of Jumadi I in the year 1050 [September, 1640], and my sojourn there was long- some two years- after which I returned to Aleppo and remained there for two months, then went to Basra and remained there for a span of ten

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[736] My usage of the term 'freelance,' which does not have a precise emic equivalent, is decidedly imperfect; the closest equivalent in the period would probably be 'Uwaysī,' on which see below, but otherwise there is no exact equivalent. 'Do-it-yourself' would also apply, and is probably a better choice but has the disadvantage of lacking a good nominal form ('do-it-yourselfer' or 'DIYer' hardly flow off the tongue). My usage combines both the sense of unaffiliation conveyed by 'freelance' and the bricolagesque, largely self-directed approach of do-it-yourself practice and aesthetic.

[737] For the long after-life of this text, see Rachida Chih, 'Le livre pour guide: ethique (*adab*) et cheminement spirituel (*sulūk*) dans trois manuels soufis d'epoquire ottomane,' in Francesco Chiabotti et al., *Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi Adab*, (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 526-527.

> months. I returned to Aleppo and stayed there for but ten days, then departed with the *ḥājj* to Mecca the Noble. I departed from the Ḥijāz to Islāmbūl [ie Constantinople/Istanbul] and remained there for a year and seven months. Finally, I returned to Aleppo. These travels of mine lasted for some ten years, and during them I was engaged in the business of taking and giving, buying and selling. After my final return to Aleppo I was taken with love of solitude away from the people, abandoned my trade of buying and selling, and traveled the way of lowliness and poverty, so changing my way of life in all respects-friends, habits, and self.[738] I engaged in ascetic struggle with my carnal self, opposing it with hunger and vigil, all for some seven years. Out of that time, for about two years I would restrict myself to eating every sixth hour a handful of flour made into *ḥarīra* sweetened with a spoonful of honey, which I would pour down my throat. The handful of flour was about fifteen *dirhams* worth. Out of the rest of those seven years I subsisted on eating less than a little—all of that was due to instruction from my [unnamed] shaykhs, God be pleased with them all…
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> After nearly seven years of being heavily weighed by ascetic practice, at the beginning of the month of Shawwāl in the year 1066 [August, 1656] God cast into my heart the love of seeking exoteric knowledge, so I studied for two years, minus a month, under various shaykhs. But God Himself graciously bestowed knowledge upon me, so I stopped my studies and began teaching. I taught some students, but most of them would laugh at me and mock me, saying, "We have been in the service of knowledge for ten years yet we do not have such audacity!" One of them, however, came to my teaching session with the intention to mock, but, by God, when he arose from that session his denial of me had been replaced with belief in me! The next day he came and studied under me and said, "This matter is something miraculous!" I continued teaching in that manner for another year.[739]

The image here—one which is reinforced in *al-Sayr al-sulūk*—is of a claimant to sainthood (a claim he makes with little ambiguity in the second paragraph above) whose life was marked, first, by a moment of disrupture and conversion, followed by a long process of self-transformation effected by seclusion and asceticism, and finally a rather audacious partial entry

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[738] Al-Khānī uses this very phrase in the fifth chapter of his *al-Sayr wa al-sulūk*, in explicating the wide-ranging field of asceticism needed to overcome the lower self and root out blameworthy characterstics. Qāsim ibn Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Khānī, *al-Sayr wa-al-sulūk ilá Malik al-Mulūk,* ed. by Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyah, 2002), 146.

[739] Muḥammad Khalīl ibn ʻAlī al-Murādī, *Kitāb Silk al-durar fī aʻyān al-qarn al-thānī ʿashar*, (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʻah al-Amīrīyah al-ʻĀmirah, 1874), vol. iv, 9-10.

back into the public sphere where his implicit claims met a mixture of ridicule and eventual acceptance. There is a striking dichotomy between the first stage of al-Khānī's life-history, in which he would have been an active participant in the social worlds of the Ottoman oecumene, and his ascetic turn. His ten years of merchant travel are reduced to a series of places and dates and a terse notice of his activities—'buying and selling'—symbolizing with this terseness his abrupt departure from such a life. Al-Khānī's asceticism is quite striking in its intensity and duration, as, in his presentation, an almost complete withdraw from ordinary life, with his specific ascetic practice oriented primarily around hunger.

Unsurprisingly then, hunger—literal, physical hunger, as well as more spiritual iterations thereof, but always connected with the physical experience of hunger, or its memory—appears as a central leitmotif in his *al-Sayr al-sulūk*, as not just *a* but *the* means whereby the aspirant can subdue his stubborn *nafs*.[740] Hunger and inwardness, the practice of sustained retreat from public life, formed the base of al-Khānī's practice, and, as the second paragraph in the above account slightly obliquely suggests, his ultimate saintly realization: having subdued his *nafs* and achieved some degree of friendship with God, al-Khānī's embarking on exoteric knowledge was facilitated by divine inspiration. Not only did al-Khānī reverse the usual order of studying exoteric knowledge, then the knowledge of the *ḥaqā'iq*, he undertook both primarily on his own terms, with, he strongly suggests, divine inspiration guiding his mastery of the exoteric.[741] While

[740] Examples could be multiplied, but one passage will suffice: When those brought near to God, al-Khānī argues, recognize that the stomach is the 'maker of the corruption and of blameworthy attributes, they hasten towards purifaction from its evil through lessening of food and so the purify themselves from the entirety of the blameworthy attributes, and take on praiseworthy characterstictics instead… That is because when they lessen their eating, they also lessen their drinking, their sleeping, and their speech, for the hungry one inadvertently is not interested in speech, so they retire from the people, and nothing of blameworthy characteristics remain in their hearts.' al-Khānī, *al-Sayr wa-al-sulūk,* 144-145.

[741] Here he is very much in agreement with al-Nābulusī, for whom the true realization of the *sharīʿa* is dependent upon entering into the *ḥaqīqa* first. For his presentation of this model of wayfaring by innovative means of an analysis of the tomb of Ibn al-ʿArabī, see Paul B. Fenton, 'The Hidden Secret Concerning the

he mentions shaykhs, they are unnamed, with his *al-Sayr al-sulūk* laying no special claim to any particular saintly genealogy either. In both his auto-hagiography and in his writing, while al-Khānī draws upon the long legacy of historical *taṣawwuf*, and even positions himself as having studied under and been authorized by anonymous shaykhs, the stress is on his own experience and indeed experimentation, making use of sufi texts, eventually himself producing a sufi handbook meant quite explicitly to potentially serve a reader in lieu of a shaykh, should the reader be unable to find one. If in his asceticism and his extensive use of seclusion al-Khānī is reminiscent of Ḥasan Ünsī, al-Khānī (like, we will see, al-Nābulusī) made far less use of genealogical authorization or attachment to a *ṭarīqa*, instead both employing a determinedly freelanced approach and encouraging others to do so as well. Similar again to al-Nābulusī, al-Khānī ultimately emerged from seclusion, in fact publicly challenging the authorized teachers of exoteric knowledge, presenting himself as an authority in both the exoteric and esoteric, based on divine inspiration and aid. Where Ḥasan Ünsī moved from the public contestation of space to the creation and maintenance of a regulated, inward domestic space, al-Khānī emerged from his retreat and laid claim to the public space of teaching *ʿilm*, his mastery of the *ḥaqā'iq* and of bodily asceticism his source of authority.

Turning back to al-Nābulusī's practices of retreat, seclusion, and asceticism as they appear in the hagiography and in his own writings, we see that what at first seem to be fairly close parallels to al-Khānī's repertoire of asceticism and seclusion contained already elements of difference and divergence. The most obvious instance of evident asceticism and use of retreat and of a turn into inward, domestic—and hence restricted—space came in 1680 when al-Nābulusī 'entered *khalwa*,' at the age of forty, in precise synchrocity, al-Ghazzī writes, with 'the

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Tomb of Ibn 'Arabî: A Treatises by ʿAbd al-Ghani an-Nâbulusî,' *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* 22 (1997): 25-40.

Muḥammadan inheritance,' a deliberate synchronicity that already by itself suggests the particular nature of this 'retreat' into the safety and seclusion of domestic space as being a retreat that had as its object the re-emergence into public life.[742] Al-Ghazzī goes on to describe this *khalwa*: In his retreat he practiced asceticism (*al-zuhd*), eating sparingly, such that his family would bring in a plate of food and a glass of water, place it before him silently, leave and lock the door, then come back in an hour to find he hadn't touched anything. During this time, he slept only sparingly and rarely left his *khalwa*, even neglecting to trim his hair and nails, resulting in an 'ugly' in appearance when he did leave his *khalwa*. Within the retreat he spent most of his time reciting the Qur'an and meditating in a state of divine 'immersion.' Upon emerging from his *khalwa,* which he did only with the permission of the Prophet, he set back to writing, now focusing almost exclusively on *taṣawwuf*, on refuting those who denied the saints, his ensuing writings 'strengthening the folk of gnosis' and 'restricting the chests of the folk of denial and repression (*ṭugyān*).' For a while after his re-emergence into public life, al-Ghazzī concludes, he was not fully adjusted, antagonizing some of his disciples, divorcing his wife Bint al-Hūsh, and manifesting 'marvelous states and strange conditions,' before returning to a more fully socially acceptable state.[743]

In al-Nābulusī's own largely indirect depictions this period of retreat remains visible and important, but the strongly ascetic overtones that al-Ghazzī suggests appear more muted, the *khalwa* seeming less disruptive in the overall flow of the shaykh's life and thought. It takes on

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[742] Al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 93. Cf. al-Baytimānī's usage of 'Muḥammadan inheritance,' Al-Baytimānī, *al-Mashrab,* fol. 41-42. For an overview and additional discussion of this period of al-Nābulusī's life see Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary,* 39-56.

[743] Al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 92-95. Al-Ghazzī relates another story in which his great-grandfather was found to have lived off of water for three days, having been forgotten by his cook and the rest of the household—but when his son took note of his father's lack of eating and cooked him a plate of rice and meat, al-Nābulusī ate but sparingly of it, saying he was not especially hungry—not, significantly, because he was fasting, but because he was simply so immersed in his work that food was far from his mind. Ibid., 102.

the appearance, not so much as a bout of intense asceticism and meditative practice as the hagiographic account suggests, as instead the equivalent of a long sabbatical, an inward retreat for purposes of spiritual refuge and regrouping, in the face of opponents who presented themselves—falsely, in al-Nābulusī's reckoning—as the true arbitrators of genuine Islam. As he explains in his 1685 treatise *Takmīl al-nuʿūt fī luzūm al-buyūt*—written during this period of retreat within his own household, and before his re-emergence into a public career—these people who falsely claim to be the true followers of the *sharīʿa* castigate anyone who deviates from them as being a '*rafīḍī* or *shīʿī*, at variance with the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jumāʿ*,' supposing that they themselves are the exclusive claimants to the title of *ahl al-sunna wa al-jumāʿ*.[744] Certainly, as both the hagiography and the saint's own writings indicate, frustration with this situation contributed to al-Nābulusī's (temporary) inward turn, as a way of escaping '*fitna*.' That the 1680s saw what would turn out to be the final large-scale political efflorescence of the Kāḍīzādelis is hardly coincidental: the decade as a whole clearly weighed on al-Nābulusī even as current events pushed him into bouts of intense engagement.

The valence and content of the asceticism which al-Ghazzī records finds appears rather more nuanced and decidedly less full-blown ascetic in the shaykh's own treatment. For instance, in a letter to Muḥammad al-Ḥājj al-Ḥamīdī of Constantinople sent during al-Nābulusī's period of 'retirement (*al-inziwāʿ*),' the saint related to his correspondent that 'God through His goodness has made us to be occupied with lessons, readings, compilation, and writing in accordance with that which God, the true owner of all spiritual states, has made easy.'[745] Strikingly, the remainder of this letter is occupied with advice (*al-naṣīḥa*) concerning social relations—both among living

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[744] 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nābulusī, *al-Muslimūn fī zaman al-fitna* [*Takmīl al-nuʿūtf fī luzūm al-buyūt],* ed. by Majdī ibn Manṣūr ibn Sayyid al-Shūrī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qāhira, 1997), 15-19, 25-26.

[745] al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 139, *et passim*.

everyday Muslims and with the community of the living and departed saints, al-Nābulusī encouraging his long-distance disciple in the face of Kāḍīzādeli social policing and opposition to the saints, even as he himself was physically secluded, his public access limited—if only for a time. In an earlier letter, sent in April of 1678 to Mulla Aḥmad of Hayrabolu, al-Nābulusī provides a sort of theory of *khalwa* that no doubt also applied to his own later sustained practice:

> May my friend—God, exalted is He, give him peace—know that there is no recourse for that besides entering into sharīʿaic seclusion (*al-khalwa*) and doing sharīʿaic spiritual exercises. And I mean by "seclusion" only your solitude in witnessing the true Doer apart from the metaphorical doer, then the witnessing of the true One Described, apart from the metaphorical one, then the witnessing of the true Existence, apart from the metaphorical existence. And persist in this witnessing so that the senses and the intellect are fully immersed. This is true spiritual seclusion. As for the metaphorical seclusion, it is that you enclose your body in a *ḥalāl* house and *ḥalāl* sustenance, and cut off your sight interiorly and exteriorly from all that is outside that house by negation or affirmation, until you find the true seclusion, then come out of the metaphorical seclusion.[746]

In other words, physical *khalwa* has a place, but a contingent one, meant to lead to a particular spiritual state that al-Nābulusī represents as the genuine *khalwa*, the goal of the physical, metaphorical version, the reversal of the expected valences of 'real' and 'metaphorical,' rooted in Akbarian theology, a favorite trope of the shaykh.

And just as al-Nābulusī did not entirely reject 'metaphorical seclusion,' but rather placed it in subordination to 'true seclusion,' it would not be quite accurate to say that he rejected asceticism outright. Rather, we might describe his mature stance—which had long existed in some form in his life and thought, both before and during his period of retreat—as a sort of post-asceticism, in that he practiced, not so much the rejection of *zuhd*, as its internalization and expression in attitude, deportment, and spiritual comprehension. This post-ascetic stance is not something that must be teased from his writings since he made it quite explicit, as in his 1682

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[746] Al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 116.

letter—in the midst of his period of *khalwa*—to Mulla Muhammed Humaydî: ‘There is nothing wrong with enjoying the good things of this world, so long as your object is truly God. One ought to be concerned with making sound the heart, not the externalities of the body—those things will follow when the heart is made sound.’[747] This inner asceticism of ‘making the heart sound’ need not entail a world-denying mode in outward life but can even entail the possession of goods from a *halāl* source and relative wealth. This sort of ‘*zuhd’* is known to God, but not necessarily to others: ‘Asceticism (*al-zuhd*) after this manner in someone is known by no one save God—it is the asceticism of the saints, received as inheritance from the prophets through proximity in following them in belief and action, not abrogated in our *sharīʿa*.’[748] In the same letter, al-Nābulusī elaborated on the goal of this sort of asceticism: ‘incumbent upon you is the struggle’ against ‘fleeting thoughts (*khawāṭir*),’ to be undertaken by ‘cutting off the jugular veins of might and power [in oneself], breaking the bones of laying claim [to things exclusive of others], and spilling the blood of scruples. You ought not labor over-much in obtaining the goods of this world—but you also ought not labor overmuch in the abandonment of this world! Restrict yourself to rejecting forbidden things, which are already known to you.’[749]

In short, the asceticism enjoined here and throughout the saint’s works is very much one of internal attitude, and even suggests the avoidance of bodily asceticism, which might elevate

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[747] Ibid., 160.

[748] Ibid., 161.

[749] Ibid., 159. Elsewhere al-Nābulusī clarifies things further in a similar vein: ‘And I mean by “exercise” (*riyāḍa*) whenever I mention it, the directing of the soul towards the attaining of the realities and their habituation in every state, little by little. And that is by attachment to the clear Truth (*al-ḥaqq*), then by being characterized by it, then by ultimate realization—that is real spiritual exercise. As for metaphorical bodily exercise by the limiting of the eating of food and the drinking of water, as he—peace be upon him—said: ‘The sufficiency of the son of Adam are morsels which suffice his loins,’ so it is an excercise seeking other than itself, not for its own sake. It is constituted in the whole and is an aid for the fulfillment of the spiritual exercise, and is what does not go to excess and so lead to corrupt imaginings, so becoming a harmful inderícted thing—for this reason the jurists discuss it in their books. Ibid., 117.

one's trust in oneself as well as heighten any existing scruples through over-zealous attention to matters of ritual purity and the like—positions which, to be sure, were not novel within *taṣawwuf*, though few of al-Nābulusī's contemporaries took his elaboration of post-asceticism to such consistent ends. For not only did the great shaykh, as we will see further along in more detail, embrace 'the good things of the world' and such socio-cultural developments as coffee and tobacco, he boldly argued for the spiritual potency of such practices and of appreciation and love of manifestations of bodily beauty and excellence in this world below. In his treatise *Gāyat al-maṭlūb fī maḥabbat*, a defense of the extremely controversial sufi practice of 'gazing at beautiful faces, (*naẓar*)'[750] he notes that 'some divide love (*maḥba*) into two: creaturely love and divine love, depending on the object of the love.'[751] But ʿAbd al-Ghanī argues instead that love is fundamentally one, that while love can be channeled through and towards and in God to different degrees, it remains one in nature. It is true, he notes, that not everyone who loves recognizes the connection to God, in that the object of love in this world is a manifestation of God: 'Among the necessary aspects of one who does not know (*al-jāhil*) with divine shari'aic gnosis is that if he loves something created, he loves the thing (*al-shay*) but is blind to the aspect (*wajh*) of God (*al-Ḥaqq*) therein and is deaf to hearing His word.'[752] Ultimately, al-Nābulusī concludes, 'if God loves the beautiful and his messenger loves the beautiful, then love of beauty and handsomeness is from the most noble of attributes and most perfect of characteristics.'[753]

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[750] See Sirriyeh's discussion, Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary*, 47-48.

[751] al-Nābulusī, *Ghāyat al-maṭlū*b, 22.

[752] Ibid.

[753] Ibid., 66.

After his period of *khalwa* al-Nābulusī fully embraced the post-ascetic profile heralded by the hagiography and plunged into social life and mission with great energy, all the way up until his death—a career path in marked contradistinction to the path adopted, among others, by his contemporary Ḥasan Ünsī, who traveled in almost the exact opposite direction. Both shaykhs were acting in response to the changing social and cultural dynamics of the late seventeenth into eighteenth centuries, their responses interplaying closely with their saintly self-presentation. But if for Ḥasan Ünsī the exuberant public culture and sociability of the age of Ahmed III provided an opportunity to heighten the drama and significance of his inwardness and luxury-denying asceticism, al-Nābulusī took the opposite tack, directly incorporating cultural change and public sociability into his saintly persona and performance, a stance that he saw and presented as being both congruent with Akbarian theology and as a means of expanding the reach of that theology to a wide public. Not only did al-Nābulusī engage, as the hagiographers noted in support of his sainthood, in numerous sessions of public teaching, including of deeply esoteric topics such as Akbarian theology, and in his various extended journeys, chronicled in his *riḥla* writings, he participated in the public culture of early modern Damascus in highly visible ways, ways which both reinforced his practice of post-asceticism and which positioned him as a political force and figure.[754] It would be the very public, socially engaged, and frequently traveling ʿAbd al-Ghanī, the saint of coffee houses, smoking, music, and recreation in the countryside, of uninhibited teaching of esoteric works and doctrines, that would become foremost in both his own self-presentation and in later memory. If such a profile would emerge most thoroughly and consistently in the second half of the shaykh's life, ʿAbd al-Ghanī was developing it already

[754] On the social life and culture of this period in Damascus' history, see in general James Grehan, *Everyday Life & Consumer Culture in 18th-Century Damascus* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

quite early in his career and seeking authorization for it, as in the following dream-vision that the saint recorded and which is reproduced in al-Ghazzī:

> During the month of Rajab, 1088 (August, 1677), I saw in a dream that I was inside a house I didn't recognize, and that the Messenger of God, God bless him and give him peace, was in that house, and I saw him only, no one else being with him in that house, and I could not see myself with him. Then he, God bless him and give him peace, cried out: "Bulāl!" I heard this from him, God bless him and give him peace. And then a tall black man of slight build when out from the door here at my right, from a vestibule of the house, until he came to a stop before the Messenger of God, God bless him and give him peace, silent. Then he, God bless him and give him peace, said to him: "Say to Ḥasan," or, "Say to Ḥusayn," the doubt being mine regarding the specifics of that, 'that he should address the people,' or, 'that he should speak among the people.' Then I looked to the source of the speech, and he who I had seen to be the Messenger of God, God bless him and give him peace, in the house—he was me, and I was alone there. Then Bulāl, God be pleased with him, when he was commanded by him, he sought me to speak to me, and I was also the one commanded that he spoke to, so he spoke to me as he commanded. Then I found, opposite the shrine of Yaḥya ibn Zakiriyya, God bless and give them both peace, in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus the protected, a minbar built resembling the *sudda* which muezzins use in mosques. It had steps, so I ascended by them, and spoke a long discourse. Then I awoke and was deeply happy. Before seeing that dream vision, I had been disturbed within concerning regarding permission from the Messenger of God, God bless him and give him peace, regarding speaking with the people about the knowledge of divine oneness and divine gnosis. I had seen in one of the books that Junayd al-Baghdādī, God be pleased with him, did not speak with the people until he was given permission by the Messenger of God, God bless him and give him peace regarding that matter in a dream vision which he saw. So my mind was put at rest. God's is the praise and the grace![755]

While this dream-vision suggests, among other things, a decisive moment in his saintly career, the overall tenor of al-Nābulusī's works, supplemented by our hagiographic accounts, suggests more of a give-and-take in the shaykh's stance towards public teaching, access to his person, and overall cultural and social role. As he indicates in the above, al-Nābulusī was well aware of the traditional stipulations regarding public teaching and the legitimacy of a shaykh's giving instruction, even as he modified or outright overrode such stipulations.

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[755] Al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 437.

And in accordance with the above dream-vision, central to much of al-Nābulusī's career but especially in his final few decades in his home in the Ṣalāhiyya was his very public and relatively unrestricted teaching of esoteric subjects and texts. The nature of ʿAbd al-Ghanī's instruction during the mature phase of his career can be seen in particular relief in the following account from al-Ghazzī concerning the beginning of the previously mentioned Muṣṭafá Ṣafī al-Dīn al-ʿAlwānī's relationship with ʿAbd al-Ghanī, after his having come in 1722 to Damascus from Hama with his primary shaykh, Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Ḥabbāl, taking up residence in the Bādharā'iyya madrasa. The two went to visit the saint, and upon entering ʿAbd al-Ghanī's presence,

> love of him seized the whole of [Muṣṭafá's] heart, so he returned to him and sought permission to read under him, asking which book [he should read]. The Master said to him: "Read our book concerning the oneness of being titled *al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq*." Then the Master gave him a notebook (*kurrās*) from out of his own copybooks, saying to him, "Write it down in your own handwriting lesson (*dars*) by lesson." He specified to him that the time of the lesson would be on Friday after the *ṣalāt*, and that every week he would recite one lesson. The subject of this entry would take the notebook and write it down in it. So it occurred that every Friday he would go to the Ṣālaḥiyya and enter the house (*dār*) of the Master after the *ṣalāt*, kiss the hand of the Master and sit down. Then the Master would raise his head from writing and say, "Recite." He would recite, then kiss his hand and go. He did this for a while, though his Shaykh al-Ḥabbāl did not know about it. One day this Shaykh al-Ḥabbāl entered the subject of this entry's [madrasa] room previously mentioned, and began leafing through his loose pages and books, and found the book of the Master, al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq, in his possession, he having written out a goodly portion of it. He asked him about it, and he told him that he was reading the book under the Master's supervision and so forth. Al-Ḥabbāl said to him by way of advice, "My son, you are not ready to read the like of this book, you don't have the disposition for understanding the books of *ḥaqā'iq*. If you want to receive something from the Master and derive blessing from him, read under him a book on the technical terms of hadith, and get an *ijāza* from him—that much will suffice you." So [Muṣṭafá] complied with his words. In accordance with his custom on Friday he went with a portion of what he had written out to the Master, this time from the book *Sharḥ al-Nukhba*, on the knowledge of technical vocabulary. He entered into the Master's presence, kissed his hand, and sat down. The Master did not raise his head from his writing, and did not say anything to him! He remained looking at him until the ʿ*aṣr adhān* of that

> day, and the Master arose, prayed the ʿ*aṣr ṣalāt*, then after completing his prayer looked at [Muṣṭafá] and said, "Ya Sayyīd Muṣṭafá, we do not instruct save our own books, and if you wish to read under us then read our books." He did not expand upon those words any further. Mustafa understood that what he had intended to ask of the Master had been revealed to him by way of unveiling, and he resumed his completion of the recitation of the aforementioned book.'[756]

On vivid display here is al-Nābulusī's insistence on making esoteric knowledge—specifically, the teaching of 'oneness of being'—widely available, in a way that did not necessarily involve close explication or regulation. Shaykh al-Ḥabbāl's attitude was more representative of the traditional stance, as it did not indicate rejection of 'the books of *ḥaqā'iq*' but rather a sense that their use ought to be restricted to those prepared for them, no doubt also with close and careful instruction from a guiding shaykh. Yet even if in this account al-Nābulusī—whose saintly knowledge is indicated therein and forms the rationale of this story's inclusion in al-Ghazzī's hagiography—condenses his saintly authority and the saintly authority of Ibn al-'Arabī into a text, physical proximity is still involved, and the reproduction of the text is not wholly divorced from the spatial context of the saint. Indeed, al-Nābulusī's household was the frequent, though hardly exclusive, locus of his public persona and social life, the site of much of his teaching, as in the above account, functioning in many ways as a de facto madrasa, as a *zāwiya*, and mosque, particularly since he eschewed establishing conventional sufi institutions. As an open and accessible but still delimitated space, his home both contained and radiated his saintly presence. And while his move from his centrally located home near the Umayyad Mosque to a new home in the Ṣalāḥiyya was, according to al-Ghazzī, primarily precipitated by a desire to avoid the spill-over from conflict between different Janissary factions, the move was almost certainly also motivated by al-Nābulusī's desire to be physically closer to Ibn al-'Arabī, whose nearby shrine

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[756] Al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 338.

was not just geographically proximate but in many ways formed an imaginatively and spiritually continuous unit with al-Nābulusī's own home and later shrine.[757]

Outside of his house and household al-Nābulusī made use of all manner of public space, with his numerous long-distance journeys themselves a key component in broadcasting and elaborating upon his public saintly persona, both through forging connections with numerous saints and holy places and through the wider social ties that he made and maintained on these journeys, supplemented by his writing and dispatch of letters and treatises. On a smaller scale, the great shaykh frequented local saints' shrines, as well as coffee houses, mosques, marketplaces, and the homes of disciples and notables, participating in the leisure culture and modes of sociability that emerged in particular full force in the first decades of the eighteenth century, both at the imperial center and in the provinces. One of the most spectacular instances of this engagement with the leisure culture of early modern Damascus, and of the full flourishing of his post-ascetic, even anti-ascetic stance, came late in al-Nābulusī's life, in the form of a portable pleasure palace built for the elderly saint. Al-Ghazzī describes this curious piece of transportable architecture: 'The master had a palace (*qaṣr*) which he assembled from wood, comprised of plaitwork and vaulting. Under it was an *iwān* raised off of the earth,' and it was equipped with iron articulations that allowed it to be broken down, moved, and reassembled, moving from 'place to place' in gardens and elsewhere. Upon its completion al-Nābulusī had it inscribed with some lines of encomiastic poetry.[758] He had this *qaṣr* built in 1726, when he was in his late eighties, the structure acting as a means of maintaining his presence in the pleasure-grounds outside of the city even in old age. His 'lovers' would break down and transport the *qaṣr* using

[757] Ibid., 119.

[758] Ibid., 111.

ten mules, we learn, moving it where the shaykh indicated. Al-Ghazzī provides a description of one such use, a three-day pleasure excursion to the countryside (*sayrān*), in 1727, to which various members of the Damescene elite were invited, with a vast encampment spread out on the banks of the Barada, complete with a tent functioning as a coffeehouse, to which the two men who related this story went upon arriving in the pleasure encampment, to deposit the coffee beans they had brought as a gift to the shaykh. Al-Nābulusī was seated 'like a king' in his portable *qaṣr*, overseeing the cultural and recreational proceedings that ensued.[759] 'His reign encapsulated his mature style of sainthood and of shaykhly performance, he seeing the sociabilities of the early eighteenth century as outlets for the practice and projection of sanctity, not as obstacles. Not only did he not attack these cultural permutations and social developments, he quite literally set himself up in the very middle of them!

ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī ultimately saw and argued for this post-ascetic, culturally gregarious, and publicly visible and available performance of sanctity being rooted in the example of Muḥammad, he himself, he argued, imitating the Prophet and realizing the *sunna* in all its depth and multiplicity in a way that his opponents could not. The image of Muḥammad that emerges in al-Nābulusī's writings, particularly in his 1683 *sharḥ* on Birgivī's *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, can be seen as both a projection of his own project and as a imitative template for that project. In descriptions that find parallels in descriptions of ʿAbd al-Ghanī in the hagiography and in his own writings, Muḥammad is shown engaging in everyday tasks and chores. He answered everyone and accepted gifts from anyone regardless of social standing; he was not a picky eater, nor did he eat away off by himself, but rather in the company of others. He was not particular about his clothing or his mode of riding. He spoke the truth frankly, and he

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[759] Ibid., 112-113.

liked to laugh (if not to excess). He watched permissible playful activities and did not forbid them, and he liked to go out to the gardens of his friends, who came from many social stations. When he sat with people and they chatted about food and drink, he joined in the conversation, and when people would recite poetry for him or related things from the pre-Islamic period, he enjoyed it.[760] And so forth—one of the implicit arguments running through this *sharḥ* is the incongruence between the 'real' Muḥammad and the Muḥammad imagined by the Kāḍīzādelis and other puritan-minded Muslims.[761] But if the reader also sees al-Nābulusī in this socially gregarious Muḥammad, a Muḥammad that one could easily imagine enjoying coffee-fueled music session on the banks of the Barada, that is hardly accidental. As the above dream-vision concerning Bulāl implicitly argues, in al-Nābulusī effectively fading into the person of Muḥammad, the saint and the Prophet's relationship was deeply intimate and lent him considerable authority, provided one accepted the reality of that relationship of course.

Finally, ways in which al-Nābulusī adapted his saintly practices and performance to new socio-cultural circumstances and the role his teaching and household played in his career all point to one of the most important aspects of ʿAbd al-Ghanī's life in terms of his place in the larger current of early modern history and of the formation and presentation of the self: his embrace of spiritual freelancing, both in his own life and as an ideal of practice for others. If they differed on the nature and relative centrality of asceticism and pious retreat, both al-Khānī and al-Nābulusī pursued their respective regiments of personal transformation without the

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[760] Al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥadīqa*, vol. i, 33.

[761] Al-Nābulusī tackles elsewhere one potential criticism of his position: 'If some people say that the Prophet was inviolate from sin, such that disobedience, hypocrisy, and evil did not arise in him, he being purely pure, but others are not thus, so it is not permissible for those other than him who are not inviolate from sin to follow him in this matter, all manner of disobedience, hypocrisy, and evil being possible from them, we reply: This is an obstruction blocking the gate of imitation of the Messenger of God.' Al-Nābulusī, *Gāyat al-maṭlūb,* 61.

intervention or supervision of physically-present saintly shaykhs. While such a path was not unheard of in Islamic settings, and in fact had a name—the ʿUwaysī *ṭarīqa*—it was certainly unusual in earlier centuries, and often carried profoundly negative connotations, exemplified in the well-known, indeed almost cliché, saying 'He who has no shaykh has Shayṭān for his shaykh.' The difference in these seventeenth into eighteenth century lives of self-made sanctity can be usefully contrasted with any number of earlier examples, as well as contemporary ones such as that of Ḥasan Ünsī, whose formation at the hands of Karabaş ʿAlī was quite crucial.[762] In a rather theoretical vein, the important Mevlevī şeyh Ismāʿīl Anḳaravī (d. 1631) laid out in detail the problems with a freelance approach to sufism in his *Minhācü'l-fuḳurā'*, a handbook of the sufi path which also defends many aspects of sainthood and controversial sufi, especially Mevlevī, practice. Anḳaravī strenuously argues against the path of taking initiation from departed pîrs or even from Muḥammad himself, arguing that if Muḥammad had intended for his later followers to seek him directly, why would he have appointed successors at all? While Anḳaravī has nothing against modeling oneself upon departed saints, he argues that the active instruction of a living murşîd remains necessary. He notes that some in his day would say that a 'book is my *murşīd*,' taking a *hırḳa* from a living şeyh or occasionally entering into his presence

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[762] The older, well established attitude in the Ottoman world concerning sufi practice, texts, self-direction, and sainthood is nicely condensed in a story that Meḥmed Naẓmī Efendi tells of ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd-i Şirvānī (d. 1564) in his late seventeenth century *Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān*. ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd was as a young man an 'exoteric' scholar who occupied himself with teaching in the rural district of Şirvān. 'I was continuously occupied with love of exoteric knowledge… such that most nights I stayed awake reading books. Suddenly, one blessed night the book that I was reading, lying on my lap, began to move and to speak!' ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd's clothes also begin talking, both asking him why he busied himself with books while neglecting the Lord about whom the books were ostensibly concerned. ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd threw the book from his lap, ripped off his clothes, and remained in a stupefied state until the morning when his father found him and threw an *ʿabbā* over him. ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd, however, fled to the mountains of Şirvân where he found a cave in which to settle and practice asceticism and constant *zikr*, only to be driven forth from his cave and into discipleship under a passing shaykh and his band of dervishes, ʿAbdü'l-Mecīd realizing that neither his previous book-based learning nor his do-it-yourself asceticism in the cave had any real value. Only the close direction of a realized shaykh would suffice. Naẓmī, *Hediyyetü'l-iḫvān,* 269.

but deriving their instruction from a text—such a practice is from Shaytân and the *nefs*, Anḳaravī avers.[763] In his discussion of the *hırḳa* he describes what he calls the *hırḳa-yi teberrük*, the sufi cloak sought by devotees solely as a means of participating in a şeyh or saintly lineage's sanctity, not as a symbol of total submission and discipleship. Not wanting to discourage *ziyāret* and the seeking of such 'robes of blessing,' Anḳaravī nonetheless reiterates the need for stable instruction under a living pîr.[764] Anḳaravī, then, recognized the existence of a preference for freelancing and 'independent' initiation models, the beginnings of ideas and practices that would flourish later in the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century, even as he and others sought to preserve the traditional model of sufi initiation and instruction, while implicitly recognizing and seeking to engage with the power of texts and do-it-yourself practice.

By contrast with the perspective of someone like Anḳaravī, al-Nābulusī's initiation into sufi *ṭarīqa*s, and his relationship with other shaykhs, was very much of an instrumentalist nature, akin to the selective use of Mevlevī discourse and practices noted above—a selectivity that was not meant as commentary upon the legitimacy or authority of those *ṭarīqa*s. Rather, it indicated a view of institutional saintly lineages and of direct, physical shaykhly instruction as not entirely indispensable, particularly for someone already standing in the ranks of the friends of God. Al-Nābulusī's encounters with both the Qādirī and Naqshbandī shaykhs who would initiate him into their respective orders is remarkable for the rapidity with which these encounters unfolded, hardly time for in-depth instruction or formation.[765] Instead, initiation served to link him into the saintly lineages directly and to begin drawing upon the practices of the *ṭarīqa* in a freelance,

[763] İsmâ'îl Anḳaravī, *Minhacü'l-fuḳarā'*, 30.

[764] Ibid., 32.

[765] See al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 149-157.

creative manner. That al-Nābulusī's primary object was insertion into a saintly lineage is further underlined by his double-initiation into the Naqshbandiyya, undertaken in a dream-vision as well, skipping over the intervening generations.[766] Affiliating with saints in some way was a consistent theme in ʿAbd al-Ghanī's life, even if his true teaching shaykhs were not physically present, but rather encountered in the dream-vision world, through their spiritual presences, as was the case with Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī and even more importantly Ibn al-ʿArabī.[767] Ultimately, respect for the sainthood of others did not mean al-Nābulusī saw himself in need of subordination to a sainted other, at least not one physically alive in the body; encounters with departed saints, especially Ibn al-ʿArabī, and knowledge and practice mediated by texts (especially but of course not only those of Ibn al-ʿArabī) would largely suffice. Somewhat remarkably, then, neither ʿAbd al-Ghanī nor al-Khānī nor, as it turns out, their opponents among the Kāḍīzādelis and others regarded a living, physically present shaykh as indispensably

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[766] Ibid., 150. Cf. Le Gall, *Culture*, 120-121.

[767] A relationship exemplified in the following dream-vision al-Nābulusī reports and which is cited in al-Ghazzī's hagiography: 'One day I entered the shrine of al-Shaykh al-Akbar Muḥyā al-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī, God sanctify his secret, and it was my custom in visiting him that I entered through the door then sat at the head of the shaykh, God be pleased with him, and this had occured many times before. But a couple of times I entered and found a crowd gathered at the head of the shaykh, so I went to his feet and sat there, so that [this] time I entered and there was no one at the head of the shaykh, but it occcurred to me what had been mentioned to me once, by one of those who serve the shaykh [at his shrine], that it is preferable in *ziyāra* that a person go towards the feet, lest the departed be wearied in raising his gaze at the visitor, if the visitor went towards his head. So I went and sat at the shaykh's feet, God be pleased with him, and it occurred to me that I should ask the shaykh, God be pleased with him, about this matter which that man had spoken to me about. So I asked him with [my] spiritual tongue (*al-lisān al-ruḥānī*), and he answered me with a cry (*bi-ṣiyāḥ*) that there was nothing to this, and that the departed in his world is entirely spiritual (*rūḥānī*), and the spiritual has no spatial direction specified for it. And if you come to him [the deceased saint] from whatever direction you come to him, you are acceptable to him, and he is not wearied by it in his spirit. Rather, the *sunna* in placing the body of the deceased in the earth is that his physical face should face the qibla in the initial time of burial. So I understood from the shaykh, God be pleased with him, that he was not satisfied with my sitting before him except in the direction of his head, so I persisted in my custom regarding that. I entered once a few years ago to visit the shaykh, God be pleased with him, and sat facing his head as is my custom, and I found him seeking forgiveness for himself apart from anything else. Then it was revealed to me in that time the realization of the station of forgiveness, which if it comes to be for anyone, then there has come to be for him every perfection and preperation for the reception of every good. So I departed from him and I was rich in [the station of] seeking forgiveness.' al-Ghazzī, *Intimate Invocations*, 258-259.

necessary. This was no small change, one that must be seen as indicative of the distinctiveness of the early modern period and its wider socio-cultural transformations, as we will see momentarily.

While this flexibility of repertoire and of diverse affiliations to saints and sanctified texts was crucial to al-Nābulusī's performance of sainthood, he did not regard such a position suitable only for himself or other spiritually realized people. Rather, in his teaching and texts he encouraged a similar do-it-yourself approach, as in these remarkable instructions to another of his Rūmī correspondents, Ibrāhīm Efendi, in 1680:

> Persist in the *dhikr* of Sahl ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Tustarī, God be pleased with him, which his shaykh invested him with and through which he attained to God in four days, with your observation adhering to its meaning in each moment. Then you will be benefited greatly by that, God willing. The *dhikr* of Sahl, God be pleased with him, is: "God is with me, God looks towards me, God is present to me." And if you translate it for yourself into the Turkish language, with words that make attention to its meaning easy for you, and so remember God by them, that is excellent. And it is thus when you pay heed to it with your heart but your tongue does not speak it. The intended goal is that there be no straining (t*akalluf*) in yourself and in your thoughts for the flow of the remembrance of God (*dhikr Allāh*), and that you practice *dhikr* in every condition.[768]

Here the selected practice comes from the early sufi al-Tustarī, whose own life story lends it authorization; al-Nābulusī makes no pretense to being in direct genealogical connection with al-Tustarī however. Not only that, but he encourages his interlocutor to modify the *dhikr* formula as he needs by translating it into Turkish, such that whatever charge the literal continuity of the phrase might have had would be effaced: it is the function of the spiritual technology, preserved in texts and put into use in particular living circumstances by people in the present, that mattered. More mundanely, it was the technology of relatively widespread literacy, of an expansive urban class of literate and culturally involved people, and networks of communication (and of shared polemical struggles) that made the transmission of the above advice possible and which provided

[768] al-Nābulusī, *Letters*, 150-151. He adds, 'I have presented you with good advice, but it is God who is responsible for your guidance, for He is your Master.'

the material base for the sort of freelancing al-Nābulusī engaged in and directed his followers to practice themselves. Subsidiary technologies, like the widespread keeping of *majmū'a*s (personally selected collections of texts, excerpts from texts, notes, and other textual material) gave the spiritual freelancer a way to gather together and use relevant material without requiring recourse to the expense of multiple volumes.[769]

While a large-scale reception history of al-Nābulusī's ideas and practices is beyond our scope here, we may note briefly one example, in the person of the decidedly not of humble station Şeyhülislām Muṣṭafā ʿĀşir Efendi (d. 1804), whose library of al-Nābulusī's works was noted in chapter five. An initiate into sufism under the tutelage of a disciple of ʿAbd al-Ghanī as well as a connoisseur of the great saint's corpus, ʿĀşir Efendi partook of the 'mainstream' of sufism and sainthood as it had developed—in no small part due to ʿAbd al-Ghanī's labors—in the eighteenth century. In attempting to define ʿĀşir Efendi's (presumed) sufi *ṭarīḳat* affiliation, Erdal Toprakyaran, perhaps unsurprisingly, is perplexed, ultimately settling on a Melāmī affiliation (which, naturally, would not be made explicit anywhere in the Şeyülislam's works!).[770] The more likely explanation is that ʿĀşir Efendi's sufism, while owing much to al-Nābulusī's

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[769] Cf. Hirschler's remarks on these developments: he notes that 'the increasing diversity of libraries developed in parallel to two genres that gained in popularity during the same period: collective manuscripts and anthologies. In these works writers effectively assembled for themselves, or for their customers, 'one-volume' libraries of miscellanea with a remarkable diversiy of themes…' Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands a Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 151. He further describes how such developments were not well received by many among the 'ulama: The readership that had started to play an increasing role in scholarly reading practrices formed their own forums of reading that were beyond scholarly control. Consequently, the schoalrs repeatedly attempted to suppress the copying, selling, transmission, individual reading and performance of the popular epics…. However, in other fields these challenges touched upon more fundamental questions as the texualization of cultural practices gave a new topicality to issues such as knowledge gained by individual reading outside scholarly networks.' Ibid.180, 184.

[770] Erdal Toprakyaran, 'Nābulusian Sufism in the Ottoman Realm: The Case of Şeyhülislam Mustafa Âşir Efendi,' in in *Early Modern Trends in Islamic Theology: ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nābulusī and His Network of Scholarship (Studies and Texts)*, ed. by Lejla Demiri and Samuela Pagani (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 222-223.

works and legacy, was very much of the freelance variety, primarily textually mediated, his formal initiation really a matter of connecting himself to a rarified lineage of great saints (his ensuing *silsila* Toprakyaran describing as 'extraordinary' for its sheer number of major saints).[771] While clearly venerating living and recently departed sufi saints and masters, ʿĀşir Efendi's own sufi practice emerged out of his consumption of texts, under his own self-direction.

In terms of the yet wider context of this turn to freelancing, do-it-yourself, and textualization, the late seventeenth into early eighteenth centuries was marked by the continued political decentralization and distribution of power and privilege that had arisen earlier in the seventeenth century. The period saw, across the empire, the adoption of formerly elite forms of discourse and self-presentation by Ottomans of humbler social class, as represented in the personal chronicles, some intended for publication, of quite ordinary people. Texts, ranging from the catechism to the devotional to the poetic to the polemical, were produced in greater numbers and clearly reached larger and larger audiences during this period, with one of the distinctive elements of the Kāḍīzādeli and analogous movements being its non-elite makeup and the efforts of polemicists across the spectrum to reach, using accessible literature and other means, ordinary people and not simply members of the ʿulama or of the *ʿaskerī* elite. The freelancing of sainthood and of sufi practice was further facilitated by the existence within sufi traditions of suitable forms and concepts, such as Uwāysī initiation, with scattered elements coalescing in the works and prescriptions of people like ʿAbd al-Ghanī for whom the entire Ottoman world was a potential resource basin. In lieu of a sustained examination of this historical trend, which is beyond the confines of this chapter, we may briefly consider the şeyh of the Murād Molla Tekke in Istanbul, Beyzāde Muṣṭafā Efendi (d. 1785). Beyzāde's collected writings reveal a career

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[771] Ibid., 218-219.

devoted to facilitating independent spiritual wayfaring on the part of devotees without access to a living, physically present spiritual guide. Beyzāde produced a sizeable body of devotional literature geared towards widespread usability, dispatched across the empire *ʿijāzas* which also functioned as short guides to the sufi life, and adapted long-standing Nakshbandī techniques as ways of facilitating contact between ordinary devotees and physically absent saints.[772] In his longer Arabic treatise on spiritual wayfaring, Beyzāde directly confronted the tension between the traditional sufi stress on a living guide and the contemporary reality of independent, textually-centered practitioners:

> It is incumbent upon the wayfarer to find a guide, for otherwise how can he receive of the spiritual presence (*rūḥāniyya*) of the sufi shaykhs? How can there be benefit from the revivification of the masterful guides without being present with them, with no external companionship save through written and mailed ʻ*ijāza*? However, if one cannot find an appropriate shaykh, one's treatment is to act according to Book and Sunna and the words of the sufi shaykhs, taken with firm resolution, avoiding permissibility except in case of necessity, avoiding innovation, the forbidden and the disliked. He should undertake *wird* of *dhikr*, *wird* of *tawḥīd*, and *wird* derived from the Qur'ān, such as reading a *ḥizb* every day or more with humility and weeping; and *wird* from *taṣliya*,[773] turning to [Muḥammad's] spiritual presence with a heart present as if he were sitting upon a magnificent throne in luminescent form and prophetic splendour, and as if [you the wayfarer] were sitting before him humbly—for verily if you persist in this

[772] He describes his technique in detail: 'The path of deriving benefit from the spiritual presence of departed shaykhs is that you turn towards the spiritual presence of a well-known perfect shaykh like ʿAbd al-Qādir or al-Shadhilī or Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband or other from among the perfected shaykhs. If you are present at his tomb that is easier—sit facing his feet and make him present in your imagination through what you know of him of his attributes and states. And if his tomb is far away from you, then sit in a pure cell (*khalwa ṭāhira*) and turn towards his spiritual presence, summoning him up through his attributes in accordance with what is possible. Close your eyes, whether you are at his tomb or in the cell, and face your heart towards his heart, and persist in this state in perfect purity with persistance in prayer, union, and congregations, and avoidance of people except according to necessity, which permits the interdicted. And if you persist in this state, the spiritual presence of the one to whom you turn will be manifest to you, and he will teach and guide you byday, and exhort and direct you [unclear]. Then act accordingly. But this path is extremely difficult except for the one to whom God gives His aid. And one calls someone guided through spiritual presence 'Uwaysī,' after Uways ibn Anīs al-Qarnī, for he grasped the Prophet even though he never saw him, and he was taught from his spiritual presence in life and after death. Şeyh Muṣṭafā Beyzāde, *Risālat al-sulūk*, in *A͟sār-i Şeyh Seyyid* Muṣṭafā Beyzāde (Istanbul: Darüttıbattil'âmire, 1848), 122.

[773] That is, the practice of pronouncing prayers and blessings upon Muḥammad, technically known as *taṣliya*, though the term itself is rarely encountered outside of modern scholarly literature, making this an unusual instance of its usage in an emic setting.

> state you will see the Prophet in your dreams, even in waking visions. Then he will guide you and teach you and exhort you and you will present your doubts and concerns before him and he will answer you with insight and allusion. This has occurred for many from among the sincere pious.[774]

If Beyzāde begins this passage with a seemingly resounding condemnation or at least discouragement of independent spiritual wayfaring, the rest of the passage argues something quite different. With the right techniques and disposition, situated within a *sharīʿa*-compliant life, the wayfarer can become guided by the Prophet himself, without need for a living and physically present sufi guide—a path that could well lead, as the final line here hints, to one's own realization of sainthood. While the services of a guiding şeyh like Beyzāde and the presence of living saints might still be necessary in a general sense—Beyzāde is not willing here or elsewhere to do away with such a need entirely—their role might operate at a very extended remove indeed, leaving the freelancer to improvise and determine appropriate paths for him or herself, perhaps ultimately helped along by the direct intervention of none other than Muḥammad himself.

Such freelancing in spiritual development and even in the activation of sainthood was not confined to the Ottoman world, but in many ways can be regarded as a typical feature of Eurasian early modernity. If confessional regimes sought to limit saintly freelancing in much of Europe, in certain places and times, such as the British Isles during and immediately after the Civil War, spiritual freelancers and innovators flourished, deriving their inspiration from personal readings of Scripture and other resources, often staking out a unique and frequently radical political position alongside their theological ones. At the other end of Eurasia, the resurgence of Chan Buddhism in late Ming and early Qing China as examined by Jiang Wu reveals the widespread presence of freelancers, whether monastics or philosophic-minded

[774] Beyzāde, *Risālat,* 123.

members of the scholarly classes, drawing upon textual compilations from centuries past, often cobbling together a dharma transmission almost as an afterthought. If textual authority was rarely the only point of purchase—in the Chan case, many a self-taught and self-enlightened monk or scholar still sought out proper dharma transmission, for instance—it was often the primary reference point, the individual adept fashioning his or her self-image and authority from a close and often creative reading of source texts.[775] What brings these various contexts together seems to be the abundance of texts and of high-functioning literacy, relative to the late medieval period, on the one hand, alongside the frequent break-down or at least serious modification of the political and social structures and hierarchies that had marked the sixteenth century in much of Eurasia. The so-called 'crisis of the seventeenth century,' however we are to explain, if at all, its simultaneity across so much of Eurasia, did not so much undermine traditional bodies of knowledge and cultural resource as it shook their contents up and drove their redistribution and re-interpretation in creative and far-reaching ways.

What sort of profile this re-distribution might take could vary immensely: both ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī and his Kāḍīzādeli and Kāḍīzādeli-adjacent opponents implicitly and explicitly drew upon texts in a way that largely dispensed with extra-textual and extra-personal authority, even if they rooted the rationale of textually-operative personal authority in radically different interpretations. The genealogical routes and structural institutions that had dominated, either in direct formation or in reactive ways, the sixteenth century were of far less concern in this new context. Far more apropos was the very polemical situation itself, and the fact that while members of the elite were involved, the real struggle was at the ground level of mosque, madrasa, neighborhood, and shrine, among relatively ordinary people, ʿulama but also non-

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[775] Jiang Wu, *Enlightenment in Dispute: The Reinvention of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-Century China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), esp. 47-82.

learned, non-elite Muslims invested in the issues at hand. In such a setting both textualization, an inherently portable and flexible technology, and the cultivation of a wide and geographically dispersed public makes perfect strategic sense. And so, ironically, even as al-Nābulusī argued against the Kāḍīzādeli denigration of saintly authority, and stressed the importance of the personal, physical presence and guidance of the saints apart from the use of any text at all, the great shaykh tended to end up replicating many aspects of their practice and implicit theory of textuality, deployed under the aegis of individual scholars' authority, often apart from any institutional basis (which in the Kāḍīzādelis' case would have been both madrasas and Halvetī tekkes). Al-Nābulusī recognized that restricting knowledge and only cultivating close disciples would cede far too much ground to the enemies of the friends of God. His approach employed some of the same technical apparatus and even presuppositions as his opponents, but ultimately to very, very different ends.

iv. Conclusions: putting al-Nābulusī and his milieu in a global frame:

In 1664, around the time that a young ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī was launching his public career in earnest, defending his spontaneous poetic composition and imbuing and commenting upon works of Akbarian theology, another claimant to sanctity in another part of the wide early modern Mediterranean world, Cecilia Ferrazzi of Venice, was being brought before the Roman Inquisition on charges of 'pretense to sanctity.'[776] Her defense consisted in no small part of an autobiographical account which she had transcribed and inserted into the records of the trial (an unsuccessful gambit, as it turned out), an account in which she tacitly argues for her own

[776] On such charges and the people against whom they were made, see Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Aspiring Saints: Pretense of Holiness, Inquisition, and Gender in the Republic of Venice, 1618-1750: Pretense of Holiness, Inquisition and Gender in the Republic of Venice, 1618-1750* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

sanctity but without pushing herself quite over the line into a full-blown claim to sainthood, even if that is what she herself believed.[777] There is much in the repertoire and self-presentation of Ferrazzi, and of others like her in early modern Western and Central Europe, that resembles what we have seen of al-Nābulusī, including a decidedly freelance approach to sainthood and piety, made possible by analogous social and political developments and expectations. But unlike the Ottoman context which allowed ʿAbd al-Ghanī's project of sainthood, like that of so many before him, to flourish, Ferrazzi was confronted with opposing social and institutional stances, most importantly that of the Roman Inquisition, which saw the unrestricted practice of sainthood on the part of anyone, but especially non-elite, non-cleric, non-monastic individuals, as dangerous and subject to punitive action. And while controls on expressions of sainthood became particularly institutionalized in the Catholic world, similar situations prevailed in Protestant lands, from the execution of recalcitrant Catholics in a Protestantizing England (men and women quickly venerated as martyrs by the Catholic faithful) to attempts in the same realm to suppress and control the surges of prophetic and ecstatic people and communities represented by various Dissenting groups such as the Quakers or the Fifth Monarchists, with parallels to the English situation throughout Western and Central Europe (and, on a smaller scale, in the Euro-American fringes of the Americas).

While it is doubtful that the political and social lineaments of the Ottoman polity could have ever fully lent themselves to the sort of thorough and pervasive surveillance and disciplining methodology of the Inquisition or its cognates elsewhere in Latinate and post-Latinate Christendom, there clearly were groups and individuals in the Ottoman world, from the seventeenth century forward, for whom such powers and structures would have been desirable,

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[777] For her life and defense see Cecilia Ferrazzi, *Autobiography of an Aspiring Saint*, introd. and trans. by Anne Jacobson Schutte (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

and who from time to time were able to wield punitive power against claimants to sanctity. And while in hindsight it seems unlikely that confessionalization or puritanism could have every come to dominate Ottoman society, the eventual subsidizing of those trends did not appear inevitable to people at the time, whether for, against, or somewhere in between. Few people did as much to change the cultural and religious dynamics of the empire as al-Nābulusī—his life-long work and articulation of a radical and persuasive counter-vision, a counter-vision that did not merely react to the campaigns of the 'zealots' but was an active and vital work of synthesis and creative cultural production, played an outsized role in the eventual outcome. The ensuing cultural and religious synthesis that al-Nābulusī and his followers and imitators in the years and decades to come worked out has tended to become obscured due to the very different trajectories of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, centuries in which new and often exogenous forces would come to bear on Ottoman Islam and Islam in the various successor states to the empire.

The creativity that al-Nābulusī displayed was possible in no small part because of the political transformations—to use the most neutral term possible—that the empire had undergone in the decades before the great shaykh's birth, and which were still unfolding throughout his lifetime. The multifaceted political decentering of the empire was crucial in making space available for a shaykh like al-Nābulusī, whose patronage and support by members of the 'askêrî class was crucial, while the fact that Ottoman sultans, with sporadic exceptions, no longer laid claim to saintly authority in the way those of the sixteenth century had meant that one of the key sites of struggle and self-representation that so marked the first half of this study was no longer operative. Challenges to saintly authority came from actors of much greater social and political modesty, even if they occasionally had the sultan's ear. But even when they did, the political decentralization of the period meant that no single actor—not even the sultan—could long

dominate or monopolize the scene, as it were. Rather, an expansive public, including but not limited to holders of formal political power, was the real formula for success, something that al-Nābulusī and some of his contemporaries realized at least implicitly. Finally, as others have noted, the political decentralization of the empire somewhat paradoxically went hand-in-hand with increased cultural flow and shared participation, to the point that the eighteenth century sees what can reasonably be called a common Ottoman culture. Al-Nābulusī's expansive network of contacts and long-distance disciples, his defense and selective embrace of the repertoires of Rūmī *ṭarīqas*, his sense of an empire-wide struggle with puritanism, and his interactions with Rūmī saints all reflect this reality, and should be seen as components in that reality's realization. It was individuals like al-Nābulusī through whom discourses and practices of sainthood circulated and were comprehended across the empire, a circulation that we will see in further detail from more geographical perspectives in the following chapter.

Chapter VII

The Ocean of Sanctity is Boundless: Ṭaha al-Kurdī and Lineaments of Ottoman Sainthood Between Urban and Rural, Arabic and Kurdish

i. Ṭaha al-Kurdī and his milieu introduced:

The itinerant Kurdish shaykh Ṭaha al-Kurdī (1723—c. 1790) was winding north along the long arc of the mountains that limn the Jāzira, staying well within the shelter of the ranges and valleys, the open plains to the south best avoided for as long as possible, too exposed and insecure, the haunt of Türkomen and Yazīdī bandits. He was on the long way back, after an extended stay in his homeland, to Damascus, the city where he had settled years before in order to follow in the footsteps of his shaykh, Dervish Muṣṭafā. One of the greatest of the saints—by Ṭaha's estimation at least—of these Kurdish lands or of anywhere, he was, Ṭaha wrote, a 'master of incredible *karāmāt*, the like of which would not be exceeded in this age.'[778] Now, having earlier met with some of the semi-autonomous local rulers whose little realms perched along the edge of the vast mountain ranges running down from the Caucasus far in the north, Ṭaha turned up into the hills bound for the town of Zakho, where he would meet back up with the caravan of ʿAlī Agha, the *ketkhudā* of the *amīr* of Akra with whom Ṭaha had been journeying, but who had turned aside from the main route to visit the town of 'Amadiya and its *amīr* further north. Winding northwest from Akra,

> we came to another village, and here there was a man from among the great pious ones of that region (*al-aqlīm*). His house was outside the village, well-known to elite and common alike. ʿAlī Aghā's companion stopped there, and we were all treated hospitability together. He quickly set food before us and we breakfasted with him, were blessed by him, and drank coffee. Then he

[778] Ṭaha ibn Yaḥyá al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat al-shaykh Ṭāhā ibn Yaḥyá al-Kurdī*, 34.

> recounted to us the story of his going on the *ḥajj*, mentioning that he met with my shaykh, Shaykh Muṣṭafā, in Syria, and praised him. When I heard that from him, I said to him: 'That's my shaykh and master! God unite us with him!' And so great intimacy, love, and joy arose between us. Then he said to ʿAlī Agha's companion: 'Recite this verse—God willing, you will be returned safely by its *baraka*. This is soundly tried, no doubt in it. It is His words, in Sūrat al-Qaṣāṣ, *Verily, he who made the Qur'an incumbent upon you He will return you to a place of return. Say: my Lord knows who goes with guidance and who is in clear error*.' We shook hands and bid farewell to him and his sons. We rode and traveled the rest of that day, until we reached a village perched below the summit of a great mountain, and we stopped here at a spring of water on one side of the village. We spent the night here until the sunrise, when we breakfasted and gave provision to the animals.[779]

This little encounter between Ṭaha and an unnamed pious elder in an equally anonymous village (Ṭaha would hardly be the first traveler to forget the name of every little village through which he passed) is a world in miniature displaying Ottoman rural culture in the eighteenth century and the far-flung 'economy of sanctity' structured around relationships with the Friends of God, from city to village to nomadic tent, recorded here in Ṭaha's autobiographical *riḥla*. Coffee was here a fact of life, even in a settlement in the distant Kurdish mountains, yet another reminder of the increasing reach of early modern commercial globalization, as well as the victory of coffee and tobacco in the culture wars described in the previous chapter.[780] The hospitality that the village

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[779] Ibid., 105.

[780] The villages of these foothills of the Zagros, in particular the little village of Shūsh, may have been (and remain!) geographically isolated, far from the centers of power, but as Ṭaha's encounters and short biographies underscore, they were not culturally or socially disconnected from the wider Ottoman world; coffee had come to dominate social settings here as much as in Damascus or Istanbul. Muḥammad Amīn ibn Khayr Allāh al-ʿUmarī's (d. 1788) description of another saintly man from this area, Shaykh Yunus al-Shūshawī, in his genre-bending work *Manhal al-awliyā',* provides a good precise of the cultural interchange that took place in these foothills: after seeking ʿilm, then *taṣawwuf*, al-ʿUmarī writes, the shaykh settled in his native village, where 'God poured upon him good,' and he was able to treat many to aid and charity—travelers, those in want, and the general poor. Al-ʿUmarī met him several times, including once at a spring outside of Mosul that people liked to visit in the summer time to bathe in for its healing properties. They there had a discussion on theology and the doctrine of oneness of being. He would send al-ʿUmarī greetings from his village through people passing by (people such as Ṭaha, perhaps!); his brother ʿAbdallāh carried on his legacy after Yūnus' death. Muḥammad Amīn ibn Khayr Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Manhal al-awliyā' wa-mashrab al-aṣfiyā' min sādāt al-Mawṣil al-ḥudabā'* (Mosul: Maṭba'at al-Jumhūrīyah, 1967/8), 211-213. For the ʿUmarī family and the context of early modern Mosul during our period and beyond, see the excellent Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial*

elder shows his guests gives way to the intimacy of discovering a mutual connection with a living saint, Ṭaha's beloved Shaykh Muṣṭafá—whom the elder encounter while on the *ḥajj*, another reminder of the degrees of interconnectedness that might obtain even in such out of the way places, the village elder, the saint, and the perambulating Kurdish shaykh bound up with places and patterns of movement and consumption and identity that spanned the Ottoman world, and that were intimately interwoven with sainthood.[781] Ṭaha responded to the discovery of this mutual saintly connection with joy, and reproduced his response for the readers of his *riḥla* from which I have extracted it, but one instance of the expansive performance of emotion and subjectivity on the part of Ṭaha—such a performance of emotion and subjectivity yet another piece of the wider story of the eighteenth century.[782] As we turn back in earnest to the intersection of sainthood, rurality, and Ottomanness, this little story can serve to orient us towards realities that were in some ways quite old but in other ways reflective of and constitutive of the transformations that the Ottoman world as a whole, rural and urban, would undergo in the course of the eighteenth century. It also returns us to the more particular question of Kurdishness

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Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), the most valuable to date scholarly study of this portion of the empire, so often otherwise overlooked.

[781] To continue with Shaykh Yūnus above, underlining these interconnectivities and routes: on his visit to Shūsh, Ṭaha met with Shaykh Yunus' saintly brother ʿAbdallāh (whom he notes was at the time of writing departed and buried in Mecca). Some time afterwards Shaykh ʿAbdallāh himself passed through Damascus where he met with Ṭaha and gave him another rosary; Ṭaha retained it to the time of his writing this text and treasured it, he writes. His first encounter reveals many of the facets of sainthood we will see in what follows: 'When my sight fell upon him, meaning ʿAbdallāh, when I entered al-Shūsh, this lover Ṭaha cast himself from his horse and hasted to kiss his hand, and it was said to me, 'This preacher Shaykh ʿAbdallāh is the brother of Shaykh Yūnus.' Holiness (*al-ṣalāḥ*) shone upon his face…. One who sees him remembers God in the vision of him, as it occurs in the accounts of the saints: if one sees them one remembers God due to their hearts being overflowing with the light of the presence of God.' The shaykh also gave Ṭaha a 'book on *tawḥīd*,' which the examined together and which Ṭaha kept firmly in his possession. al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 102.

[782] On the question of affectivity and other 'emotions' in the early modern Islamicate context, the chapters and especially introduction of the following has proven invaluable, particularly given the challenges, noted previously in this study, of drawing upon 'history of emotions' approaches in our context: *Affect, Emotion, and Subjectivity in Early Modern Muslim Empires: New Studies in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Art and Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

in the Ottoman world, in particular whether we may productively and accurately speak of a Kurdish tendency or style of sainthood, an issue that we will attempt to more definitely resolve in the following pages.[783]

While our previous extended foray into rural sainthood in the context of the sixteenth century drew primarily upon material from *ṭabaqāt* and *manāqib*/*menāḳıb*, I have built the final chapter of our story of Ottoman sainthood around and out of the life of this Kurdish shaykh (and sometime-saint) Ṭaha al-Kurdī, focusing especially, but not exclusively, upon formations of rural sainthood in the eighteenth century, using his autobiographical *riḥla* as my primary source. His natal village, Balisan, nestled within a valley of the Zagros where the hills begin to rise into higher and higher peaks, was in his day and in ours as obscure as any other little mountain village, one that would only come to figure into world history far more recently and tragically, as the site, in 1987, of a deadly chemical weapons attack during Saddam Hussayn's long war with

[783] 'Kurdishness,' as noted in chapter three, is of course a fraught question in the contemporary world; our purpose here as in chapter three is simply to evaluate to what extent self-identified Kurds thought of their selves in relation to a Kurdish identity, if at all, and, to a lesser extent here, what others thought of such an identity or otherwise contributed to its articulation. The reader may be left to draw conclusions as to implications for present-day debates and iterations of identity and belonging. The issue of Kurdish identity has been extensively discussed in the literature, though almost entirely from the perspective of the modern period (see chapter three for the handful of relevant studies of pre-1800 Kurds). On the question of early modern Kurdishness, David McDowall's statement is broadly representative of one major thread of thought: that 'there is virtually no evidence that any Kurds thought in terms of a whole Kurdish people until the later years of the nineteenth century,' which is probably accurate in the sense that nothing like a 'national consciousness' existed among the early modern Kurds (which would be true of almost any ethnic group before the 1800s), but does not seem to be true in that a sense of group identity that was deployable politically does seem to have existed. See below Ṭaha's discussion of the struggle for the body of Mullah Ḥasan al-Bānī al-Kurdī for the sort of deployable political identity I have in mind. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 1. For additional approachs to the issue of 'Kurdishness' in the premodern world, see, for a counter appraisal to that of McDowall on the origins of Kurdish 'national' identity, Martin van Bruinessen, 'Ehmedî Xanî's Mem û Zîn and Its Role in the Emergence of Kurdish National Awareness,' in *Essays on the Origins of Kurdish Nationalism,* ed. Abbas Vali (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2003), 40-57; while Abbas Vali's 'Genealogies of the Kurds: Constructions of Nation and National Identity in Kurdish Historical Writing,' in Vali, *Origins*, 70-105, argues for a more nuanced approach and one which avoids the reification of identity in both the past and present; see also Hakan Özoğlu, 'Politics of Memory: Kurdish Ethnic Identity and the Role of Collective Forgetting,' in *The Kurdish Question Revisited*, ed. by Gareth R. V Stansfield and Mohammed Shareef (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

the Kurds, at the opening of the deadly Anfāl campaign.[784] In Ṭaha's time however the Balisan valley was of little interest to anyone outside the mountains, existing quietly (most of the time at least) alongside the nearby town of Koy Sanjaq as part of the long arc Kurdish communities stretching along the mountainous core from Armenia south that marked the Ottoman borderlands with the Iranian world. That is not to say that the Kurdish highlands somehow sat timeless outside of history, of course. In the eighteenth century the wider Kurdish lands of which Balisan was a part were, not unlike previous centuries, perched at the intersection of various routes of political power, cultural and social spheres, and economic and other connections, such that different parts of the Kurdish world possessing very different and dynamic political profiles. Many would have looked similar to the sixteenth century world of Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo al-Kurdī: Kurdish polities maintained different degrees of semi-autonomy and loyalty, sometimes affiliating with the Ottomans, sometimes with the Safavids.[785] Their mountain villages were often home to other religious communities, such as those of the Church of the East, which had become concentrated in several regions within the Kurdish arc, as well as Kurdish-speaking

[784] For this now largely forgotten (outside of southern Kurdistan at least) chemical weapons assault on Balisan and a neighboring village, see the detailed multi-media documentation by the Kurdistan Memory Programme, 'Chemical Apocalypse in Balisan Valley,' which includes several interviews with survivors. the bombing is mentioned briefly in McDowall, *Modern History*, 353.

[785] For a workable, if limited, political and military historical overview of Kurdish polities and communities during the early modern period, see McDowall, *Modern History,* 25-37. The dynamics of 'decentralization' and the ways in which these polities, under the rule of local 'dynasties,' could be integrated into the larger Ottoman project are succinctly described in a passage from Khoury in regard to Mosul, not itself a Kurdish principality but sharing many characterstics with the more montane Kurdish polities: 'One particular Mosuli family proved a dependable contractor for the recruitment and provisioning of armed forces on the eastern frontier. The head of the Jalili family, Ismāʿīl Pasha, and his son and succesor Hussein Pasha, successfully defended the eastern frontier against the forces of the Safavids and those of Nadir Shāh in the first half of the century. The mobilization of human and material resources to defend the Ottoman frontier helped integrate, albeit quite tenuously, large sectors of the rural and urban population into the Ottoman project. The expansion of the tax farming market in the first half of the 18th century created wider support for the state among sectors of Mosuli urban society.' Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, 18-19.

Jews, and various iterations of Islam and Islamic-adjacent traditions.[786] And just as in Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo's time and before, Kurds ranged far and wide from their mountains, within and without the Ottoman realms, travels which often meant that even obscure places like Balisan would have connections to the wider world without.[787]

Like his natal village, by most of the metrics of his time Ṭaha was not an especially important person, being possessed of no great status, wealth, or fame. While he was evidently known to the prominent biographer al-Murādī through mutual friends, and knew al-Murādī when the scholar was a young man, Ṭaha was not included in the Damascene *ʿālim's ṭabaqāt* compilation, though this is most likely simply because Ṭaha and al-Murādī died around the same time, al-Murādī generally only including deceased persons in his compilation. Beyond traces he left through manuscript production as a copyist and a *qaṣīda* in praise of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, our only record of Ṭaha's life comes from his autobiographical *Riḥla*, which survives in a handful of copies (meaning it did attract some attention, at least), and which will be the main source and focus of this chapter.[788] What follows here will be the longest to date scholarly engagement with Ṭaha's life, which has so far consisted of a handful of articles, beyond which he remains unknown to wider Ottoman historiography.[789]

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[786] Most notably the Yazīdīs and the Ahl-i Ḥaqq (and the closely related Kākā'ī), each with a relationship to both 'Islamicness' and 'Kurdishness' that is decidedly complex and often ambiguous.

[787] In addition to the examples that will follow here, see instances of far-flung Kurdish scholars in El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History,* 25; 46-47; 49-50 (for a scholar whose texts traveled much further than he did); 51 (for one of the most famous Kurdish scholars of the period, al-Kūrānī), etc.

[788] For his *qaṣīda* attached to the end of a copy of al-Nābulusī's *al-Ḥaqīqa wa-al-majāz fī riḥlat bilād al-Shām wa-Miṣr wa-al-Ḥijāz*, see Vollers 745, University Library of Leipzig, ff. 473r-473v; an example of his copyist work can be see in Vollers 853–02, University Library of Leipzig, a copy of Muḥammad Ḥijāzī's sufi treatise *Shaqq al-juyūb ʿan asrār maʿānī al-ghuyūb wa-tajallī al-maḥbūb fī ufuq samāʿ al-qulūb*.

[789] To date, Ṭaha has been treated in an introductory fashion by Karl K. Barbir (who hopes, per a personal communication, to produce further work using his writings, with a focus on the Damascus milieu), and an article by Ralph Elger that tries to situate Ṭaha's *riḥla* within a literary context and which to its credit takes

In the course of his travels and migration, Ṭaha's life unfolded along three geographic axes: first, his native Kurdish lands,[790] where he was born, underwent his formative education, his foundational encounter with 'his' saint, and to which he would return for a while. Second, his travels within the Ottoman Empire (like the majority of early modern Ottoman travelers, regardless of specific geographic origin, Ṭaha stayed within the bounds of the Well-Protected Domains) provided another site of orientation and structure for his *riḥla* narrative, while, third, his adopted home of Damascus was the final defining place in his self-identity and self-narrative. Ṭaha's narrative is at root structured by the distance—spatial and otherwise—between his natal rural land and his adopted urban home, a distance that provided much of his creative drive and his intense subjectivity, as he sought to explain to the reader, and, perhaps also to himself his own identity as a Kurd and as a Damascene (with his Ottomanness a third factor if one less obviously articulated by Ṭaha), a dual identity that was expressed, in no small part, through his affiliation to Kurdish and Syrian saints both. Much as his village would end up, at the end of the twentieth century, becoming deeply and terribly integrated into larger patterns and stories of world history—from the horrors of industrialized warfare to the complexities of nation-formation to the geopolitics of the late Cold War world—Ṭaha's life intersected with many of the transformations and developments of not just the Ottoman Empire but of the late early modern world. From the omnipresence of coffee in social settings, to the after-effects of the wars with Nadīr Shāh, to the dynamics of decentralization and attempted Ottoman recovery, Ṭaha's

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seriously the autobiographical project in which Ṭaha was engaged. Karl K. Barbir, 'The Formation of an Eighteenth Century Sufi: Taha al-Kurdi (1723-1800),' in *Revue d'histoire maghrébine*, 17/59/60 (1990), 41-47; Ralf Elger, "Ṭāhā Al-Kurdī (1136/1723–1214/1800) between Sufi Adab and Literary Adab,' in *Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi Adab,* ed. by Francesco Chiabotti et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

[790] Because the term 'Kurdistan' *usually* had a particular meaning in the Ottoman context, and did not exactly overlap with what is today generally regarded as Kurdistan, in what follows I will use the term 'Kurdistan' sparingly, alternating with the more capacious and neutral 'Kurdish lands' and variations thereon (translating the common term in our sources *balad/bilād al-Akrād*).

accounts weave through many areas of historiographic enquiry, only some of which can occupy us here. And while Ṭaha's *riḥla* is indeed many things—an autobiography, a travel narrative, a *diwān* of his chronographic poetry, an apologetic for Kurdish distinctiveness—the presence of saints and multiple iterations of sainthood are abiding, structuring elements. This chapter will proceed much as Ṭaha proceeded in his *riḥla*, exploring chronologically major points in Ṭaha's life in more contextual depth, beginning with a look at the possible antecedents and models for his autobiographic *riḥla*, and then proceeding to Ṭaha's rendering of his childhood and first important saintly encounter. This encounter, supplemented by further hagiographic and other sorts of accounts in the *riḥla*, as well as a handful of other sources apart from Ṭaha, will allow us to return to the question of a distinctive Kurdish style of sainthood while also examining other saintly contexts with which he was involved. Remaining in Kurdistan, we will consider Ṭaha's return to the Kurdish borderlands and his self-described reception as a saint there, a reception that he did not receive in Damascus, and what we can descry of economies and dialects of sanctity across the Kurdish lands. Finally, we will travel with Ṭaha on his journeys, highlighting his encounters with sanctity in more devotional forms as well as the matter of his Ottomanness, concluding his story by placing it in an empire-wide frame.

Before setting out with Ṭaha further on his *riḥla* we ought to consider further the generic context of this work, given how central my use of it will be for this chapter. As described in the previous chapters and as is now widely recognized by scholars of Ottoman cultural history, the seventeenth into eighteenth centuries saw simultaneous expansions in 'nouveau literacy,' typified by Dana Sajdi's barber of Damascus, and heightened public expression of subjectivity and of the autobiographical, up and down the social ladder, in many generic contexts and for many social functions, as first explored in the context of Cemal Kafadar's now well-known

dervish diarist.[791] Thanks in part to the cumulative effects of both earlier decentralization[792] and the subsequent relative recovery—political and economic—and even flourishing of the empire well into the mid-eighteenth century, the eighteenth century as a whole (and not just a narrow 'Tulip Age' subset) saw a flourishing of innovative cultural forms and institutions as well as the abundant 'remixing' of established generic categories, trends which continued even after the relative vitality of the century's first half turned south.[793] From the development of devotional forms like the *hilye* and the 'hadith-*tuğra,'* to an abundance of public parks and recreational spaces, to new forms of poetry and literature, this flourishing was manifest at both elite and ordinary levels across the empire.[794] In keeping with these overall trends, Ṭaha's *riḥla* is really a

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[791] Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2013), 43-76; Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature," *Studia Islamica*, no. 69 (January 1, 1989): 121–50.

[792] 'More often than not, rather than destroying the empire's political and sociocultural framework, localism made use of it. This was especially true in times of external pressures. Throughout the eighteenth century, Muslim powerholders did not pursue a policy of independence or allegiance to non-Ottoman powers.' Christopher K. Neumann, 'Political and diplomatic developments,' in *The Cambridge History of Turkey Volume Three*, ed. Kate Fleet, Suraiya N. Faroqhi, and Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 56.

[793] A few examples for the political and economic trends of this period: on long durée economic and political trends in the Arab provinces, see in general Bruce Alan Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600-1750* (New York: New York University Press, 1988) and Karl K. Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708-1758* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980). For monetary history evidence of economic and political recovery to the mid-18th century, see Pamuk Şevket, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), esp. 166: 'Linkages between the money markets of Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt grew stronger during this period… given the reestablishment of the Istanbul based currency in many parts of Syria, especially in the north, as well as the general economic expansion of the 18th century, the economic linkages between Anatolia and Syria must have grown stronger during the 18th century.' For Mosul specifically, an important center for southern Kurdistan, Khoury notes that an increase in military activity—and the money brought by the military—spurred a rise in artisinal production and rural production, from the 1720s on, even as, like much of the rest of the empire, the second half of the century was far more troublesome. Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, 66. On the cultural and political consequences of expanded 'consumption,' besides the previous chapters, see also Ariel Salzmann, 'The age of tulips: confluence and conflict in early modern consumer culture (1550-1730),' in *Consumption studies and the history of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922: an introduction*, ed. Donald Quartaert (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), esp. 84-87.

[794] To give only a few relevant examples, in addition to those that will be treated in this chapter: For an in-depth discussion of the *hilye*, developed in the late 17th century but coming into its own in the 18th, see Christiane Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One: The Prophet Muḥammad in Islamic Texts and Images*

composite work, drawing upon and remixing different genres for his own purposes, with a central autobiographical thrust. While *riḥla*, as we saw in the case of ʿAbd al-Ghanī, is generally translated 'travel narrative,' like much travel literature from across the early modern (and, for that matter, modern) world, the autobiographical component is just as important and visible, if not more so, than the elucidation of places visited and routes followed (and all the explanatory apparatus a given writer might include with such an itinerary).[795] In fact, at times Ṭaha refers to his work, not as a *riḥla*, but as a *tarjuma*, a biographical entry. Ṭaha's personal voice sounds forth in surprising ways: not only does he describe the places he visited, he describes how he *felt* about them, feelings ranging from melancholy at encountering ancient ruins and undecipherable inscriptions to amazement at spectacular natural features. For instance, during his visit to the

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(Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), 285-301; on Aḥmed III's '*hadith-tuğra*,' which would help lead to a veritable explosion in innovative, often devotional, uses of this calligraphic form, see Philippe Bora Keskiner, 'Sultan Ahmed III's *Hadith-Tughra*: Uniting the Word of the Prophet and the Imperial Monogram,' in *Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Yıllığı*, 2 (2013), 111-125; for related instances of calligraphic 'remixing' during the same period, including the spectacular application of earlier calligraphy, originally contained in Topkapı albums, to the walls of the Sinan Ağa Tekke in Sarajevo, see Lâle Uluç, 'The Perusal of the Topkapı Albums: A Story of Connoisseurship,' in *The Diez Albums: Contexts and Contents* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 146-160; on a much larger scale, Ünver Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque: The Architectural Refashioning of Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019) reframes the discourse on Ottoman 'borrowings' and transformations of Western European architectural styles during this period. If dated and often problematic, on Nedîm and poetic transformations still see Kemal Sılay, *Nedim and the Poetics of the Ottoman Court: Medieval Inheritance and the Need for Change* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). On the first Ottoman Turkish printing press, see Yasemin Gencer, 'Ibrāhīm Müteferrika and the Age of the Printed Manuscript,' in Christiane Gruber, ed., *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); and for the 'public library' tradition, again a late 17th century development but which flourished in the 18th, most helpful is İsmail E. Erünsal, *Ottoman Libraries: A Survey of the History, Development and Organization of Ottoman Foundation Libraries* ([Cambridge, Mass.]: The Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures, Harvard University, 2008). See Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008) for discussions of public spaces, parks, fountain construction, and new poetic forms in architectural use, while for a look into new nocturnal sociability—and its discontents—see Avner Wishnitzer, 'Into the Dark: Power, Light, and Nocturnal Life in 18th Century Istanbul', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 46/3 (2014): 513–31.

[795] Others have noted the presence in the Ottoman world of the autobiographical within multiple genres: see for instance the Ottoman Turkish examples—including ostensible travel narratives—gathered by Jan Schmidt in 'Ottoman Autobiographical Texts by Lāmiʿī and Others in The Collection of Turkish Manuscripts at the Leiden University Library,' in *Journal of Turkish Studies* 26/2 (2002), 195-201.

semi-autonomous amīrate of ʿAkra in ʿIraqī Kurdistan, Ṭaha climbed the winding path that led to the citadel perched above the town, and upon reaching the top, Ṭaha describes how wonderful the view was, the world stretching out at his feet as if in miniature, a sublime feeling, which, crucially, Ṭaha wishes to reproduce for his reader, so that the reader, too, might participate in the experience in some way.[796] Iteration of his subjective feelings runs throughout the narrative, a narrative which, among other things, becomes a narrative of Ṭaha's own life, both in its outer aspects and in its inner, subjective aspects (though it is doubtful Ṭaha himself would have articulated things in quite that way). Alongside this autobiographical narration and performance are the aforementioned hagiographic accounts integrated into the narrative flow of the more properly *riḥla* sections, their inclusion due to some personal connection to Ṭaha and, in many cases, their shaping of his life in important ways.[797]

Riḥla as autobiography, or as setting for autobiography, was hardly unprecedented in the Arabic literature of our period. It is doubtful that any author did more to cement the genre of *riḥla* as a pliable and indeed genre-exceeding form of writing as ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, whose various *riḥlas*, as we saw in our discussion of him, are replete with autobiographical and subjective content, marking a restructuring if not outright transformation of a venerable literary genre.[798] And as we saw repeatedly, his travel narratives were frequently structured by saintly encounters, serving as subtle arguments for and means of his own realization of sainthood,

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[796] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 98-101.

[797] This is especially true of the hagiographies of Kurdish shaykhs that he includes near the end of the work, to be discussed below.

[798] Cf. Shirane on the transformations of genre in contemporary Japan: 'Haikai required "newness", but, like kabuki, that novelty lay not so much in the departure from or rejection of the perceived tradition as in the reworking of established practices and conventions, in creating new counterparts to the past. In Edo culture the ability to create the new out of the old was generally a more highly regarded form of newness than the ability to be unique or individual.' Shirane, *Landscape*, 5.

reproducing for a reading public his insertion in a vast and lively world of holy people and places. Ṭaha would have almost certainly had access to at least some of al-Nābulusī's *riḥla*s, which, despite their length and relative novelty in terms of genre, were quite popular, obtaining, as noted in the last chapter, a veritable semi-canonical status. But ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī was not the only author making use of the *riḥla* genre for his own particular purposes, as our brief encounter with Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī's entries in the history of such literature demonstrates.[799] Among the various other possible models or inspirations for Ṭaha's production might have been the spectacular—and thus far understudied—*riḥla* of one Muṣṭafā al-Laṭīfī, which is described in an effusive entry by Ṭaha's friend al-Murādī:

> Muṣṭafā al-Laṭīfī ibn Ḥusayn known as al-Laṭīfī al-Ḥammawī, the shaykh, the knower in God, sound of religion, good, well-known, the master of many travels. He departed his home and entered distant lands, traversing much of the world, meeting with the great from among the worshippers, the ʻulama, the teachers, and the saints. His is the well-known *riḥla* which he wrote, in which he mentions wondrous things which transpired for him and which he saw. He mentions the saints and his encounters with them, as well as other wonderful and marvelous things. He visited Damascus, Aleppo, Rūm, and other places, dwelling in the distant reaches of the earth, roaming its length and breadth. I saw his *riḥla* and read all of it, seeing the mentioning therein of cities and lands which he visited, and the saints and gnostics with whom he met. I gathered from it indications of the elevation of his standing in divine gnosis—all in all, he is from among the great of the gnostic saints and the well-guided imams. The condition of divine overflow and divine dependence predominated in him. His death was in Aleppo the Grey, on Saturday, the 4th of Ramadan, 1123 [October 16th, 1711]. He was buried there, and his tomb is well-known, people visiting it and taking *baraka* from it, God be merciful to him and benefit us with his *baraka*![800]

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[799] *Riḥla* as a genre fits well witihn John Frowe's helpful definition of a 'secondary' genre: '… a "primary" genre is univocal: it speaks in its own "voice," its formal logic is singular; whereas the more complex "secondary" genres are multivocal: their formal logic allows or encourages the incorporation of other forms, other "voices."' John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2015), 43. Travel by its very nature tends to encompass many things and invite the incorporation of many textual voices and styles, from poetry to description to the incorporation of correspondences, recorded conversations, and so on, all suiting the genre to new and creative uses.

[800] Muḥammad Khalīl ibn ʻAlī al-Murādī, *Kitāb Silk al-durar fī aʻyān al-qarn al-thānī ʻashar*, (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Amīrīya al-ʻĀmira, 1874), vol. iv, 189.

Al-Murādī's estimation of this work is a significant indication of its probable intended purpose, given that, unlike Ṭaha's *riḥla*, Muṣṭafā al-Laṭīfī's text has—to modern readers at least—all the marks of imaginative literature, even if it does not explicitly present itself as such.[801] This aspect of imaginativeness, along with the centrality of sainthood and the text's creative, even innovative style, is reminiscent of another saint-centered imaginative work from closer the end of the century, ʿAzīz Efendi's *Mukhayyelāt-i ledün-i lāhī*,[802] which ought to be seen as participating in the same socio-cultural currents as al-Laṭāfī, al-Kurdī, and others.[803] The unique nature of al-Laṭāfī's *riḥla* and its perhaps generic similarity to a work like that of ʿAzīz Efendi's quickly becomes evident as the text unfolds: unlike most Ottoman travelers Muṣṭafā al-Laṭīfī ranges far beyond the bounds of the empire,[804] into quite fabulous territory, encountering marvels, wonders, strange occurrences, and, most importantly, holy people of all sorts, living and departed.[805] As

[801] The question of genre naturally once again presents itself: 'fiction' as such was not a generic category in this world, even if a term like *adab* might encompass some of what would call 'fiction'; the 'fictional' was however very much a category, but with a different sense from our modern usage of (literary or otherwise) 'fiction.' Classifying this text seems to have been of particular trouble for the only modern scholar to have examined it at all, Ralph Elger, 'Narrheiten und Heldentaten. Die merkwurdigen Reisen des Mustafa al-Latifi (1602-1711),' in *Erkundung und Beschreibung der Welt. Zur Poetik der Reise-und Landerberichte*, ed. Xenia v. Ertzdorff and Gerhad Giesemann (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), 267-87.

[802] Written between the 1770s and ʿAzīz Efendi's death (and burial in Berlin where he was on diplomatic mission) in 1797, and printed multiple times in the nineteenth century and since. One example out of the several: ʿAzīz Efendi, *Muhayyelāt-ı ʿAzīz Efendi.* (Istanbul: Izzet Efendi Matbaasĭ, 1874).

[803] Like al-Laṭīfī, ʿAzīz Efendi's corpus remains understudied and under-theorized, its role in Turkish historiography mostly as a forerunner to nineteenth century fictional literature and Westernization. Tietze notes the centrality of 'mysticism' and saints, at least. On ʿAzīz Efendi—who also authored a work of *Vâridat*, which I have not yet however had access to—see Andreas Tietze, 'ʿAlī ʿAzīz Efendi, Giridli,' EI^2; M. Cavid Baysun and Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, 'Aziz Efendi,' *IA*; for a partial translation into English, E. J. Gibb, *The Story of Jewâd*, *a romance by ʿʿAlī ʿAzîz Efendi the Cretan* (Glasgow: Wilson & McCormick, 1884).

[804] Traveling 'south' from Baghdad, for instance, towards Yemen, he visits a village inhabited only by women half the year, but one of the wonders he finds beyond the confines of the empire, the greography growing decidedly fuzzy once he leaves Basra. Muṣṭafá al-Laṭīfī, *Riḥla*, Islamic Manuscripts, Garrett no. 1342Y, Princeton University Rare Books and Special Collections, folios 11a-11b.

[805] For instance, in Jerusalem he encounters Muḥammad al-Qirāmī and al-'Alamī, two of the most important saints of the seventeenth century in that city; in Hama he venerates the tomb of Shaykh ʿAlwān; and much of

al-Murādī's remarks would indicate, it is an auto-hagiography of a sort, though one in which Muṣṭafā al-Laṭīfī gradually ascends to sanctity by means of his encounters with other holy people, and it was evidently successful, especially given that its author's sanctity seems to have largely rested on this 'well known' text. Did Ṭaha know this *riḥla*? While we cannot say for sure, as there is no mention of al-Laṭīfī's book in Ṭaha's *riḥla*, a 'saint, the *quṭb*, the pious Shaykh Muṣṭafā known as al-Laṭīfī' is described, in relation to the Damascene saint ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Simān, known to Ṭaha through ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's son Aḥmad. And while neither Muṣṭafā nor al-Laṭīfī are exactly uncommon monikers, given the rather fabulous nature of the story—in which al-Laṭīfī miraculously dines on Mount Qāf—it seems very likely that Ṭaha had the same saint as al-Murādī's *riḥla*-author in mind.[806] And while such second-hand knowledge by itself need not entail familiarity with al-Laṭīfī's work, the similarity of autobiographical structure, if not so much of tone or precise content, that Ṭaha's *riḥla* shows in relation to that of al-Laṭīfī makes it more likely than not that the Kurdish shaykh had encountered this curious travelogue. Regardless of textual relation, Muṣṭafā al-Laṭīfī's work is another good example of the creative possibilities the genre of *riḥla* contained, possibilities which Ṭaha al-Kurdī would pursue in his own, less fantastic, fashion.

Closer in time and space to Ṭaha's own life, if more distant in terms of social circles, was the 'Irāqī scholar and littérateur ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī al-Baghdadī (d. 1761), briefly encountered in chapter one due to his naming a son after ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī. Like so

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the opening pages of his tale deal with his travails in reaching the shrine of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, as he describes himself following the army of Murād IV on his reconquest of the city, and eventually assisting in clearing out of the shrine the bodies of dead Persian soldiers. He also meets rather more obscure saints, such as ʿAbd al-Karim al-Zaʿtarī, so known for gathering thyme (*zaʿtar*), dates, vermicelli, raisins, pistachios, almonds, hazelnuts, and roasted chickpeas, putting them in his pocket, then giving them out in handfuls to people in trouble or in need for *baraka*. Muṣṭafá al-Laṭīfī, *Riḥla*, 3a, 3b-4a, 5b, 6a-8a.

[806] al-Kurdī, *Riḥla*, 146-147.

many of the authors considered here a largely neglected[807] but fascinating and versatile Ottoman author, his autobiography in the form of a *riḥla*, titled *al-Nafḥa al-miskīya fī al-riḥla al-Makkīya,* besides covering some of the same literal ground as Ṭaha (points of contact to which we will have occasional recourse further along) and engaging in many textual 'reproductions' of encounters with holy places and people, is also replete with textual 'performances' of subjectivity, such as the following description of his approach to Tabūk, the gateway to the Ḥijāz: 'And among the things that befell me… were that I was taken with sadness, disquiet, fear, alarm, and hurt, with much weeping, lamentation, and crying, this state not ceasing to affect me at every hour, my eyes not being dry from weeping nor my heart cooled from the heat of separation and fear,' all out of apprehension at finally meeting his beloved Prophet upon arrival in Medina.[808] He goes on, asking himself,

[807] With the exception of Hala Fattah, 'Representations of Self and the Other in Two Iraqi Travelogues of the Ottoman Period,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30, no. 1 (February 1998), 55-62, which includes a discussion of other aspects of al-Suwaydī's life and career, including his role in the conflict between Nādir Shāh and the Ottomans and Nādir's attempts at a reconciliation of sorts. Fattah unfortunately misinterprets al-Suwaydī as a sort of proto-Salafī based on al-Suwaydī's critiques of the ʿulama of Damascus and of some claimants to sainthood in that city—critiques which however serve a very different purpose (as Fattah in fact notes) from those of contemporary puritans or later Salafīs. For instance, in the vicinity of Mardin, he passed by the shrine of one Dede Qarkhīn, almost certainly the Bektāşī saint Dede Karkğın (also known as Dede Gargın), al-Suwaydī describing the place as 'the *mashhad* of a saint from among the saints of God,' and pleasantly situated in general. 'Abdallāh ibn Ḥusayn al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha al-miskiya fi al-rihla al-Makkiya,* ed. by'Ali 'Umar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafah al-Diniyah, 2009), 116. In Aleppo, he relates how 'I met with the snatched-away *majdhūb* shaykh ʿAlī al-Shātīla, and kissed his hand. The people claim for him many manifest miracles—we are benefited by God through him! I also met Amīr Muḥammad al-Durānī, who is also from among the *majādhīb*, except that he prays, fasts, and studies ʿilm. While I was in Mosul he studied [al-Zarnūjī's famous treatise] *Taʿlīm al-mutaʿallim* under me, in the year 1127/1715. At that time was called *al-Akh al-ʿAzīz* due to how much these words were upon his tongue, speaking them to everyone who spoke to him. There was at that time a type of *jadhb* in him (*nūʿan jadhb*[an]), and the people of Mosul believed in him. As of today he has been in Aleppo sixteen years, the people of the city thinking well of him, God benefit us by him, amen.' Ibid., 171. And finally, at the *maqām* of Ibrāhīm in Aleppo, he relates how 'it has a scent purer than musk, such that a person might frighten himself out of the strenth of the scent. I was blessed by it, and took from its soil and rubbed my face, beard, and body with it—praise be to God for that!' Ibid., 206.

[808] Ibid., 303. Elsewhere al-Suwaydī describes his emotional reaction to hearing a moving *qaṣīda*, which triggered memory of distant 'beloveds': 'My eyes overflowed with tears, my ardent desire was stirred up, and my sorrow compounded…' al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafhah,* 156.

> how shall I face the Messenger of God, peace and blessing be upon him, I being full of great sin, excessively deficient, engrossed in pleasure, drowning in a sea of heedlessness, without interest in obedience, no passion for acts of worship…? This occurrence (*wārid*) did not cease being with me nor separate from me. O God, I ask that He put me among the accepted and those found favor with, not among the turned away, the interdicted, and that He benefit me with the visitation of him, peace and blessing be upon him, and that He gather me under his banner, amen.[809]

On hearing that the next day they would be in Medina, al-Suwaydī's apprehension and sorrow only increased, coming to a crescendo the next day when actually came to Medina. Upon seeing the outlines of the city, he jumped down from his camel and continued on foot. When he finally entered the Prophet's Mosque, he was overwhelmed with emotion, in particular his fear that when he says 'Peace be upon you!' he will be answered with a negative, though in the end, though what al-Suwaydī suggests is divine—or Prophetic—intervention, his fears and sadness were put to rest and his experience was immensely positive.[810]

Such appraisals and textual reproductions of inner states, among other features, provide obvious parallels with Ṭaha's work, even as many of al-Suwaydī's specific narrative concerns—describing his up from poverty career as a scholar, lambasting the sadly lacking 'ulama of Damascus, or detailing his various particular literary pursuits (he was well known for his mastery of the *maqām* genre, for instance)—would have been more distant from our Kurdish shaykh.[811] We could continue to elaborate examples from the Ottoman eastern frontier, such as the also 'Iraqī turned Safavid Shī'ī scholar Niʿmatallāh al-Jazā'irī (d. 1701) who penned a *riḥla*-as-

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[809] al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 303-305.

[810] Ibid., 314.

[811] For an edition al-Suwaydī's *maqāmāt*, see 'Abdallāh ibn Ḥusayn al-Suwaydī, *Kitāb Maqāmat al-amthāl al-sāʾira* (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Nīl, 1906); see also al-Suwaydī's slyly humorous description of his 'ghostwriting' a mildly erotic *maqāma* on behalf of one Sayyīd Aḥmad in his pursuit of a handsome beloved youth named Muḥammad: al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 344-345; for an example of al-Suwaydī's (still pretty funny) jokes, see ibid., 147.

autobiography that, unlike the previous instances, narrates his life in large part through the instrument of humor, a different but parallel sort of subjectivity.[812] That Ṭaha al-Kurdī, al-Suwaydī al-Baghdadī, and Niʿmatallāh al-Jazāʾirī all came from the eastern borderlands of the Ottoman world is not, I think, coincidental, as I will argue further along.[813] Yet whether or not we can safely speak of a relationship with the borderlands (east and west) as precipitating a particular approach to autobiographical self-understanding and textualization, it is clear that Ṭaha would have found more than a few authorizing and mimetically capable examples of the *riḥla* genre turned to distinctively personal autobiographical and hagiographic uses. 'Influence' is, as is often the case, the wrong word here: while these other texts, in particular the prestigious, and well-known, *riḥla*s of ʿAbd al-Ghanī may well have provided models to Ṭaha, more importantly they provided the authorizing sense that such a project could be done and was socially acceptable and socially legible.

Concerns of audience were prominent in Ṭaha's mind particularly in relating matters of his birth and childhood. In describing his original impetus for writing his self-*tarjuma*, Ṭaha relates a request, via mutual friend, from the Hanafī mufti of Damascus, Khalīl Abū al-ʿAṭā al-Murādī Efendi, for a description of his family background, probably for eventual inclusion in his *ṭabaqāt*.[814] Ṭaha's answer, which makes up the first part of his *riḥla*, sets up an image of himself

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[812] See the introduction and translation of this marvelous little text by Devin Stewart, 'The Humor of the Scholars: The Autobiography of Niʿ Mat Allāh al-Jazāʾirī (d. 1112/1701),' *Iranian Studies* 22, no. 4 (1989): 47–81. Al-Suwaydī and Ṭaha both employ humor at times, though not as pervasively as Niʿmatallāh.

[813] If we add someone like ʿAzīz Efendi—diplomat to the Prussian lands, among other interactions with Central and Western Europe—into the mix, the role of borderland, frontier, and the like becomes even more evident, and can be separated out from simplistic explanations of 'influence.'

[814] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 41. Here as elsewhere I find Ṭaha's self-reporting quite believable: it is perfectly reasonable to imagine that al-Murādī would have sought out at a remove information about people for inclusion in his biographical compilation work, probably often by means of commissioning 'researchers' such as he and Ṭaha's mutual friend, the (rather less prestigious) Sha'fiī mufti Muḥammad al-Ghazzī.

and his family primarily constituted by sanctity, sanctity operative in both his male and, especially, female family members. He mentions briefly that his paternal grandfather, a tribal amir (*amīr al-ʻashīra*) named Sulaymān, was famous 'in the lands of the Kurds with the fame of ʿAntar,' the legendary pre-Islamic Arab warrior, but otherwise the family members whom he includes are remarkable for their piety, personal holiness, or their encounters with holy people (more interesting to Ṭaha about his grandfather is that Amīr Sulaymān's pious and holy mother Khadīja died in Damascus while on the *ḥajj* and was buried next to a Kurdish saint).[815]

In the case of his parents and his own coming into existence, he writes that his father, Yaḥya, had been married before marrying Ṭaha's mother, to a woman named Zulaykha, with whom he had several children. During the time of his marriage to Zulaykha, Ṭaha tells us, his father had a dream in which he was having sex with his own mother; upon awakening, 'he was fearfully anxious due to his dream-vision, but for days was unable to tell it to anyone so that his anxiety increased.'[816] Fortunately, however, there was a man in his village named al-Ḥajj Mūsā, known for his piety and believed by the people to possess *walāya*, best known for the utterance of the name of God from his heart while asleep. 'It occurred to my father to go to this saint, meaning, al-Ḥājj Mūsā, and tell him his dream,' which he did, furtively due to his embarrassment. The saint told him not to worry since the dream did not mean what Yaḥya feared it meant, but rather was a portent of success and happiness, including that he would make the

[815] Ibid., 30.

[816] For a wide-ranging and, while decidedly uneven, fascinating anthropological study of contemporary dreaming and dream-interpretation in Kurdistan, see Iraj Esmaeilpour Ghoochani and Frank Heidemann, 'Bābā Āb Dād: The Phenomenology of Sainthood in the Culture of Dreams in Kurdistan with an Emphasis on Sufis of Qāderie Brotherhood,' (Phd Dissertation, Universitätsbibliothek der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 2017). The broader literature on Islamic dream-interpretation and its uses is considerable; for an overview, see Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Dreams & Visions in the World of Islam: A History of Muslim Dreaming and Foreknowing*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), and cf. Jonathan Katz, 'Dreams in the Manāqib of a Moroccan Sufi Shaykh: 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dabbāgh (d. 1131/1719),' in *Dreaming across Boundaries: The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands,* ed. by Louise Marlow (Boston: Ilex Foundation, 2008).

ḥajj. A few years later, Yaḥya did go on the *ḥajj*, passing through Baghdad on the way where he would meet with Ṭaha's future shaykh, Muṣṭafá, and Muṣṭafá's shaykh, Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣāwī, receiving blessing and supplications from them, attributing his later narrow escape from a Bedouin musket-ball to Shaykh Muṣṭafá's supplication. Upon returning home Yaḥya married Ṭaha's mother (whose name, alone among his female relations, he does not give) and shortly thereafter Ṭaha was born, while his father was attending a *mawlid* celebration, on the 13th of Rabiʿ al-Awwal, 1136 [December 11, 1723], one of the dates commonly given for Muḥammad's birthday, for which Ṭaha praised God.[817] His birth, then, was the culmination, his narrative argues, of a series of divine and saintly interventions, his story revealing 'the grace of God the Beneficent upon me in His eternal knowledge.' In Ṭaha's reckoning, saintly interventions, and the residue of his saintly genealogies and encounters, would remain the most important and consistently formative aspect of his life and journeys.

As important as the story of his father's coming to marry Ṭaha's mother was to his narrative, it was ultimately through his mother that Ṭaha traced the most important lineaments of sanctity inhering in him from birth forward. While his father is a rather passive actor in Ṭaha's narrative—receiving a dream, encountering saints, being rescued by them—Ṭaha describes his mother as a more dynamic presence. She was herself the daughter of a saint and scholar, Molla Muḥammad, whose many *karāmāt* Ṭaha's mother related to him. She, her sister Faṭima, and her mother Āsiya were all Qu'ran reciters, while her brother, Molla ʿIsā, would be Ṭaha's second instructor, in a range of disciplines. His first instructor, he says, was his mother, whom he describes as 'my *shaykha*, my *murshīda*, and my *mu'addiba*,' pious and learned like her sister

[817] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 31. On early modern *mawlid* practices, see Marion Katz, 'Commemoration of the Prophet's Birthday as a Domestic Ritual in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Damascus,' in *Domestic Devotions in the Early Modern World* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 167-181.

and her mother. He gives a charming instance of her early instruction to him: 'I myself remember that I used to not know how to clean myself except with my right hand, so my mother taught me use of the left, saying to me, "The right is for every good deed, and the left is for what is one attaches little importance to." I said to her, "I can't, I don't know, and my left hand is unable to do that!"' But she assured him that with practice he would improve, 'and the matter turned out that way.'[818] His mother appears a little further on again in his narrative: like his father before him, Ṭaha had dreams—initially quite disturbing to him—in which he was having sex with his mother. Unlike his father, Ṭaha evidently felt no shame in making these dreams known to his reading audience, as he was able to interpret them—in a positive fashion—due to the interventions of his own saintly guide, Shaykh Dervish Muṣṭafá, through whom 'God opened for me the gate of interpretation of dreams.'[819]

How ever we in the post-Freudian present might interpret Ṭaha's unsettling dreams, the centrality of his mother and his other female relations to his own self-image and memory ought to now be clear, centrality that seems to have been a piece with his wider Kurdish milieu, in which women were, by necessity, quite mobile and not confined to home—hardly practical in a rural society of any sort, of course—but seem also to have had access to education to a greater degree than rural women elsewhere. It also appears that women in the Jewish and Christian communities of the Kurdish lands—the so-called Kurdish Jews and the various Christian groups using Syriac as their liturgical language—seem to have been both active participants in religious life and even claimants to sanctity themselves, such as the important female Kurdish Jewish scholar and saint Asenath Barzani (d. 1670), whose tomb in Amadiya remains a place of

[818] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 30.

[819] Ibid., 32.

pilgrimage.[820] All that said, given the limitations of our sample size we should be careful of too start a delimitation of the Kurdish case for this period from other contexts. And in fact, returning to al-Suwaydī's *riḥla*, we find a similar situation in neighboring 'Iraq, at least in al-Suwaydī's case: while his mother was less than pleased with his self-inflicted poverty in pursuing a career in *ʿilm*,[821] his wife, Faṭima, was kind and supportive. Even more notably, after describing his son, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, al-Suwaydī describes in equal detail the birth of his daughter born three years later, Ruqayya,[822] who followed in her father's footsteps, becoming a scholar and teacher of *fiqh*, al-Suwaydī always gathering *ijāza*s for her and her brother when traveled. And, while his report is somewhat cryptic, it was a woman, unnamed in the text,[823] who sponsored al-Suwaydī's going on *ḥajj*, and about whom he wrote effusively, 'everything I have is from her charity. Everything I saw was a trace manifest from her charity reminding me to pray for her. I asked every pious and learned person I met to pray for her, her children, her husband, and her relatives…'[824] The norms and practices, then, that can be seen underlying Ṭaha's narrative may well have extended into the rest of Ottoman Iraq, allowing for a high degree of female visibility and narrative centrality. Certainly many of the women in both Ṭaha's and al-Suwaydī's families

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[820] On whom see Renée Levine Melammed, 'Barazani (Barzani), Asenath,' in *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[821] al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 69-71. It wasn't really her fault, he writes, as the constant mockery of the neighbors over her son's self-inflicted poverty finally got to her.

[822] Her name was inspired by a dream al-Suwaydī had while he was working on his commentary on *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt*. In the dream-vision, al-Suwaydī was sitting with Muḥammad, and Muḥammad's daughter Ruqayya was sleeping, recumbent beside him. Muḥammad jokingly pokes her, saying '*Man fāta māta*!' so that she would awake and sit up. Al-Suwaydī awoke, overjoyed that he had been given entrance into Muḥammad's family circle, and vowde to name his first daughter after Ruqayya. al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 74.

[823] I suspect, not having examined the text in question closely enough to ascertain, that her anonymity is a literary device, and might well be contained, 'hidden,' within al-Suwaydī's prose, a device that he used in the aforementioned semi-erotic *maqāma*.

[824] al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 320.

had access to education, enough to be not just literate but engaged in scholarship and ritual performance themselves; we will return to the question of such education further along in relation to Ṭaha's later career in his homeland.

The availability of instruction in the rural Kurdish world points us towards another important context of Ṭaha's early life and later career, his educational routes as a young man. While Ṭaha would leave off his pursuit of exoteric knowledge after his transformative encounter with Dervish Muṣṭafá, he initially studied a range of disciplines—*fiqh*, grammar, Persian poetry, and others—with his uncle Molla 'Isā, until he turned seventeen, at which point Molla 'Isā moved to Kirkuk, Ṭaha's father discouraging him from moving with him. Instead Ṭaha began studying at the madrasa in Koy Sanjaq.[825] That Ṭaha, despite hailing from a small village in the mountains at the edge of the Iranian frontier, would be able to study a quite diverse repertoire of subjects, first under an independent scholar and then in a madrasa context, is not especially surprising given what we know of Kurdish intellectual life and institutions during the Ottoman period.[826] Scholars in a vast range of fields, from poetry to philosophy to *fiqh*, could be found working independently or in an institutional setting in many villages and small towns up and down the Kurdish arc, a wealth of scholarship and scholars that is reflected in the biographical literature of the period with the continual recurrence of urban-settled Kurds—a presence that

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[825] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 33-34.

[826] See the aforecited sections of El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*; each scholar who made his mark in the urban centers did so either still working in a rural madrasa setting, or after having been formed in such a milieu. A parallel situation obtained in Morocco during this period, as El-Rouayheb also discusses, with some rural locations of advanced learning, such al-Zāwiyya al-Ayyāshiyya perched among the nomads of Jbel Ayachi in the High Atlas, being truly remote indeed. Ibid., 150-153. It should also be noted that this is the period in which Kurdish was first used as a written language, in the form of aids for madrasa students, per Michiel Leezenberg, 'Elî Teremaxî and the Vernacularization of Medrese Learning in Kurdistan,' *Iranian Studies Iranian Studies* 47, no. 5 (2014): 713–33. Ṭaha makes no mention of literary production or textual consumption in Kurdish, though his silence obviously need not preclude his access to Kurdish texts in a madrasa setting.

points to the other constant feature of Kurdish intellectual life, the migration of scholars from '*balād al-Akrād*' to the major centers of intellectual and religious life in the Ottoman world, or, as with Molla ʿIsā, simply to a somewhat more populated locale beyond the hills and mountains such as Kirkuk or Mosul. Ṭaha, while never becoming a scholar of any note, would continue to draw upon this education in Balisān and Koy Sanjaq in the years to come, working as a copyist, teaching treatises by ʿAbd al-Ghanī and others, and, the activity he seems to have been most proud of, composing chronogram poetry for various patrons (including saintly ones), some of which he reproduced in his *riḥla*.

While he does not specify when or how he learned the art of chronogram poetry, it is likely that he would have encountered it first in his native Kurdish lands, perhaps under the tutelage of his uncle, this style of poetry—which would become very much in vogue in Constantinople and elsewhere over the course of the eighteenth century, as analyzed by Shirine Hamadeh—originating in the Persianate world where it first became popular.[827] Did Ṭaha learn this art as a young man in the company of his uncle, or in another context within the Kurdish borderlands—or even later in life? Regardless, his foundations in learning in Balisan and Koy Sanjaq would form the nucleus of his later career, even if, reading a bit against the grain of his self-narrative, he had at some point hoped to establish himself as a resident saint or at least teaching shaykh in the mold of his master Dervish Muṣṭafá, neither of which he ultimately maintained for long. Supported by his various cultural activities, he was able to carve out a living

[827] Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 171-175 *et passim*. For a concise overview of the Ottoman chronogram, see Edhem Eldem, 'Chronogram, Ottoman,' in EI^3.

for himself, and even make inroads into relatively elite sectors of Damascus society, his skill in the in-vogue art of the chronogram a definite asset.[828]

Yet as important as his training in exoteric knowledge was in his day-to-day livelihood, in Ṭaha's own self-understanding and sense of priority it was the realm of saintly encounter that was foremost in Ṭaha's life. It was the intervention of saints, Ṭaha believed, that explained his very coming into being, and it would be the intervention of saints and a desire for their presence that would shape Ṭaha's future peregrinations. Such proximity to the *awliyā' Allāh* was, as we have now seen repeatedly, especially common in the eighteenth century's resurgence of devotion to the saints across the Ottoman world—Ṭaha, even before his departure for the central lands of the empire, was already in contact with more oecumenical patterns, reminding us of the little encounter at the opening of this chapter. At the same time, his encounters with his saints reveal the ways in which Kurdish distinctiveness could overlap with these oecumenical Ottoman patterns, the theme to which we now turn.

ii. Ṭaha in the midst of overlapping iterations of identity and saintly repertoire:

If there is a narrative center to Ṭaha's *riḥla*, it is his story of his encounter with Shaykh Muṣṭafá (also named in the text as Dervish Muṣṭafá), a story that will allow us to explore in more depth the nature of Ṭaha's autobiographical project, his sense and performance of subjectivity, as well as the matter of Kurdish sainthood and the wider context of rural religiosity in the Kurdish lands. Ṭaha introduces Dervish Muṣṭafá as a great and powerful saint who lived at the time of

[828] In this regard his career, and particular the receptivity of local elites to his poetic productions, is a good 'provincial' example of a process in eighteenth century Istanbul that Hamadeh refers to as '*décloisonnement*,' which she defines as an opening up between different cultural traditions and practices, the changing nature of the interface between court and city, and a greater porosity in the sensibility of different social groups.' Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures*, 75.

Ṭaha's first encounter with him in the village of ʿAwajī,[829] some three or four hours by foot from Koy Sanjaq. He would come to town on Fridays 'and the people would gather to him as if he were a prophet,' and would visit in the house of the preacher of Koy, which was near the madrasa in which Ṭaha was studying. Ṭaha had a friend, named Ḥasan, who had previously pledged his allegiance to 'the *ṭarīqa* of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī in the presence of the shaykh,' and he would relate his shaykh's miracles and wondrous states to Ṭaha, causing 'love of union' to build in Ṭaha's heart, love which spurred him to visit and pledge allegiance to his shaykh.[830] Already we see some of the parameters of sainthood in Ṭaha's world: Shaykh Muṣṭafá's career at the time had him occupying different registers of space, normally inhabiting a village higher up in the hills—a pattern we saw with Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo, and which we will see again further along with Kaka Abū Aḥmad—but coming down on a regular basis into the larger town of Koy Sanjaq, where he was evidently on good terms with the local preacher and where he could interact with disciples and potential disciples. The role of the '*ṭarīqa* of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī' will reappear in Ṭaha's brief *manāqib* of his shaykh further along, but for now it is enough to note the importance Ṭaha places, not on the *ṭarīqa* itself per se, nor on any larger institutional structure or network, but the fact of *receiving* the *ṭarīqa* from a great and powerful saint.

Wishing to meet this saint himself, Ṭaha told his friend Ḥasan to bring him to the shaykh the following Friday and to tell him about his 'condition,' acting as a 'translator' (*tarjumān*[an]) between himself and the shaykh, 'for which you will be rewarded by God.' It was during the final days of December, 1738, that on one Friday Ḥasan told him the shaykh had come to town,

[829] The vocalization is uncertain, as the village either no longer exists or is known under a different name, both entirely plausible possibilities.

[830] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 34.

so they went together to the preacher's house and found it packed.[831] Despite Ṭaha's embarrassment his friend Ḥasan charged in through the crowd anyway and told the shaykh about Ṭaha. After an hour the shaykh came out and looked at Ṭaha, who was holding an inkwell (one, he says, that had a 'firm cover in order to shake it to improve the ink'). Ṭaha went up and kissed the shaykh's hand, his memory, he writes, at this point something of a blur, other than that Shaykh Muṣṭafá stretched out 'his blessed hand,' took the inkwell, and asked Ṭaha about it, as if to assuage his embarrassment before the crowd. After relating a story to the people, the shaykh went back inside and invited Ṭaha to enter and come before him. Ṭaha knelt before the shaykh, who asked him the 'questions of repentance,' Ṭaha in answer pledging to repent from every sort of sin.

At this one of the saint's disciples, a *majdhūb* named Molla ʿAlī of Koy Sanjaq, asked, in jest (*min bāb al-mazḥ*), 'What is this child repenting of?' But the shaykh answered: 'No one is free of major and minor sins,' which struck Ṭaha powerfully, due, he writes, to his self-knowledge of his own (unspecified) prolificacy, such that 'I trembled in my heart that the shaykh spoke truthfully in what he said, and that was the first *karāma* which was manifest to me from him.' The shaykh took hold of Ṭaha's right hand, looked him in the face and cast his *mandīl* upon the young man's hands and said the words of *tawḥīd* three times, which Ṭaha repeated after him. The shaykh bowed his head for a brief time then looked Ṭaha in the face, with Ṭaha's hands in his hands; after doing this a second time, the saint told Ṭaha to return to his place and sit, then ordered him to undertake a six successive year fast. Ṭaha agreed, 'and my agreement to him was

[831] If the preacher's house—undescribed further by Ṭaha, for whom it was no doubt unremarkable—fit the profile of pre-modern Kurdish vernacular architecture, it probably contained a courtyard area as well as space on the roof that could have accommodated crowds, thanks to the robust cross-beams that made up the roofing on such houses. See the only exploration of this topic known to me, Dilan M. Rostam, 'Evolved Sustainable Building Engineering in Vernacular Architecture of Kurdistan,' in *Aro: The Scientific Journal of Koya University*, no. 1 (April 24, 2017): 9–19.

true, interiorly and exteriorly, without the flit of a thought that I would be unable to carry it out.' Molla ʿAlī said, 'O shaykh, this is a lot! And he's just a boy!' So the shaykh reduced the fast to six months, then six days. Ṭaha agreed with each one but was relieved by the *majdhūb's* leniency-seeking on his behalf, he writes. He then received from the saint his instructions for *dhikr*,[832] which he practiced day and night, using *tasbīḥ* with five hundred beads, working towards a goal of five hundred *la ilah ila Allahs* at a time. Ṭaha went—having evidently left off his studies in the madrasa after his encounter with the saint—to the countryside just outside Koy Sanjaq, where he 'meditated, recited the Qur'an, and prayed single-mindedly,' which led, he tells us, to a spiritual awakening of realization. After all this he traveled up to his shaykh's home village, living, presumably, as a disciple of the saint.[833] Ṭaha concludes his account of his encounter and initiation with a discussion of the powers and knowledge that the saints possess, warning his readers not to deny the friends of God, one of a handful of instances scattered through his *riḥla* that indicates the continued presence of puritan sentiments and even activists, even if their presence and sway were much diminished.[834]

There is much that can be unpacked from this dense, detailed account. For instance, the presence of a *majdhūb*, in the role of a sort of saintly auxiliary, points to the dispersal of this Ottoman modality of sainthood, which we have now encountered intermittently in many contexts, far and wide, including into the Kurdish hills at the far edge of the empire. Even as

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[832] 'Bow your head, collect yourself inwardly, and say with your heart, "No god but God, He is One,' until your *nafs* is constricted so that nothing remains of endurance above that from imprisoning the self, until it comes naturally.' Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 35.

[833] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 34-38.

[834] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 37. In Medina Ṭaha buried some hairs of his beard, having recently shaved, under the wall of the *qubba* of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAfan, with the intention of securing his trust that he would intercede for Ṭaha and that he bear witness 'for me that I am a monotheist, no associating any with God,' the last clause seemingly added to counter any possible puritanical objects to his hair-burial and seeking saintly intercession. Ibid., 71.

distinctive forms of sainthood were enacted in places like Koy Sanjaq, local repertoires of sainthood responded to empire-wide trends, adjusting to them in particular ways.[835] That Ṭaha wrote this account at all, and in such detail, is perhaps the most immediately significant aspect—his narrative resonates with modern expectations of autobiography (or indeed of novelistic writing, which crosses in and out of the autobiographical) in many ways, from the inclusion of seemingly insignificant details—the clever little inkwell Ṭaha was holding, the recollection of *not* remembering much in one moment because of emotional foment, the gentle joke of the *majdhūb*—to the periodic descriptions of Ṭaha's own changing internal states. But it was not Ṭaha's intention to accord with modernist canons of subjectivity or of social realism, of course. Rather, this account was meant to reproduce or to re-enact, in textual form, the most important moment in Ṭaha's life as he remembered and understood it, a sequence of events which, because they unfolded in the presence of the saint and were a part of Ṭaha's initiation into the saint's genealogy and practice, took on a cosmic significance, ordinary spaces—the preacher's house, the press of the crowd—and ordinary objects and ritual motions magnified in meaning and power through the presence and activity and attention of the saint.

This sort of hyper-charging of the evidently quotidian is visible as well, for instance, in the hagiography of Ismāʿīl Fāḳirallāh (d. 1734) by one of Ṭaha's contemporaries, Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı (d. 1780) of Tillo (a village that was itself along the northern edge of the Kurdish arc and so well within the broader 'cultural zone' into which Ṭaha was born, Ibrāhīmin fact noting that his

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[835] In (relatively) nearby Mosul, we can see the number of *majādhīb* rise quickly and suddenly in al-ʿUmarī's hagiographic compilation centered on that city; urban centers like Mosul and Baghdad no doubt served as important points of contact for rural milieus like Koy Sanjaq, in the transmission of repertoires and resources of sainthood as in much else. Al-ʿUmarī, *Manhal*, 173-175, 189-191, *et passim*. Ṭaha himself also records several other *majādhīb* encounterd elsewhere, such as Aḥmad al-Sirāj al-Kurdī, who dressed in the 'clothing of the elite and carried a dagger in his belt.' When he came to a gathering, 'without jest or shame' he would announce in a loud voice, 'Stand to me, the Friend of God!' before greeting anyone; his most famous miracle was simultaneously attending several nocturnal soirées through a miracle of translocation. Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 151.

shaykh was beloved of the Kurds as well as the Arabs).[836] The *menāḳıb* of Fāḳirallāh with which his *Maʿrîfatnāme* concludes (and which Ibrāhīm also produced in a 'stand-alone' Arabic version) includes a textual description of Ismāʿīl's house—which was also his 'hermitage,' his *tekke,* and, at least once, an incubatory cell for a 'mad amīr'[837]—and of both his ritual devotional practices and his ordinary domestic life, Ibrāhīmenumerating his various possessions: prayerbeads, wooden and clay dishes, a boxwood spoon, and so forth.[838] Alongside this textual description is a rather unusual pictorial addition: an architectural plan of Ismāʿīl Fāḳirallāh's home, describing both the religious components and the (at first glance) thoroughly quotidian. The design of the plan resembles earlier Ottoman architectural drawings,[839] with the difference that it was obviously not meant as a schematic for construction, but instead invites imaginative participation in Fāḳirallāh's domestic and ritual space. Some of the elements delineated in both the textual description and the detail architectural plan reinforce Fāḳirallāh's sanctity by highlighting his asceticism and his charity, but the thoroughness and detail go beyond such purpose. When placed in dialogue with the images that precede it in the *Maʿrifatnāme*—schematics of the cosmos in various iterations and understandings—the argument Ibrāhīm is making becomes clear. Namely, the personal, domestic space surrounding the saint, the material, quotidian aspects[840] of his

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[836] Per the Arabic version of this *manāqib*, Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı ibn ʿOs̱mān Erzurūmlu, *Tadhkirat al-aḥāb fī manāqib quṭb al-aqṭāb*, Demirbaş 01438-001, Süleymāniye Kütüphanesi, fol. 17-18 (consecutively numbered folios in this manuscript).

[837] Ḥaḳḳı, *Tadhkirat*, 16

[838] Ibid., 10, 13; İbrâhîm Ḥaḳḳı Erzurūmlu, *Maʿrifetnāme,* ed. Yusuf Ziya Kırımi (Istanbul: Matbaa-yı Ahmet Kâmil, 1914), 507-508.

[839] On which see Gülru Necipoğlu-Kafadar, 'Plans and Models in 15th- and 16th-Century Ottoman Architectural Practice,' *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45, no. 3 (1986): 224–43.

[840] It seems likely, furthermore, that the expansive and changed material culture and patterns of consumption that marked the eighteenth century should be seen as the coordinating impetus for translating saintly cosmology into the details of the everyday, particularly quotidian objects, though it would be helpful to have a

domestic and ritual life are a recapitulation or a condensing into miniature form of the cosmos, with the holy friend of God at the center of that cosmos.[841] Like Ṭaha's reproduction in detail of his encounter with his saint, Ibrāhīm's reproduction or re-enactment in text and image of his saint's domestic life and bodily deportment produces a space of intimacy and of encounter for his audience, whereby the power of the saint is made accessible even to those unable to visit his physical resting place (which was designed by Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı).[842] The abundant depictions of Mecca and Medina, from elaborate scale three-dimensional scale models to the ubiquitous images in copies of *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*, entailed a similar imaginative, effacious participation in distant sacred space; Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı's productions almost certainly have such a context in mind. That both Ṭaha and Ibrāhīm would, probably unbeknownst to one another despite being contemporaries,[843] adopt similar strategies of reproducing encounter and intimacy is not especially surprising. Besides having access to metropolitan discourse and practices in vogue at

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better sense of how urban patterns of consumption and cultural change were translated into rural areas such as Koy Sanjaq or Tillo.

[841] For Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı, the saint, while accessible to the public—he records Ismāʿīl Fākirallāh's beneficience and meeting with the people—is best understood as a hidden figure, one found within a space protected from the assaults of ignorant deniers, preserving his special gnosis: inwardness and protection being key themes in Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı's treatise on dealing with puritanical opposition, *Huṣn al-ʿārifīn lil-Ḥaqqī*, Demerbaş 02740-001, Süleymâniye Kütüphanesi, fol. 36a-46b.

[842] Necipoğlu-Kafadar discusses scale models of mosques and holy places that were present in Ottoman sacred spaces, amd though she does not elaborate at length upon their uses, it seems reasonable to see such entities as means of imaginatively and sympathetically mediating pilgrimage to such sites for those unable to do so physically. Necipoğlu-Kafadar, 'Plans and Models,' 237-239. Being able to envision the saint's surroundings might also figure into the Naqshbandī practices, which Ibrāhīm lauded and described in the *Maʿrifatnāme* and elsewhere, of fixing the image of one's pīr in one's heart and so forging a link between him and oneself; certainly the vogue for *şema'īl* objects and texts should be seen as interconnected with the dispersal of Naqshbandī techniques in the Ottoman world. See for instance his treatise *Risāle-i ṭarīḳ-i Nakşbendiyye*, Demirbaş 00345, Süleymāniye Kütüphanesi, fol. 7a. On, among other things, the incredible *türbe* which Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı built for his beloved saintly master, see Yahya M. Michot, 'Sufi Love and Light in Tillo: Ibrāhīm Ḥaqqı Erẓurūmī (d. 1194/1780),' in *The Muslim World* 105, no. 3 (2015): 322–67.

[843] While Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı wrote in Arabic as well as in Ottoman Turkish, so far as I can tell his works circulated primarily in Rūm among Turcophone audiences, though circulation in the Kurdish lands and elsewhere certainly cannot be ruled out. A reception history of Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı remains a desiradatum.

the time—Ṭaha in the context of Damascus, Ibrāhīm in Constantinople where he sojourned for a time—they were both formed within a culture of sainthood that emphasized deep and abiding personal connection and loyalty to a particular saint encountered in his bodily particularity, while also participating in theological cosmologies that emphasized the interconnectivity of different levels of the cosmos. Not only did Ṭaha and Ibrāhīm reproduce the domestic spaces of saints: they, like many others in the late seventeenth into eighteenth centuries, gave descriptions of saints as ways of forming images in their audiences' imaginations, a practice that was part of a much larger cultural current emphasizing the imaginative and prophylactic role of such verbal 'icons' as *shamā'il* and *ḥilye*, not just of the Prophet but of other holy people as well.[844]

Returning to Ṭaha's account, alongside his emphasis on quotidian details is his recording of his inner states during these pivotal moments, a different sort of invitation to sympathetic imagination as it were. He himself starts us out on an explanation: the knowledge of the saints, Ṭaha argues in his defense of the saints appended to this account, reaches into the inner secrets and personal histories of those who come before them in repentance, which entails both the importance and the visibility of inner states, of what we would call emotions but which in Ṭaha's

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[844] On Prophetic *shamā'il*, see Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One,* 285-290; starting in the seventeenth century, in both Ottoman Turkish and Arabic hagiography, the *shamā'il* of saints—careful physical descriptions, some obviously symbolic (light-suffused faces, for instance), others thoroughly quotidian—become quite common, if not outright de rigeur. Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı describes his saintly şeyh as being 'neither too short nor too tall, peerless in appearance,' and possessed of a good nose, thin lips, pleasant voice, with long fingers, long toes, hairless chest, not fat, and so forth; Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı suggests the rationale for these descriptions in a prayer for his readers that they be able to 'see' the saint by means of his description. Ḥaḳḳı, *Maʿrifatnāme*, 507. Ibrāhīm Has' description (*ḥilye-i laṭīfler*) of Ḥasan Ünsī is even more detailed: 'His face was luminous and tended towards yellow-white. His blessed forehead was wide. His eyebrows were crescent shaped. His eyes were black, big, and perfect. His nose was '*çekme*.' His cheeks had a reddish tint to them. His lips were fine. He had a small mouth…' And so forth. Ibrāhīm Ḥāṣ, *Menāḳıb-nâme,* 349-350. While, so far as I have been able to locate, no one has studied the rise of these 'saintly *şemā'il*,' the productive intersection of Nakşbandî techniques and the practices of devotion to Muḥammad probably goes a long way in explaining things. Similar developments were evidently underway in the Safavid and post-Safavid lands, with the result that by the eighteenth century '*shamā'il'* of holy individuals had become actually iconic in form, as little portable icons, *shamā'il-i jībī*, on which see Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, 'Icône et Contemplation: Entre l'art Populaire et Le Soufisme Dans Le Shiʿisme Imamite (Aspects de l'imamologie Duodécimaine XI),' in *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 20 (2006): 1–12.

understanding would go beyond emotional states into more ontological directions.[845] Subjectivity here emerges then as a response to the saint's living (and textually reproduced) presence, Ṭaha seeing himself and others reflected back through and in the saint. In addition, part of Ṭaha's clear intention with his *riḥla* was to present to a wider, Arabic-reading audience Kurdish saints who would have otherwise remained obscure to such an audience, as well as to make available to that wider public a view of his own participation in the economy of sanctity emanating from such saints. Finally, his rationale for including the friends of God in general in his writing can point us to one further explanation: that in mentioning them their *baraka* will abide with him and in the text itself. Going a bit further, perhaps this vivid and detailed reproduction of his formative encounter with 'his' saint makes that moment present again, gives renewed form and substance to it, allowing Ṭaha—and his readers—to re-encounter the saint, now in the space of text, through the lens of Ṭaha's own inner sensations and memories, resulting in an intimacy much more pronounced than traditional hagiography had usually sought to produce.

That is not to say, of course, that traditional hagiography ceased to be important, and in fact, following his account of encounter, Ṭaha sketches out a more conventional *manāqib* of his shaykh, a *manāqib* that will demonstrate further the ways in which early modern Kurdish sainthood did not only look to local contexts for its genealogy and elaboration, but was also situated within both the wider Ottoman and Islamic oecumene. Ṭaha reports that a year or two after his initiation at the hands of Shaykh Muṣṭafá, he saw in a dream-vision the shaykh of his shaykh, 'the pious saint Shakyh Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī,' while Ṭaha was—in the dream-vision—drinking milk. Ṭaha went to his shaykh and reported his dream, which Shaykh Mustafa told him

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[845] Once again, our term 'emotion' has its uses in this context—and with it the historiography of emotions—as well as it limitations once we recognize the disconnections between 'modern' approaches and those of pre-19th century discourses.

to be a blessing from Shaykh Aḥmad, who normally lived in Baghdad though at the time he was in India.[846] This dream-vision acts as segue way for Ṭaha to describe some of the *karāmāt* of Shaykh Aḥmad, followed by a description of Shaykh Muṣṭafá's own *manāqib*. He begins with the story of Aḥmad and the Ottoman mufti of Basra: Muṣṭafá and Shaykh Aḥmad were in Baghdad together when the mufti of Basra was retired from his post, and so passed through Baghdad on his way to Constantinople in order to secure a new post.[847] He met with Shaykh Aḥmad in Baghdad and sought his prayers and spiritual aid, the shaykh promising not to forget him. Upon reaching Üsküdar, the mufti heard a voice crying out to him 'in eloquent Arabic,' saying, 'O So-and-So, O mufti of Basra, return to me!' Upon turning in the direction of the voice he saw Shaykh Aḥmad sitting next to the road, saying, 'Come to me, and drink some coffee!' When the mufti saw the saint 'his reason nearly left him for joy and wonder.' Coming up to the saint he noticed that he was now 'wide-eyed and seeing,' even though he had seen him in Baghdad to be blind. Shaykh Aḥmad told the mufti that he ought not tarry in Constantinople but should return to Baghdad, where he will be awarded a new position. Upon returning to Baghdad the saint's instructions come true, and the mufti discovers that Shaykh Aḥmad was still blind and that, according to his attendants, he had been in Baghdad the entire time.[848] While this story—which Ṭaha avers is but one of many he could relate about Shaykh Aḥmad—is replete with hagiographic commonplaces underlining Shaykh Aḥmad's sanctity, it also points to the potential role of local saints in addressing the anxieties of Ottoman functionaries in the provinces, for

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[846] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 47.

[847] The story indicates, by the by, that at least in the matter of presumably Hanafī mufti Ottoman writ still obtained for something in early eighteenth century Basra. On this period of Basran history, see Thabit Abdullah, *Merchants, Mamluks, and Murder: The Political Economy of Trade in Eighteenth Century Basra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001).

[848] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 47-48.

whom matters of appointment must have been especially fraught given both the complexities of local power dynamics as well as the sheer distance involved in negotiating one's position. It also presents Shaykh Aḥmad's power as being recognized by a presumable outsider, the mufti of Basra, and as extending through Ottoman space all the way to Üsküdar.[849]

Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī's connections extended in other directions, as well, both into the Kurdish lands, and into the realm of the Unseen, as the extended account of how Shaykh Muṣṭafá came into the tutelage of Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī reveals. In his youth, Ṭaha relates, during the time of his great ascetic struggles, Shaykh Muṣṭafá 'heard the voice of the pole, the sign, the saint… ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī… in Damascus,' and wanted to travel there to meet with him and receive initiation into the Qādirī *ṭarīqa* at his hands. Muṣṭafá's shaykh at the time, an Aḥmad al-Kurdī, feared for his safety in traveling to Syria and instead wanted him to receive initiation at the hands of *his* shaykh, Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī. Having gone to sleep after seeking indication from God about the matter, he saw in a dream none other than the great saint and 'most magnificent succor' (*al-ghawth al-a'ẓam*) ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, who was holding a candle, representing Muṣṭafá (who, ʿAbd al-Qādir declared, was marked for sainthood), in his hand, instructing Aḥmad to take it—meaning Muṣṭafá—to his shakyh. Awakening, Aḥmad went to his shaykh and reported the dream-vision, and while Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī was initially reluctant to receive another disciple, the word of ʿAbd al-Qādir prevailed. However, Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī did not wish for

[849] Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı demonstrates his saintly shaykh, Fāḳirallāh, intervening in the lives of Ottoman elite, such as his rebuke to the 'paşa of Van' while the paşa was besieging a rebellious bey's castle, sending a letter to the pasha on the fifth day of the siege: '"O Paşa, have mercy on the poor, and go with your soldiers from this land, before the they pillage the vineyards of the people of Muḥammad, upon whom be peace and blessings. As for the disobedient emir, the end of the arrangment of his recompense is another time."' But when the pasha received the letter, 'he did not do right but rather erred, saying, "We have come with the *firmān* of the Sultan, and leaving is impossible for us before conquering the castle and killing the disobedient emir…" But having disobeyed the [true, saintly] sultan, when his soldiers fired their cannons, they ruptured and hit his own troops,' which was but the first of disasters to strike the paşa, the story ending with him pleading for mercy before the saint. Ibrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı, *Tadhkirat*, 15.

Mustafa to receive the Qādiriyya initiation 'in form' from him, but instead sent him to a member of the Baghdadi ʿulamawith a better external *silsila*.[850] This accomplished, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī sent his new charge to his *khalwa* in the Ḥasan Paşa Mosque in Baghdad, instructing him in a series of exercises to undertake while spending the night alone in the lampless cell. Muṣṭafá began by uttering, with utmost concentration, 'Ya Allah!' at which the roof and walls disappeared and only magnificent light remained for a short while. Then he returned to his previous state, 'his heart fluttering like a decapitated chicken.' Next he cried, 'Ya Muḥammad!' Again the light was manifest, all else receding from view. Again it departed, and 'He then remembered the words of his shaykh to him, and so said "Ya ʿAbd al-Qādir!" thus, facing with his spiritual energy and heart towards the presence of the friend of God, his *khalīfa* in the world, the delegate of the Prophet Muḥammad in his time, axis of being… ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī.' With this third exclamation the light appeared again, but this time 'the *ḥaqīqa*, the *sharīʿa*, and the *ṭarīqa* dawned together like the break of day': instantaneously he was transformed through the agency of the great saint. Muṣṭafá, Ṭaha adds, went on to receive further instruction from Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī, to the point that he was empowered 'such that he could walk upon the water of the Tigris, the people witnessing it.'[851] Not long after entering into the tutelage of his shaykh, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥaṣawī set out for Basra, and instructed his Kurdish charge to return to his native region as there was no longer any instruction or spiritual power that he could give him. In sum, Ṭaha concludes, 'time does not permit the recounting of all the deeds of this great saint.'[852]

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[850] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 49.

[851] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 50-52.

[852] Ibid., 52.

Of particular interest in this account is the active role that ʿAbd al-Qādir is given in establishing Shaykh Muṣṭafá's sainthood, and Shaykh Muṣṭafá's spatial relationship to the saint: much of the story involves his attempts to bring himself into a sanctified genealogical relationship with the saint.[853] His initial goal of journeying to ʿAbd al-Ghanī reveals a desire to reinforce his link with the great medieval saint through the mediation of a living one—al-Nābulusī having achieved repute, within his own lifetime, across the empire, on a scale that few, if any of his predecessors or successors in the Ottoman world could claim. Instead, Muṣṭafá, after an initial intervention by ʿAbd al-Qādir in the world of the dream-vision, goes to a Baghdadī saint, leaving Kurdish dominated territory and receiving through two means his desired connection to ʿAbd al-Qādir. It is this connection that clearly counts in terms of his 'affiliation' into the Qādirī '*ṭarīqa*,' which here has no institutional or even specific ritual sense but rather signifies a means of entering into a relationship with the eponymous saint. Having first traveled to Baghdad for physical proximity to the saint—through his *silsila*, though of course his tomb-shrine was nearby as well—Muṣṭafá next traveled inwardly and thus into the world of the Unseen where he encountered ʿAbd al-Qādir directly.

In more mundane, and dangerous, physical space, it was the 1743 invasion of the Ottoman lands and investment of Mosul by Nādir Shāh during his second war with the Ottomans (a topic to which we will return below) that precipitated Shaykh Muṣṭafá's departure from the Kurdish lands and west to Syria, though the above mention of his desire to meet ʿAbd al-Ghanī

[853] Despite his evident importance in medieval, early modern, and modern Islam, scholarly coverage of ʿAbd al-Qādir has remained rather thin and underdeveloped. For a survey of the saint, his hagiography, and existing studies, see Jonathan Allen and Ahmet T. Karamustafa, ʿAbd Al-Qadir al-Jilani,' in *Oxford Bibliographies Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

al-Nābulusī points to a potential further motive.[854] His shaykh's departure led to Ṭaha's own migration west (though the depredations of Nādir Shāh surely contributed to his decision as well), which set him off on a series of travels that would make up much of the remainder of his *riḥla*, a series of travels that would be marked by encounters with other saints, living and departed, close calls in the course of sea travel, visitations to numerous holy places, encounters with strange local customs (including, Ṭaha avers, seeing the antinomian residents of Suez having sex in public in broad daylight, during Ramadan no less), and so forth.[855] He would remain in his shaykh's vicinity off and on until Dervish Muṣṭafá's death in 1757, though his devotion to his saint would continue for the rest of his life.[856]

Alongside and subordinate to his formative, ongoing ties with Dervish Muṣṭafá, Ṭaha established relationships with a number of other saints, living and departed, in the course of his travels and residences in the Kurdish lands and in Damascus. His relationships with other saints varied and sometimes were held in tension with other commitments and markers of identity, while the means through which his relationships were mediated were also diverse. Like so many others in the Ottoman eighteenth century world, Ṭaha was devoted to ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, taking him as a saintly presence, as a teacher, and as a model—both his presence and teaching transmitted to Ṭaha primarily through texts, which Ṭaha read, studied, copied, and carried with him on his travels. When, in Mardin, Ṭaha was forced, thanks to the unwritten rules of guestly etiquette, to give away as a gift his precious copy of ʿAbd al-Ghanī's *sharḥ* on a *qaṣīda* of al-

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[854] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 55-57. Ṭaha's account of the siege has the city being delivered by secret intelligence delivered by 'Muslims from among *the ahl al-sunna'* without the city, whereas Khoury notes that the Christian villagers of Qara Qosh were attributed with delivering the city in other accounts, for which the governor rewarded them by financing eight new churches. Khoury, *State and provincial society*, 67

[855] For his shocking encounter with the irreligious inhabitants of Suez—who describe their religion as 'Baḥriyya'—and Ṭaha's reaction, see al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 59.

[856] Ibid., 78.

Jīlī,[857] he was heartbroken, the commentary one of the very few texts he had been carrying with him, its function for him more as a physical container of the saint's presence than as a text to be read. But the man who received the gift sent it back to Ṭaha, expressing his thanks but saying he wasn't especially interested in sufi texts and supposed that Ṭaha himself would be better off keeping the book! Ṭaha's heartbreak changed to joy, and he attributed the turn in fortune to the saintly intervention of ʿAbd al-Ghanī and al-Jīlī.[858] Ṭaha also performed his devotion through his work as a copyist, closing out a copy of al-Nābulsuī's important text *Wujūd al-ḥaqq* with a *qaṣīda* in praise of the saint, which he also included in his *riḥla*. Yet even in this praise-*qaṣīda,* written in 1784, Ṭaha also praises as 'the unique, the singular, of whom there is none like' his original shaykh and saint, Dervish Muṣṭafá (adding here 'al-Kurdī' to his name), enacting his loyalty textually and reinforcing his saint's place within the hierarchy of Ottoman holy people, even alongside the great ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī himself.[859]

The possible tensions that overlapping spheres of saints in this Ottoman hierarchy might generate are illustrated well in Ṭaha's story of his encounter with another axial saint of the period, Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī.[860] Ṭaha met with an aged Mustafa al-Bakrī (who died in 1749, while Ṭaha set out on his journey in 1743) in Egypt after having a dream in which he saw the Prophet Muḥammad who had transformed into Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī. When Ṭaha arrived only Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī and his gatekeeper were home; Ṭaha reported his dream, and al-Bakrī suggested that Ṭaha was meant to take the *biʿat* from him, to which Ṭaha replied that he already had a shaykh, and

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[857] For a modern edition of this text, see ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, *Qaṣīdat al-nādirāt al-ʿayniyya* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1988).

[858] al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 108-109.

[859] Ibid., 52-55.

[860] Ralf Elger, *Mustafa al-Bakri: zur Selbstdarstellung eines syrischen Gelehrten, Sufis und Dichters des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Schenefeld: EB-Verlag, 2004).

taking another over his previous one would be like one woman marrying two men at the same time. Instead he asked that the shaykh give him help, 'from your heart to my heart,' pointing from his chest to al-Bakrī's chest. Al-Bakrī agreed, saying 'You are under my protection!' Ṭaha was not very pleased with these words, as he was already under his own shaykh's protection, but he acted pleased outwardly, and they exchanged blessings and farewells.[861] Later, after Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī's death in 1749 (foreseen, Ṭaha adds, by Dervish Muṣṭafá), Ṭaha would visit his tomb and seek his *baraka*.[862]

Ṭaha's story carries echoes of another account, mentioned briefly in chapter three, in which a *khalīfa* of the Kurdish shaykh of al-Quṣayr Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo must be defended by his shaykh, at a distance, from the aggressive efforts of Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bakrī to capture him for his own *ṭarīqa*.[863] In both accounts, the devotee of a Kurdish shaykh defended his exclusive commitment to his shaykh, evidence of the importance of such loyalty and exclusivity for Kurdish sainthood throughout our period, and the potential for mutual misunderstanding among non-Kurds. Interestingly, in both stories the antagonist was a Bakrī in Egypt.[864] We may here wonder if Ṭaha consciously, or unconsciously, knew of an reworked the story of Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo's disciple, or whether we are simply dealing with the coinciding of similar clashing visions of saintly *adab*—either, or both, are realistic possibilities. In either case, the differences

[861] al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 155-157.

[862] Ibid., 69.

[863] Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-'Urḍī, *Ma'ādin al-dhahab fī al-a'yān al-musharrafah bi-him Ḥalab* ('Amman: Markaz al-Wathā'iq wa-al-Makhṭūṭāt, 1992), 282.

[864] Though, it should be pointed out, Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī identified as a Khalwatī and not as a member of the Bakrīya, on which family '*ṭarīqa'* see *Manāqib al-Sādah al-Bakrīyah: majmū'at nuṣūṣ,* ed. Mustafa Mughazy and Adam Abdelhamid Sabra (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 2015); and Sandra Aube, 'Building a Family Shrine in Ottoman Cairo,' Billet, *DYNTRAN: Dynamics of Transmission*, accessed September 20, 2017, http://dyntran.hypotheses.org/1065.

in the accounts are also revelatory. Whereas Shaykh Aḥmad's disciple was delivered from the aggressive al-Bakrī through miraculous translocation and bodily pyrotechnics, Ṭaha was not miraculously delivered by a translocating shaykh. Instead he was compelled to muddle his way through a clearly fraught social situation marked by differing understandings of shaykh-hood, a situation whose resolution left him unhappy. His attempt to elicit a more neutral blessing from the saintly Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī (whose sanctity Ṭaha does not question) was transformed, in Ṭaha's estimation, into a claim on Muṣṭafá al-Bakrī's part of something more substantial and potentially infringing upon Ṭaha's exclusive connection to his saintly master. The story al-ʿUrdī recorded of Abū al-Wafā' ibn Ma'rūf al-Ḥamawī being delivered by his Kurdish saint gave no indication of Abū al-Wafā's conflicted or otherwise inner feelings, and resolved neatly with the *khalīfa's* miraculous rescue, its inclusion obviously meant to manifest the power and geographic scope of Shaykh Aḥmad. Ṭaha's situation was less clear-cut. As elsewhere, the story seems meant to apologetically present practices that were distinctively Kurdish (or which Ṭaha at least perceived as being different from the norms of the Arab lands)—hence Ṭaha's curiously gendered argument about one woman having two husbands—while also demonstrating for his audience the inner dimension of his devotion to his saintly shaykh.

Ṭaha's discussion of the case of another holy man, Mullāh Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Kurdī al-Bānī (d. 1734) points to a further source of tension manifest in this case around a saint, that of ethnic difference and political factionalism. Mullah Ḥasan was a Kurdish shaykh who, just like Ṭaha and so many others, settled in Damascus to pursue a career in both 'exoteric' and 'esoteric' Islam, becoming well-known for his proficiency in both, according to al-Ghazzī, having studied under ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, writing, among other things, a relatively well-circulated *sharḥ* on selections from Ibn 'Arabī's corpus, while also being venerated as a saint by some groups

within Damascus.[865] When Mullah Ḥasan died, a struggle arose over where he was to be buried: on the one side, was a prominent and saintly Ottoman *ʿālim* and *naqīb* of the *ashrāf* of Damascus, Ḥasan Efendi, supported by local troops,[866] who wanted to bury the saint in the vicinity of the Companion Abū Daḥdāḥ. They were disputed, however, by 'the Kurds' (*al-Akrād*), who said, 'This is our shaykh! We will bury him in our *turba* in al-Ṣālaḥiyya in order to obtain his *baraka* for our dead and for ourselves.' The two sides, joined in by others in Damascus, went back and forth over Mullah Ḥasan's burial-place, Ḥasan Efendi and the local troops winning out, burying Mullah Ḥasan where they had wished, his tomb remaining a place of pious visitation to Ṭaha's day.[867] On the one hand, this story reveals a sense of Kurdishness at least temporally operative around the body of a departed Kurdish saint, as the migrant Kurds of the city both generated and deployed a sense of distinctiveness in laying claim to the saint for themselves and their dead (with a special location for Kurdish burials certainly contributing to such collective feeling). A distinctive collective identity, spanning over the various differences that surely would have been present in the Damascene community of Kurds—geographic origin, dialect of Kurdish, familial and tribal ties—proved legible and useful, if not ultimately successful, in this case. It suggests that the Kurds of the city, and Ṭaha looking on from a point

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[865] Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazzī, *Intimate invocations*, 233. His *sharḥ,* which does little to expand relevant biographical information, has recently been printed: Ḥasan ibn Mūsá al-Bānī [al-Kurdī], *Sharḥ ḥikam al-Shaykh al-Akbar Sīdī Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī,* ed. by Aḥmad ibn Farīd ibn Aḥmad Mazīdī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2006). Ṭaha studied, at the urging of his shaykh Dervish Muṣṭafá, Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Fuṣūs* under Mullah Ḥasan's son, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, whom he describes as a much loved saint in his own right. Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 78. He also records a dream of Dervish Mustafa in which, upon the death of Mustafa al-Bakri, the current *quṭb*, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān would become *quṭb* in his place. Ibid., 66.

[866] Ṭaha does not elaborate upon the relationship between Ḥasan Efendi (whose 'ethnic' identity is not noted by Ṭaha either, though his name and position suggests Rūmī origin) and the soldiers, or the exact nature of those soldiers, leaving us to wonder why Ḥasan Efendi found military support as well as exactly why this particular holy scholar became such an object of desire.

[867] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 77.

later in time, could and did a times think of themselves as a collective.[868] Yet, to complicate matters, Ṭaha's report of this conflict was precipitated by his friendly relationship with the grandson of Ḥasan Efendi, Ḥamza Efendi, with whom he stayed for a while in Damascus, and from whom he received two texts by ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī. He regarded both Ḥamza and his grandfather as pious, worthy men, Ḥasan Efendi's altercation with the Kurds of Damascus evidently not at issue for Ṭaha. Ethnic identity and a sense of Kurdish collective distinctiveness may not have been foreign to Ṭaha and others in his milieu, but they were not at all absolute.

Along similar lines, Ṭaha's relationship with the saintly ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sammān and his son Aḥmad al-Sammān of Damascus reveals how central a non-Kurdish saint could be for Ṭaha, his relationship with the Sammām family one of the major themes of the *riḥla*. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was a merchant who, like many of the saints profiled a century before by Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, combined his various activities in the market (which included managing a hammam as well as his 'buying and selling' unspecified goods in his shop) with a parallel career as a holy man. Briefly, his repertoire of sainthood, which his son continued to some extent, consisted of numerous acts of generosity, some of them supplemented by their also being instances of *karāmāt*,[869] his reproduction of esoteric teachings and production of his own, albeit cryptic,

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[868] It should go without saying that such a sense of collective, politically deployable identity does not imply something akin to 'nationalism,' or even ethnic separatism: there is no sense in the story or in Ṭaha's own self-descriptions throughout that separation from or resistance to the Ottoman *devlet* was desirable, or even something to be considered. Any assertitions of distinctiveness took place within the assumed, and generally desirable, reality of Ottoman rule. That said, it is striking to note the 'diasporic' effect of group-identification at work here, an effect better known from the history of nationalism, with exiled and diasporic communities often the most vital sites for the construction of national identity and collective feeling.

[869] For instance: one day his father bought a head of sheep in order to give a feast for the poor; the sheep cost twelve piasters, but he had to borrow eight piasters from a friend to make the purchase. When they slaughtered the sheep, they found its gall-bladder to be hard and dry, which they marveled at; opening it up, what did they find but that it was full of various coins such as were in circulation among the people of the city. When they calculated the total value of the coins, it added up to twelve piasters. This those present attributed to 'the intention of the *fuqarā'*.' They took the matter to the Turkmen that had sold the sheep, who was equally amazed at it. Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 144-145.

material,[870] and his maintenance of relationships with other saintly individuals, including the famed *majdhūb* 'Ali al-Nabakī,[871] all overlaid by his cultivating a public, a community of followers and clients, spatially oriented around a family compound that included a *zāwiya*, private cells for sufis, and the family home. While Ṭaha knew ʿAbd al-Raḥmān at least briefly before the latter's death, most of his interactions—which he records in considerable detail—with the saintly family came through Aḥmad. Aḥmad maintained the relationship in part through gifts of different sizes and natures to Ṭaha, and to Ṭaha's brother and his family (Ṭaha was a bachelor, life-long it would seem). These gifts ranged in kind and extent. At times Aḥmad sent money, sometimes unsolicited, such as a gold dinar that Aḥmad had himself been gifted by the *muhâfiz* of the Damascus citadel, one Aḥmad Ağa al-Zaʿfāranjī,[872] while at other times Aḥmad designated funds for specific purposes, as when he paid Ṭaha's brother's rent of forty *qurūsh* in advance one year.[873] Other gifts included food and drink, such as a sherbet made of cloves, cinnamon, and rose water mixed in a dissolved sugar syrup, about which Ṭaha says 'When I drank it my heart was invigorated and my soul was blessed, as if I had never drunk such in all

[870] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 148-149. Ṭaha says that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān wrote several volumes written in what seems to have been an invented script, and perhaps a constructed language, which no one—including ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's son, or Ṭaha himself, who received the volumes from Aḥmad upon the latter's death—could decipher. He would not be the first Ottoman sufi to engage in such linguistic activity, of course, with Muḥyī-i Gülşenī's *Bāleybelen* the most famous and best developed such endevaour, on which see (including the likelihood of it being a collaborative, and perhaps long-term, project) the comprehensive article C. G. Häberl, 'Bālaybalan Language,' in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2015.

[871] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 147. ʿAbd al-Ghanī described how this same *majdhūb* came to Damascus from Nabak on the day of his saintly mother's death, telling ʿAbd al-Ghanī that God had commanded him to 'go to Damascus and be present for this exalted and blessed funeral procession (*al-jināza al-ʿaẓīma al-barika*), for verily the current plague in Damscus is ended by it.' After participating in ʿAbd al-Ghanī's mother's funeral, the *majdhūb* returned home, and the plague lifted. 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaqīqah wa-al-majāz,* vol. i., 66-67.

[872] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 162.

[873] Ibid*.,* 166.

my life!'[874] Ṭaha's careful recording of these gifts[875] suggests that he kept a record of such things—akin to the personal chronicles or diaries known from other Ottoman subjects of like social status in his time—while certainly indicating the importance he attached to these transactions in demonstrating his relationship with the saintly family and hence his own place in broader Damascene society.

Ṭaha's relationship to the al-Sammān family was one in which he made up a key part of the saintly family's public, the men and women who were devoted to the saint and who looked to him for physical, political, and economic protection and aid, aid supplied through a range of means, the saint's public contributing social support under various forms. In Ṭaha's case, besides reproducing hagiography devoted to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān wrote praise and other genres of poetry in honor of Aḥmad and his saintly father (including a chronogram poem for the entrance to the family's *zāwīya*), practiced devotions on behalf of the family, and passed along to them various objects invested with *baraka* which came into his possession.[876] In return, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and then Aḥmad not only assisted Ṭaha and his brother monetarily and with other material means, but invested them with social belonging and some degree of prestige—no small thing for Kurdish migrants from the countryside—and acted as mediators with Ottoman officialdom.[877] We ought not discount the more abstract benefits, for all involved, from the bonds of friendship

[874] Ibid., 170.

[875] His record of gifts, flowing in both directions, runs from ibid., 162-186.

[876] For instance, along with some poetry in a letter, Ṭaha sent a white cloak, which had itself been sent to to Taha from a Shaykh Muḥammad of al-Ruhā, and was therefore invested with *baraka*. Ibid., 165.

[877] Cf. an analogous situation—also in Syria—of the (rural) holy man as patron as famously described by Peter Brown, though with, among other differences, the transparency with which Ṭaha reveals the day-to-day activities that bound himself and his holy patron to one another as well as his patron's interventions with other holders of power. Peter Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,' *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80–101.

that might emerge in such a relationship, friendship indicated by certain actions Ṭaha suggests were exceptional, such as Aḥmad's secretly sending candles and cash to him, the messenger not being aware of the source (which indicates that usually the gifts exchanged would have effectively been a matter of public record, hence their social utility to the patron). In short, Ṭaha provides in his accounts of his interactions with the al-Sammān family a valuable glimpse into the day-to-day mutualistic work of maintaining a local urban saintly lineage, one that did not really extend beyond Damascus (and did not become especially well-known there) but which did much to structure the lives of all those involved.

Following his extended discussion of the Sammān family and his interactions with them, Ṭaha profiles a number of Kurdish saints, both resident in the Kurdish regions and migrants to the cities of Syria, all in a bid, never explicitly stated but clearly evident, to underline for his Arabic-reading audience the vitality of sainthood among the Kurds, and to explain aspects of Kurdish practice that might not have met with approval among all members of his envisioned audience. Out of these various profiles, one in particular stands out, that of 'Kaka' Abū Aḥmad of 'Akra. 'A little before I turned twenty, I met with one who was renowned in the realm of our country (*fī iqlīmi balādinā*) for sainthood (*al-wilayat*) of word, deed, and state,' Ṭaha writes, before describing a saintly career that has echoes of others, Kurdish and non-Kurdish, from the rural Ottoman world.[878] At the beginning of his saintly career Abū Aḥmad was reclusive, and lived out in the open during the winter, enduring the bitter cold. Later 'his reason returned,' and he took up a more conventional life, having 'possession over his *ḥāl*.' He married, had children, and sowed his fields, with wheat, barley, cotton and other things, an agrarian base that enabled him to begin engaging in acts of generosity, which would form the core of his saintly repertoire.

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[878] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 188.

He would feed people at his home, supplying them personally, Ṭaha writes, with loaves of bread so delicious that people liked to eat them without any other food, a single one sufficing even the hungriest person: 'this was among the greatest of his miracles.' He also traveled in the vicinity of his home, bringing food and a large *ṣufra* with him, he and his son supervising the feeding of disciples. He would become known as Kāka Aḥmad, the term '*kāka*,' Ṭaha explaining for his Arabic-reading audience, a Kurdish term of respectful address for an older brother or one's father, used in Abū Aḥmad's case as a way of designating a holy person, similar to the Turkish *dede* or *baba*.[879] This usage of '*kāka'* appears as well as among the neighboring Ahl-i Ḥaqq (and, as we will explore below, among the Kākā'ī outside of Mosul) [880] as a title for various holy beings, Wladimir Ivanow suggesting an origin this usage in the local Persian dialect of Fars, while Ayfer Karakaya-Stump notes the historic and contemporary usage of a derived term

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[879] Ibid., 189.

[880] The term *kākā* is almost certainly the source of the name of the Islamic 'heterodox' Kākā'ī community of 'Iraq, as suggested by the 'legend' C. J. Edmonds related, reproduced below in relation to a story of Kāka Aḥmad. The Kākā'ī emerged out of the broad saintly, theological, and devotional milieu of the Ottoman (especially but not exclusively the Turcophonic parts) whose lineaments I attempted to trace to some degree in chapter four. Saints—including some decidedly Ottoman saints such as Ḥācī Bektāş—figure prominently into their identity and ritual (with their saints' shrines continuing to be targets of militant activity, some quite recently). While Kurdish to some degree, the Kākā'ī really seem to be best described as 'Ottoman,' connected with and drawing upon discourses and communities of saints and sanctity from Anatolia south and east, with possible transmission practices only for now matters of speculation (Janissaries, nomadic movements, travelers, and so forth); like other heterodox communities the most important points of distinction are their complex cosmological and saintly-hierarchal beliefs and ritual manifestations thereof. See Martin van Bruinessen, 'Shabak,' in EI^2; C. J. Edmonds, 'The Beliefs and Practices of the Ahl-i Ḥaqq, of Iraq,' *Iran* 7 (1969): 89–101; cf. Martin van Bruinessen, 'When Haji Bektash Still Bore the Name of Sultan Sahak: Notes on the Ahl-i Haqq of the Guran district,' in *Bektachiyya: études sur l'ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach* (Istanbul: Éditions Isis, 1995) 117-138. Largely speculator, though at least putting the Kākā'ī in an Ottoman frame, is Matti Moosa, *Extremist Shiites: The Ghulat Sects* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 1-9. I have so far been able to scan through the only full-length treatment of the group, Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Sarrāf, *al-Shabak: min firaq al-ġulāt fī al-'Irāq: aṣluhum, luġatuhum, qurāhum, 'aqā'iduhum, awābiduhum, ādātuhum* (Baġdād: Maṭba'at al-Ma'ārif, 1954). Their contemporary situation, as of last year at least, is described in Seyedehbehnaz Hosseini, 'The Kaka'i: A Religious Minority in Iraq,' *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 5, no. 2 (June 1, 2018): 156–69.

among the Kurdish-speaking Alevis of Anatolia.[881] As such its usage by an ostensibly 'Sunni' saint points to a shared discourse of sanctity and shared resources for constructing that discourse and practice, regardless of specific confessional or other group identity.

Kāka Aḥmad's wondrous signs are also indicative of the wider milieu and expectations upon a saint in the region. In one account, Kāka Aḥmad was building a village mosque, and while the walls were raised, the people of the village were having trouble getting the massive central beam of the roof in place, which seemed both too heavy and too short to boot.[882] Kāka Ahmad told them to leave it overnight and that in the morning they would work something out. The next day when everyone arrived they found that the beam was in place, and rushing to the shaykh, after kissing his hand, cried out, '"Ya *Kāka*! How did you carry the beam by yourself so that you could raise it up, and how did you lengthen it? By God, tell us!" He smiled and said, "God helped us on account of our building His house! I said to the beam, Ya *mubarak*! Lengthen thusly until you reach all the way—and God blessed it, so that it is as you see."' Ṭaha relates another set of miracles which also relate to the performance of *ṣalāt*: he could tell when dawn was approaching, even on moonlit nights, or in the midst of snow storms or other forms of inclement weather, doing so from within his home, going out to alert the muezzin that dawn was

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[881] 'A question may arise whether the term *kākā*, abbreviated as *kāka, kaka*, or *kā*, which forms parts of the names of some "angels" and shaykhs (of the earlier periods) as Kāka Ridā, or Kā Rahman, etc., is a relic of Christianity. We may note that it neither appears in the names of ordinary people, nor is found in darwish names. In Persian it is apparently used only in Fars, where it means "brother." It is neither used elsewhere in Persian nor in Kurdish.' Wladimir Ivanow, *The Truth-Worshippers of Kurdistan; Ahl-i Haqq Texts Edited in the Original Persian and Analysed by W. Ivanow* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1953), 56. Ayfer Karakaya Stump notes that, 'Among Kurdish-speaking Alevis in Anatolia, we also see the use of derivatives of this same root [*kaka*] as a term of respectful address for men and in at least one recorded case for an Alevi *dede*.' Ayfer Karakaya. Stump, 'Subjects of the Sultan,' 47.

[882] This aspect of the story indicates that the village mosque in question would have resembled the houses in the village quite closely, aside perhaps in being somewhat bigger, with a large central beam (*kolleke* in Kurdish) a defining feature in the local vernacular architecture. See Rostam, 'Evolved Sustainable Building,'16.

approaching.[883] Both sets of *karāmāt* underscore very quotidian challenges to faithful performance of basic Islamic obligations in a rural village, with Kāka Aḥmad providing, through means mundane and divinely inspired, the resources necessary, and in the process facilitating local Islamic ritual life. The first story of Kāka Aḥmad's mosque construction is echoed in a very similar *karāma* tale from among the neighboring Kākā'ī, pointing towards the particular shared economy and dialect of sanctity in which Kāka Aḥmad and others participated—and the possibility that stories such as these served in part to mark out such communal distinctions to some degree. This second story is in the form of a 'legend' which Cecil Edmonds relates concerning the origins of the collective term 'Kākā'ī'[884]:

> The oratory of Shaykh 'Īsē at Barzinja[885] was undergoing repairs, but when the new main beam for the roof was hoisted on to the walls it proved to be too short to span the space between them. Seeing his father's distress [Sultan Isḥaq/Suhāk, the 'founder' of the Kākā'ī], the favourite son of his old age, climbed onto one wall, seized one end of the beam, and called to his elder brother, "Brother, pull!" (K[urdish] *Kake bikêshe*). In this way they made it longer and placed it in position. The main beam of the mosque at Barzinja today is claimed to be the identical beam of the miracle.[886]

Unfortunately, Edmonds does not describe his source for this story, which probably heard it related orally during his stint in 'Iraq as a British political officer after the British conquest of the

[883] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 190-191.

[884] The role of naming heterodox communities is itself an underexplored topic in this regard, related to the question of just what historically made distinct—or not—groups now seen as 'heterodox' 'communities' or even outright 'religions.' Valuable in this regard is Robert Ford Campany, 'On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China),' *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287–319: 'In contexts where such differences become acute, where religious plurality is not only evident but also the locus of some particular problems, nominalizations and reifications (one or another "ism," *fodao,* or, at an even more abstract, generic level, "religions") begin to be invoked.'

[885] While Barzinja is some one hundred and sixty miles from 'Akre, the 'heartland' of the Kākā'ī community is actually east of Mosul, Akre about fifty miles from Mosul, meaning that Kaka Aḥmad would have almost certainly had Kākā'ī villagers and religious experts as neighors.

[886] Edmonds, 'The Beliefs and Practices,' 89.

region during the First World War.[887] Nonetheless, the parallels with the story of Kāka Aḥmad are too close for the two stories to be unrelated, suggesting at least an eighteenth century provenance for the tale. *How* precisely these two stories are related is harder to say: do they simply reflect shared appropriations of a common dialect of sanctity and common quotidian and symbolic concerns (lifting a heavy beam, the importance of the central beam in Kurdish architecture, the role of the Gūrānī language, and so forth), present in Kurdish (and other adjacent) communities all along the southern arc?[888] Or might there be a competitive or polemical relationship, with the mastery of unwieldy but symbolically charged beams something locally important to show a powerful saint performing as a demonstration of true sanctity? Examples of explicit use of hagiographic accounts to underline communal distinctions can be found in the hagiographic memory of the nearby Ahl-i Ḥaqq (who are more or less conterminous with the Kākā'ī of 'Iraq), accounts which were almost certainly originally generated in an intertextual relationship with competing stories of other saints.[889] Both possibilities—the existence of shared repertoires and of polemical completion—are likely to have been true, as the

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[887] For the context of such careers as that of Edmonds' and the conflicts between political officers and others in the British administration and military, see Charles Townshend, *Desert Hell: The British Invasion of Mesopotamia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011).

[888] On the important role in the region of Gūrānī, itself not a Kurdish language per se, see for instance the following quite old but still useful articles, Vladmir Minorsky, 'The Gūrān,' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 11, no. 1 (1943): 75–103; E. B. Soane, 'A Short Anthology of Guran Poetry,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* 53, no. 01 (1921): 57–81.

[889] Part of a *manāqib* of one of the Ahl-i Ḥaqq 'manifestations,' Qirmizī, provides a good sense of this polemical interplay and, reading between the lines, competing saints and communities of sanctity only hinted at in the (clearly derived from an oral milieu) text: 'Khān Aḥmad Khān, the [Ottoman] *ḥākim* of that *vilāyat*, heard of the unveiling of these miracles [of Qirmizī] and out of sincerity became a disciple, and more miracles were manifest. Yet the blind people brought forth doubts and apostasized… The shāh of the world said, "Those people are the ones who doubted the pure essence of ʿAlī Murtaza, becoming the sunnafying people, while we with the memory of Muḥammad the Chosen bring them to the reality, but still they do not believe. People of the Shāhū'ī [an Ahl-i Ḥaqq affiliated tribal grouping], be separate from them, and do not give your vows and offerings to them!' The people of Shāhū'ī promised that "Our hands will not be taken from the skirt of your hem!" Persian text in Ivanow, *The Truth-Worshippers,* 95.

second is built upon the first, as the competition—explicit and implicit—over shared markers of sanctity and of community identity acted to differentiate individual saints and communities that might otherwise look very similar indeed.

Regardless of the polemical situation and need for communal distinction lying behind the stories of Kāka Aḥmad, it is very clear that the repertoire of sainthood that Ṭaha's reminiscences reveal is one ultimately deeply rooted in local needs, expectations, and religious dialects (which, it should be stressed, were also connected to communities of sanctity elsewhere in the empire, and across the borderlands in the post-Safavid lands). Strikingly, there is no indication of *ṭarīqa* affiliation or connection with other saints, though that may simply indicate that Ṭaha did not collect or recall such information, or, just as likely, that it was not of great importance to his local informants. Rather, Kāka Aḥmad's generosity, his attention to local communal needs in the form of religious infrastructure, and his ability to attract a large number of disciples spread across a rural region all made up his social profile in sanctity, a profile that Ṭaha himself saw as both expressing universally valid sainthood and Kurdish distinctiveness. Ṭaha knew the local expectations of a saint well, for he followed just such a career for a time himself, to which we will now turn.

iii. Return to Kurdistan: or, a saint in his own country?:

After twenty-six years of travel and of life as a migrant in Syria, Ṭaha al-Kurdī made his way back home.[890] Ṭaha does not explain to his readers why he decided to return to the Kurdish mountains between Koy Sanjak and Akra, his home territory, nor does he make explicit his reason for leaving a second time, though the first may have simply been precipitated by a desire

[890] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 85-92.

to see his family and his native land, both of which he clearly continued to value and to closely identify with even after many years of living abroad. Certainly the death of Shaykh Muṣṭafá was a factor, though if Ṭaha's reckoning is correct there was an almost ten-year gap between his shaykh's death and his return to their native land. Perhaps he hoped to establish himself as a shaykh, or even to become known as a saint, a successor to Dervish Muṣṭafá. Of his two Kurdish companions who set out with him from Damascus on the *ḥajj* years before, Ṭaha writes, one died of heat exhaustion on the way to Suez, while the other eventually returned to the Kurdish lands and became a shaykh, attracting a following and becoming a source of *baraka*; when he died his tomb became a site of pilgrimage.[891] In Ṭaha's accounting, his own sojourn in the Kurdish lands attracted enough attention that such a path could have been opened to him. When his relations and friends heard of his return, Ṭaha writes, they hastened to him, 'one group after another,' most of them bearing gifts.[892] From Koy Sanjaq he made his way back to his home village of Balisan, where the elderly of the village—men and women—came out to meet him, they 'being in the extremity of desire to meet with me,' despite their being unable to make the trek down to Koy Sanjaq. In every village through which he circulated over the coming months and years the people would come out to meet him about an hour out from the village, receiving him

> like the Prophet in his *umma*. The people were astonished by this honoring (*iḥtirām*) and from these crowds, such that children and infants were seeking blessing from me and kissing my hand then rubbing their clothes with their hands, then their faces. I witnessed their actions towards me, and I marveled at their belief, saying secretly within myself, "God make me worthy of what they think of me! Forgive me for what they do not know about… Bless them by me, and me by them… My fame in the land became like that of a *murshīd*, or even a prophet, praise be to the Doer of that which He desires! When I beheld the people having such belief in me, and that they would do what I declared, I ordered them repentance and forbid them disobedience, so they

[891] Ibid., 58.

[892] Ibid., 92.

repented and adjured disobedience.[893]

Even the elite of Kurdish society came to love him and to seek prayers and instruction in repentance from him, to the point that 'ten thousand people from the scholars, students, and common people' repented at his hand. He passed his three years in his homeland as an effective nomad (*bi-l-jawalān*) summer and winter, moving from one community to another, often at the behest of villages upset that the shaykh had not yet visited them. During this time of constant circumambulation, Ṭaha reports, he not only received many disciples, but also had many people, especially women, come to him with religious questions on rites and responsibilities—questions of menstruation, childbirth, and the matter of major ritual impurity, *wudūʿ*, *ṣalāt*, and their conditions, enough so that 'most of the days I was unable to attend to care of my own self in terms of food, drink, and rest.' In addition to initiating disciples and providing religious instruction, he would write amulets, and practice something called *takbīs*, a sort of holy massage in which he laid his hands on the head of a woman and recited Qur'anic verses appropriate to her need—healing for sickness, marital strife, fertility, better understanding of God, and so on. He would write out verses for people's animals, as well, which they would place as amulets around their animals' necks. Ṭaha follows up his self-narration here with a theological defense of his practices, sensing that some of his readers might have looked askance at such things, or at least seen them as déclassé.[894]

He then describes the closest thing to a *karat* story having to with himself, writing that once a herdsman placed an amulet Ṭaha had written around the neck of a prize stallion goat ('his love for it was like the love of a scholar for his book, the horseman for his horse,' Ṭaha writes

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[893] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 92-95.

[894] Ibid., 93-94.

with the sort of inner understanding of rural life that is so distinctive about his voice) which was then stolen, along with part of the rest of the herd, and taken to Mosul. In the city the buyer noticed the amulet-collar, opened it, saw Ṭaha's name (which indicates Ṭaha signed even his prophylactic productions), and recognized Ṭaha as being a shaykh in the Kurdish mountains north of Mosul. Suspecting that the animal had been stolen he confronted the thieves, who admitted their theft and out of fear (or social or divine repercussion the story does not specify!) returned the stolen animals to the herdsman. All of this was later related to Ṭaha by the owner of the stallion, who praised him to the people gathered, recounting the story as a miracle of the shaykh.[895] A better summation of the social production and power of sainthood could hardly be asked for: Ṭaha's amulet proved effective because his reputation as one possessed, at the very least, of *baraka*, had spread to the point that it was known to some in Mosul (a city with extensive links to the Kurdish mountains, including that of livestock thieves!). Ṭaha actively encouraged such a situation not just through offering a range of religious services to his fellow Kurds, but by moving about constantly, offering his physical presence as his gift of generosity in lieu of the sort of agricultural bounty or infrastructural development a Kaka Aḥmad could provide. Yet, unlike Kāka Aḥmad or Ṭaha's anonymous Kurdish companion-turned-saint, Ṭaha did not maintain this way of life, nor did he re-settled in the Kurdish lands permanently. Instead, after three years of this life, he departed for Damascus, much to the sorry, he writes, of his kin, friends, and followers.[896] The account he gives of his journey north and west along the arc of the mountains and across the lowlands to Syria is one in which his prestige and purchase as a saintly shaykh gradually diminishes, and his narrative, which had taken on the appearance almost of an

[895] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 94.

[896] Ibid., 96-97.

auto-hagiography returns to a travel narrative.[897] In Damascus there is no indication that anyone venerated Ṭaha in any way or saw him as an especially significant, or at all significant, religious authority.

To be sure, some Kurdish saints continued to be socially recognized upon settling in the Arabophone world of the cities of Syria, whether through their ties to migrant Kurdish communities—Shaykh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdo and Ṣeyh Maḥmūd from previous centuries were both indicative of this strategy—or through practices and relationships that made their sanctity legible to wider audiences. If Ṭaha hoped that his perceived sanctity in the Kurdish highlands would transfer to Damascus, he was disappointed. Not unlike the experience of ʿAlī ibn Maymūn in early sixteenth century Bursa, for whatever reasons, Ṭaha's particular saintly repertoire did not translate in his adopted Syrian milieu. Rather, it was only upon his return to his ancestral land that he was seen by others as possessing *wilāya*, a perception that seems to have hinged upon three core aspects. One, as he notes at the beginning of his autobiography, he was physically descended from saints, saints widely admired among the Kurds of his region, and his more proximate relations, while not necessarily known as bearers of sainthood, had reputations for piety and themselves forged relationships with the saints of their time. But this sort of—potentially—authorizing context would have only been known within Ṭaha's native region.

Second, Ṭaha could draw upon his experience of a long sojourn in Damascus and his travels elsewhere, an experience which clothed him in the eyes of many of his fellow rural Kurds with the prestige of an urbanite, and not just an urbanite but a dweller in one of the great and venerable cities of Islam. Finally, and most crucially, Ṭaha was attuned to the particular ways of sainthood in the Kurdish lands, having been formed in them and able to easily reproduce them in

[897] Ibid., 98-131.

himself, probably without a great deal of conscious thought, even, if we take Ṭaha's word, without his wishing for such a result. And perhaps we should take him at his word: had he desired a career as a rural saint, he could have had it, and indeed he did, for some three years. But then he set back out to return to Damascus. Why? Ṭaha does not say. Perhaps the combination of required cultural capital, social perception maintenance, and constant physical labor that went into his public manifestation of sanctity was simply more than he wanted to maintain. Perhaps the initial effect of his return from Syria had worn off, and his reputation was flagging. Perhaps the allure of life in the city—albeit often precarious life, as Ṭaha makes no effort to hide from the reader—outweighed continued activity in the poor and hardscrabble mountains. Or perhaps he genuinely did not regard himself as a saint in the way that his countrymen saw him, and regarded it wrong to keep up a career directly or indirectly dependent on such an estimation

Before we follow Ṭaha out of the Kurdish highlands and onto the danger-riven road in the lowlands, it is worth returning once more to the question of rurality and religion, particularly religious knowledge, given Ṭaha's description of his activities, particularly among Kurdish women, allowing us to explore once again the intersection of gender and sanctity. Certainly his ability to act as a preceptor of religious knowledge was aided by his recognition as a holy man possessed of divine *baraka*. It is significant however that his role was not only as a distributor of *baraka*. The women who came to him for amulets and *takbīs* also came to him, he tells us, for instruction in questions of ritual impurity, of dealing with menstruation, childbirth, and the like, and the proper performance of the *ṣalāt* (issues which Ṭaha himself had first learned about from his mother). In performing *takbīs* he would pray not just for quotidian matters, but also that the woman's understanding of God might increase, and we are probably meant to understand that the

disciples he received for further instruction in religious matters included women as well as men. His experiences, both as a child learning the fundamentals of Islam and as an adult shaykh teaching and providing religious services, reveal a rural milieu in which religious knowledge was both desired by a wide range of people, including rural women, and in which it was socially expected and acceptable for rural people, men and women, to pursue and practice such knowledge. That such a situation was neither Ṭaha's own strategic, self-serving rendering for Arabic-speaker consumption is suggested by the fact that he includes practices—*takbīs*, for instance—which he clearly sensed might not have been accepted by his urban audience, with his entire account of his career in Kurdistan being conveyed with a rather defensive, self-apologetic tone.

But we can also look to sources, such as they have survived, from non-Islamic communities that paint a similar picture of rural religious instruction and confessional life in the Kurdish lands. The Neo-Syriac didactic poetry (*durekṭā*) of the seventeenth century Church of the East writers Israel of Alqosh and Joseph of Telkepe, studied and published with translations by Alessandro Mengozzi, is representative of a genre of popular literary productions that arose in the early seventeenth century under, it seems, various polemical pressures, and which would flourish in the successive two among the Church of the East communities scattered within and at the edge of the Kurdish arc, well within the Kurdish cultural zone.[898] These texts and what reports on everyday religious life that are available—mostly from the early nineteenth century, but probably reflecting earlier periods as well—reveal that the authors of the *durekṭā,* texts which deal with matters of scriptural history, Christian doctrine, liturgical explanations, and so forth, intended them for widespread use, composing them in the vernacular, forms of Syriac that

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[898] Alessandro Mengozzi, *Israel of Alqosh and Joseph of Telkepe: a story in a truthful language: religious poems in vernacular Syriac (North Iraq, 17th century)* (Lovanii: Peeters, 2002).

reflected long contact with Arabic and Kurdish speaking communities.[899] That they were in fact widely used (read and recited publicly, as well, in echoes of Ṭaha's practices, used prophylactically) is demonstrated by both the many manuscript copies still extant and the fact that the both the form and language of the various manuscripts vary considerably from place to place, reflecting local decomposition and adaptation to regional dialects.[900] Their focus on theological questions, and on rebutting Muslim and Jewish theological claims,[901] suggests one probable factor for widespread interest in religious knowledge and the willingness of local religious professionals in the Kurdish lands to provide it during this period: while confessional divisions among and between the different religious communities had existed for centuries in this region, both the seventeenth and eighteenth century saw fresh fissures emerge, multidirectional fissures in fact, from the schism in the Church of the East precipitated by one part of the church entering into union with Rome, to the puritan-precipitated debates among Muslims over saints and sainthood and other matters, to the continued pressures from the Shiʿi Safavid and post-Safavid lands. Among the Ahl-i Ḥaqq and other Islamic-adjacent groups there seems to have

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[899] See Mengozzi's descriptions of this milieu in the above as well as in Alessandro Mengozzi and Emanuela Braida, *Religious poetry in vernacular Syriac from Northern Iraq (17th-20th centuries): an anthology* (Lovanii: Peeters, 2011).

[900] On usage, Mengozzi describes how a 'note in the margin of an important manuscript of Neo-Aramaic poems provides us with some information about the use of the *durekṭā On Penitence* and *On Supplication* by Thomas Tektek Sinjari (19th-century): 'It is said that he (the poet, probably) recited this poem under the lodge in a cucumber-garden and he recited the poem that begius *To you must be...* in the harvest of wheat when it has been heaped up after the labour'. This profane use, outside the liturgy in church, fits well with the choice of the vernacular instead of the classical language, and is reminiscent of the public performances of bards and ballad-singers which were and are still very popular in the region where the texts originate.' Alessandro Mengozzi, 'Neo-Syriac Literature in Context: A Reading of the Durektha On Revealed Truth by Joseph of Telkepe (17th Century),' in *Redefining Christian Identity: Christian Cultural Strategies Since the Rise of Islam*, ed. J J van Ginkel; H L Murre-van den Berg; Theo Maarten van Lint (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2005), 322.

[901] Often with overt polemical edge, as the introduction to one 17th century poem runs: 'Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Spirit / who gave us an open mouth/ and a story in a truthful language/so that we praise and give glory to him. / Come, let us glorify, oh Christians // and let us keep on beseeching him, / that he make for us peaceful times / and save us from the Muslims!' Mengozzi, 'Neo-Syriac Literature,' 331.

been a similar flourishing of popular religious literature and drives for widespread religious education in doctrine, reflected in the abundant didactic and liturgical poetry of the period as well as the aforementioned hagiographic text edited by Ivanow, with clear points of response to contemporary issues, such as the use of tobacco.[902] And in Koy Sanjaq itself, where Ṭaha lived and studied for a time, the small Jewish community is known to have produced during Ṭaha's lifetime literature that included material translated from Hebrew into the local Neo-Aramaic dialect, evidence, albeit more fragmentary, of popular demand for religious learning.[903]

All in all, even an impressionistic appraisal of the evidence from non-Muslim communities in and near by the Kurdish lands reveals what ought to be taken to be a shared pattern of robust rural religious life among ordinary people as well as scholars, saints, and other religious professionals, a pattern that had long genealogies, for the Church of the East, for instance, running back to late antiquity but carried forward even during the difficult times before the Ottoman incorporation of the region at the expense of the Ak Koyunlu.[904] Such similar patterns existed alongside important differences, differences made all the more evident by the shared elements: for instance, neither the Church of the East nor the Ahl-i Ḥaqq (a more

[902] The story in question, whose anti-tobacco logic is decidedly different from that of other communties, runs: 'There was a man [from the Ahl-i Ḥaqq] who did not have fear of the Truth in his heart. He went to visit an outsider (*khārijī*) and saw him smoking a pipe, took that pipe from the outsider and smoked once, and a hair from his mustache entered his mouth. He returned to his home and one night wished to go to the *jam'* of the Padishah of the World. But [his sin] was manifest to Khān Ātish, who commanded, "By God, so-and-so has gone out from the *sharṭ* of Benyamīn, and may not come to the *jam'*." They asked: "What is the reason he may not come to the *jam'*?" Khān Ātish replied: "Something forbidden has come to his mouth, and he has cast the Qur'ān to the ground, having borne a hair of his mustache to his mouth. For one hair from the mustache of a Friend (*yār*) is equal to the Qur'ān, and such a one has no faith in the hereafter, even if he does a hundred thousand sacrifices, they will not benefit him.'" Ivanow, *Truth Worshippers*, 112.

[903] Hezy Mutzafi, *The Jewish Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Koy Sanjaq (Iraqi Kurdistan)* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004), 2-3.

[904] On which see Thomas A. Carlson, *Christianity in Fifteenth-Century Iraq* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

ambiguous case) seem to have produced new saints during this period, instead focusing their veneration on holy men and women from earlier in their respective histories.[905] Yet even among communities whose generators of sanctity were largely on hold, veneration of saints remained central, and dynamic, often without clear boundaries not just in terms of shared resources and practices—saints themselves were often shared, as reported by al-ʿUmarī about one venerable Kurdish saint, Shaykh Jākir, who was venerated by Yezīdīs and Sunnis alike, a fact that did not bother al-ʿUmarī at all.[906]

To say that shared economies of sanctity existed in the Kurdish mountains is not to collapse rural religious life into a syncretistic and timeless 'agrarian religion' that was indistinguishable across confessional lines. Shared economies and symbols (and outright language)[907] did not entail sharing on all fronts, and in fact a robust understanding of sainthood helps us to see the lines of distinction: Ṭaha al-Kurd's Islam was predicated upon his relationship with particular holy people (and, to a lesser extent, holy places and things), holy people who themselves were related to yet others, an interlocking—if not impermeable—network of sanctity, structured by particular traditions, some shared, some exclusive, and open to the wider Ottoman

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[905] Ibid., 246-250. The Ahl-i Ḥaqq hagiographies are not easy to parse, and may indicate holy 'manifestations' of the divine (who, however, are treated in a hagiographic manner and suggest many elements of saintly social repertoire) active up into the eighteenth century.

[906] Shaykh Jākir was ʿAbbāsī in lineage (though also reckoned to be Kurdish—the two not being mutually exclusive, some Kurdish emirs tracing their lines back to the ʿAbbasids, per Hakan Ozoglu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (SUNY Press, 2004), 140, n.30), and his descendants claimed that lineage, al-ʿUmarī writes. They wre venerated by the Yezidis, who sent them gifts and votive offerings and sought blessing through them. Al-ʿUmarī was told a story by one of Shaykh Jākir's descendents about how he, his siblings, and their mother—their father having died—were beset by a thief while traveling, so his mother sought Shaykh al-Jākir's intercession to protect them from the thief. When morning dawned they found the thief, who they had imagined to have departed, dried out and standing stockstill in his place. The thief made a sign with humility, so the mother passed her hand over him, and he spoke, and repentened of his sin. 'All of this was due to the *baraka* of Shaykh Jākir. He was from among the Kurds of Mosul, and he had a name among them, and great fame.' Al-ʿUmarī, *Manhal*, 107-109.

[907] See Mengozzi, 'Neo-Syriac Literature,' 327-332.

and indeed Islamic worlds. The sainthood expressed by Dervish Muṣṭafá was not 'timeless,' but was produced in the context of Ottoman Baghdad as well as the Kurdish borderlands, themselves sites of cultural production drawing upon multiple worlds of such production beyond the Kurdish hills and mountains. Devotional regimes oriented around important saints of the Islamic past were among the types of sanctified cultural production in which Ṭaha and others from the rural peripheries participated and which they transmitted far and wide, and it is with two such instances of participation in Ṭaha's life with which we conclude.

iv. On the road with Ṭaha al-Kurdī: saints, devotional practices, and Ottomanization:

We have now extensively covered much of the portions of Ṭaha's *riḥla* dealing with the Kurdish regions and his connections and experiences therein. The larger portion of his work, however, covers places and people outside of the Kurdish sphere, people and places encountered in the course of his travels—including going on the *ḥajj* and a short trip to Constantinople—and in Damascus where he settled, a thorough analysis of which could easily accommodate an entire monograph. One of the many things that these pages reveal is Ṭaha's participation in the Ottoman oecumene, a participation that unfolded in diverse ways. While issues of sainthood were paramount, they hardly exhaust the points at which Ṭaha can profitably be seen as a distinctly Ottoman subject, as possessing what we might call, anachronistically to be sure, an Ottoman identity, one which overlapped with his other iterations of identity, from Kurdish to sufi to familial ties to his patronage connections, the very absence of a (continuous) reified concept of identity facilitating a fluidity of roles and self-contextualization. Out of his many recorded experiences in his journeys and in his adopted city I have isolated two related instances, examples which not only indicate Ṭaha's Ottomanness but demonstrate just the sorts of contours

such an identity could take and through what sorts of mechanisms: first, his participation in devotion to the saintly Ahl al-Badr, a distinctly eighteenth-century Ottoman phenomenon in origin, and second, his interaction with another popular form of saintly devotion through a litany of Ibn al-ʿArabī, the *Ḥizb al-dawr*. While, as described in the introduction, this study has for the most part been forced to overlook an important category of sainthood in the Ottoman world, that of devotion to and formations of memory of saints of the more distant, pre-Ottoman Islamic past, one particular instance of saintly devotion Ṭaha records, out of several such instances, warrants an exception to this pattern of exclusion, that of devotion to the Ahl al-Badr, the three hundred and thirteen Muslim participants in the foundational battle of Badr in 624. The following story took place in the context of Ṭaha's journey from Mardin to Raha (modern Diyarbakır), dangerous territory due to Bedouin depredations, made worse by rainstorms falling up Ṭaha and his other tentless companions in the night:

> When we arose safe and sound in the morning we gave thanks to God, prayed the morning *ṣalat*, and set out walking, fear in our hearts. But I had with me the names of the Ahl Badr, God be pleased with them. I began reciting them and seeking their intercession, God bless their master the master of the two worlds, our Prophet Muḥammad, upon whom be peace and God's blessing. We traveled for around three hours from our previous stopping-place when there drew near twenty or more horsemen. At the time I had covered my head with my *aba* due to the rain, and was reciting the names [of the Ahl al-Badr], and when I raised my head and saw that the horsemen had come and stopped along the way a couple of hours walk in front of us, I said, "God is greater, more majestic, and mightier than what we are afraid of and of what we are wary against!" My heart was between hope and fear, but hope predominated…[908]

When Ṭaha and his companions reached the stopped horsemen, they were relieved to discover that the men, the retinue of a tribal chieftan, were on the hunt for a fleeing murderer, and, once satisfied that the murder was not among Ṭaha's company, let the travelers continue on

[908] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 110.

safe and sound (if still soaked from the rain). The intercession, Ṭaha argues through his narration, of these powerful holy warriors of Islam past, the Ahl al-Badr, made present through the recitation of their names (and the presence of their names in some physical, written form, since Ṭaha notes that 'I had with me the names'), turned aside the potential violence of the nomads on the plains.

It is rare that we can pinpoint with any sort of accuracy the wide-spread emergence and popularization of a devotional regime or movement—the explosion in devotion to Muḥammad from the late medieval period forward is a case in point.[909] Eighteenth century devotion to the Ahl Badr is perhaps the one exception from the pre-modern period: not only does it suddenly emerge into prominence a way that is highly visible in the sources, the reason for this emergence is made more or less explicit in at least one of our sources, *Sharḥ al-ṣadr bi-sharḥ arjūzat istinzāl al-naṣr bil-tawassul bi-Ahl Badr* of Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Manīnī (d. 1759),[910] a commentary on a poem devoted to the Ahl al-Badr which he wrote upon the request, he tells his readers, of the Shaykh al-Islām in Constantinople in 1745[911] to pray for the Ottoman military

[909] For while some have put forward explanations (Nelly Amri, for instance, argues that this devotional upsurge was in response to late medieval plague deaths) they must remain heuristic and provisional. Nelly. Amri, *Les saints en islam, les messagers de l'espérance: sainteté et eschatologie au Maghreb aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris: Cerf, 2008).

[910] Along with his interactions with the then Şeyhülislām and then later other 'notables of Rūm' (including the well-known Aḥmed Resmī Efendi, and two other well-placed figures in the central administration, Aḥmed Kürdī Ercanī and Muḥammed Şakir ʿÖmerī), al-Manīnī initiated the future Şeyülislām ʿĀşir Efendi (whom we encountered in chapter five) into sufism, suggesting strong connections and networks with the imperial center on his part. Toprakyaran, 'Nābulusian Sufism,' 213-214, 222. It is also worth noting that ʿĀşir Efendi knew al-Suwaydī and received *ʿijāza*s from him—this was a deeply interconnected world, with the lines between Rūm, 'Arabistān,' and the Kurdish lands frequently blurred in ways that would have no doubt surprised or even shocked observers from earlier in the empire's history. Ibid., 215.

[911] This would have been Pīrīzāde Meḥmed Ṣāḥib Efendi (d. 1749), who interestingly authored a short treatise of exegetical clarification (*takmīl*) of an issue pointed out by a contemporary Damasence scholar, Ḥāmid ibn ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Dimashqī (d. 1758) in his work *al-Lumʿa fī aḥwāl al-mutʿa*, a detailed attempt at demonstrating the prohibited nature of *mutʿa*, 'temporary marriage'—a practice that by the eighteenth century was largely associated with Twelver Shiʿism. Hence it is likely that both treatises were a part of the wider response to Nādir Shāh and his attempts at forging a reconciliation with Sunni Islam; the interplay of the two

then engaged in the midst of renewed, and more threatening, war with Nādir Shāh, a war whose final outcome no one at the time could predict.[912] His later commentary, completed on the 6th of October 1754, came at the bequest of other 'notables of Rūm' who wanted him to expand upon his devotional work, which he did.[913] Numerous other iterations, in poetic, commentary, and other forms, of devotion to the Ahl al-Badr followed quickly after al-Manīnī's poem, perhaps most importantly Jaʿfar Ḥasan al-Barzanjī's *Jāliyat al-kadr fī faḍl Ahl Badr,* with a number of these works having been first noted by Peter Gran, who saw them as manifestations of 'middle class consciousness' in eighteenth century Egypt,[914] F. de Jong later correctly pointing to al-Manīnī and the larger Ottoman context as the original impetus for the devotional movement. Neither scholar quite appreciated the full scope or longevity of the trend begun in 1745.[915]

Why the Ahl al-Badr? For one thing they represented military victory in the face of uncertain odds, victory accomplished through divine intervention. As an unforeseen outbreak of violence and conquest on a scale unknown on the Iranian frontier for over a century, the invasions of Nādir Shāh were clearly disruptive and traumatic across the Ottoman world in ways

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texts provides yet another instance of how closely connected the Rūm and 'Arab provinces had grown by this period. For a brief biography of Pîrîzāde and an edition of his *risāla*, see Saffet Köse, 'Şeyhülislam Pîrîzāde Meḥmed Sâhib Efendi'nin (1085-1162/1674-1749) Ḥāmid el-Imâdî'nin (1103-1171/1692-1758) "El-Lum'a fî Ahvâli'l-Mut'a" Adlı Risâlesine Yazdiği Tekmile,' in *Islam Hukuku Asaştırmaları Dergisi*, sy.5, 2005, 421-432. Pīrīzāde Meḥmed was also the first to translate Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddima* into Ottoman Turkish, as related by C. E. Bosworth, 'Pīrī-Zāde,' in EI².

912 For a recent general history of Nādir Shāh, see Michael Axworthy, *The Sword of Persia: Nader Shāh, from Tribal Warrior to Conquering Tyrant* (London: I.B. Tauris; 2006); on Nādir Shāh's place within the global history of warfare and politics during the period, see Jeremy Black, *War in the Eighteenth-Century World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 51-59.

913 Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Manīnī, *Sharḥ al-ṣadr bi- sharḥ arjūzat istinzāl al-naṣr bil-tawassul bi-Ahl Badr* (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Ḥijr, 1865), 3-4.

914 Peter Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt, 1760-1840* (University of Texas Press, 1979), 69-70.

915 F. De Jong and Peter Gran, 'On Peter Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt, 1760-1840*: A Review Article with Author's Reply,' in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 14, no. 3 (1982), 386-387.

that scholars have not yet fully appreciated, yet also formative of memory and collective identity and concurrent consciousness.[916] In a period of decentralization, responses to Nader Shāh reveal a robust sense of Ottomanness, and not just among Muslim communities in the empire, strikingly. Yet there was probably an explicitly Sunni tint to this devotional regime, at least among some of those who pioneered it, even if it is less obvious later as devotion to the Ahl al-Badr became disconnected from response to Nādir Shāh and instead, as with Ṭaha al-Kurdī and others, became a source of protection and solace in the face of more ordinary dangers. Devotion to the Ahl al-Badr certainly existed in various forms before 1745. ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī visited a *maqām* honoring them in Jerusalem, for instance, on one of his sojourns in the city, though he mentions it briefly, saying only that he and his companions stopped to pray and receive the blessing of the martyrs.[917] The treatises and commentaries that arose in the aftermath of Nādir Shāh's invasions drew upon *karāmāt* stories and other sources which appear to have been scattered about within other compilations, not existing as a cohesive body of material until the mid-eighteenth century when al-Manīnī and others crafted them together. Besides the flurry of Arabic poetic texts and *sharḥ* that F. De Jong noted in his reply to Gran, there were Ottoman Turkish textual renderings that bespeak devotion to the Ahl al-Badr among Rūmī subjects of the

[916] While for whatever reasons Nādir Shāh and his wars of conquest have largely faded from historiographic and certainly popular memory, in the eighteenth century he attracted an emormous amount of attention, spurring a wide range of cultural productions and instatiations of memory, of which devotion to the Ahl al-Badr is but one example, and which were produced across eighteeth century Eurasia, but little of which has attracted sustained scholarly attention (or even mere recognition). For instance, the prolific French playwright Pierre-Ulric Dubuisson (1746-1794) composed in 1780 a play about Nādir Shāh, *Nadir, ou Thamas-Kouli-Kan,* while in the Iranian lands Armenian responses to Nādir Shāh include the very positive appraisal of Nādir by Abraham Erewants'i, *History of the Wars: 1721-1738*, tr. George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1999); or the rather unusual use of Nādir Shāh's memory by Sunnis of Central Asia explored in James Pickett, 'Nadir Shāh's Peculiar Central Asian Legacy: Empire, Conversion Narratives, and the Rise of New Scholarly Dynasties,' in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 48, no. 3 (2016): 491–510.

[917] ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, *al-Ḥaḍra al-unsīya,* 185.

empire.[918] Even more valuable for reconstructing the actual practice of this devotional regime are Ṭaha al-Kurdī's report and another description of personal devotion by ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī al-Baghdadī, who writes in his *riḥla* that he began writing out the names of the Ahl al-Badr while in the small Syrian town of al-Rastan. 'It is well-known,' he writes, 'in Aleppo, Damascus, and the Hijaz, that the bearer of these names is preserved from enemies.' Al-Suwaydī had learned of another writer, a Khalīl ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Maktabī al-Shamī, who had written a treatise (*risāla*) about them, and so al-Suwaydī had vowed to write a similar treatise once God returned him to his homeland—a treatise that he reproduced in the pages following this discussion.[919] Prefacing his treatise, which consists of accounts of the interventions of the saints of Badr in the lives of those who recited their names, al-Suwaydī offers a summary of the benefits 'for the one who bears their names.' It is said there are saints who received their sainthood due to the *baraka* of their names; the sick are healed through their intercession, and the passing of the dying is eased; their names written on a paper and placed in one's threshold can prevent thieves. And so forth.[920]

Two things stand out in Ṭaha and al-Suwaydī's discussions of their own encounter with the names of the Ahl al-Badr: one, while it is clear that this large-scale devotion to the Ahl al-Badr had its initial impetus from the Ottoman center, as suggested by al-Mīnīnī and the presence of Ottoman Turkish devotional texts, and was most vigorously and extensively developed in the Arab core, it was then spread east to the regions of the empire directly affected by Nader Shāh's invasions. This trajectory points to the second insight we may gain: the rapidity and diversity with which such a devotional regime could develop as it found reception in new contexts and

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[918] Anonymous, *Sharḥ asmā' aṣḥāb Badrīyīn*, n.d., Vollers 0846 - 01, University Library of Leipzig.

[919] al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 215.

[920] Ibid., 216-220. This little treatise went on to have a successful after-life, even being printed in the mid-nineteenth century: 'Abdallāh ibn Ḥusayn al-Suwaydī, *Asmā' Ahl Badr* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Būlāq, 1861).

among new audiences, the original impetus becoming less relevant and visible. Within a decade of al-Manīnī's composition—which appears to have been the first step in the surge in Badriyan devotion—numerous other works had appeared, and, as evidenced by our *riḥla* accounts, the devotion had filtered out into ordinary usage, and did not remain the preserve of the Ottoman elite or of the scholars producing the devotional apparatus. Rather, we ought to see the further elaboration of this apparatus as responding to wider demand, demand whose geographical spread was facilitated by people like Ṭaha al-Kurdi, al-Suwaydi, and Jaʿfar ibn Ḥasan al-Barzanjī (himself of Kurdish descent but resident in Medina), all effectively transmitters and popularizers of a range of devotional repertoires, their travels and work acting as veritable agents of Ottomanization in this period. Their work was markedly successful, down to the present in fact.[921] Holy men of the deep Islamic past became, under the aegis of this widespread devotional regime, intensely present to Ottoman subjects, high and low, the devotional regime spreading in a way that participants recognized and in which they saw themselves participating alongside other Ottoman subjects.

The second saintly devotional practice of particular Ottoman purchase in which Ṭaha participated was use of the famed litany of Ibn al-ʿArabī, his *al-Dawr al-a'lā* (which Taḥa refers to as *Ḥizb al-dawr)*.[922] Ṭaha's recounting of his multiple encounters with this devotional text begins with the story of meeting a shaykh named ʿAlī ibn Muṣṭafá al-Ḥarīrī who had wanted to memorize the litany but had been been unable to do so until one night he saw Ibn al-ʿArabī in a

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[921] Devotion to the Ahl al-Badr remains very much alive in contemporary Islam across the world, al-Barzanjī's supplicatory poem *Jāliyat al-kadr fī faḍl Ahl Badr* having recently received an English translation for instance, alongside a significant digital footprint of Ahl al-Badr devotional material (including many recordings of the recitation of the *Jāliyat al-kadr*), to give but two examples.

[922] On which in general see Suha Taji-Farouki, *A prayer for spiritual elevation and protection, al-Dawr al-a'lā (Ḥizb al-wiqāya): study, translation, transliteration and Arabic text* (Oxford: Anqa Publishing, 2006).

dream-vision and received the '*ijāza* for the litany directly from him. Afterwards, it is as if he has had the litany memorized for years.[923] Ṭaha al-Kurdi, upon being told of this miracle, asked for this ʿ*ijāza* himself, and wrote a poetic *tafsīr* about this dream encounter with the great saint.[924] Ṭaha's second encounter with the *ḥizb* would come while journeying to Baghdad on his way back to the Kurdish lands. Along the way he was accompanied by an ʿ*askerī* and his companion, whom Ṭaha initially supposed to be 'ignorant' based on his outer appearance and dress. But the Ottoman official turned out to be learned, having studied with a Shaykh Malawī who taught in al-Azhār. There would be some thousand people gathered around him learning, it being said that the spiritual presence of the Prophet would be present every Friday night in this assembly, accompanying Shaykh Malawi's teaching, and lending *baraka* to those present. This disciple, whose name was 'ʿAlī, had been the *rikābdār* (equerry) of ʿAlī Bey, but his master had become angry with him, so he fled and was now journeying to Medina, in the company of a Bedouin guide. Ṭaha received from him a rhymed prose addition to *Ḥizb al-dawr* which he had never come across before, and they deeply enjoyed one another's company before parting. 'He became my shaykh,' and Ṭaha apologizes for having ignorantly thought badly of him based on his external appearance. 'I kept gazing after him until he disappeared from my eyes, and to the date of this composition I haven't heard anything else of him…'[925]

Ṭaha's encounters, and the encounters of his two interlocutors, have ample parallel among his contemporaries, including, again, al-Suwaydī, who describes his transmission of the litany: 'I gave authorization of it to the two of them with the condition of practicing meditation

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[923] This was Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Dāmūnī (d. after 1785), per Taji-Farouki, *Prayer*, 41.

[924] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 83.

[925] Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat*, 85.

and understanding towards the word of the Shaykh—God sanctify his spirit—and with the conditions of taking a humble stance, facing towards the qibla [when reciting it], that they be in perfect purity (ṭāhira kāmila), and that they pray for me, my shaykhs, my roots, and my branches. And I authorized them to recite it at whatever time they desired, though if a crisis arises, or times are troubled, then they should recite it with urgent necessity.'[926] Both Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Dāmūnī (d. after 1785) and Maḥmūd al-Kurdī (d. 1780/1) wrote commentaries on the *Ḥizb* after dream-encounters with Ibn ʿArabī, with al-Dāmūnī further receiving and subsequently transmitting a dream-*ʿijāza*.[927] As Suha Taji-Farouki notes in her study of the litany, its popularity during the Ottoman period was expressed in multiple prestigious lines of transmission—some going through living saints such as al-Nābulusī—as well as an abundance of commentary production and the addition of supplemental prose material, similar to the prose lines Ṭaha's Rūmī companion gave to him.[928] Connections to Ibn ʿArabī were of especial importance in this devotional regime, underscoring his importance in this period as a pre-imminent saint with active power and presence and not just, or even primarily, as a mystical theologian exerting influence through his textual works. The living, active presence of Ibn ʿArabī contributed to the dynamic nature of the text of the *Ḥizb* itself: not only was their flexibility and diversity in the lines of transmission through which one might receive the litany, its precise content was not stable, open as it was to both its author's intervention through dream-vision and the constant process of interaction, use, and accrual, whether in prose additions, *shurūḥ*, or material such as Ṭaha's category-evading poetic work described above. Both a means of the

[926] al-Suwaydī, *al-Nafha,* 196-198.

[927] Taji-Farouki, *Prayer*, 40-41.

[928] Ibid., 17-21, *et passim.*

great saint's presence and the continually in-production product of that presence, the *Ḥizb* was further a means of forging other connections, most obviously those of transmission. In Ṭaha's case, it was clearly a key component in changing the Kurdish shaykh's mind about his *ʿaskerī* travel companion, acting as an item of common reference despite their different stations and identities. Much as the unnamed Kurdish pious elder whom we encountered in the opening story of this chapter discovered a connection with Ṭaha through their veneration of Shaykh Muṣṭafá, Ṭaha and the Rūmī official found commonality through their mutual performance of devotion, here oriented around Ibn ʻArabī and his powerful *Ḥizb al-dawr*, the living nature of this devotional regime further providing the opportunity for gift exchange. No doubt both men were drawn to the *Ḥizb* in no small part due to a common understanding of its prophylactic power that had been elaborated over the years, power that, as indicated in this excerpt from al-Dāmūnī's *sharḥ*, was of especial value to those on the road: 'Whoever reads it regularly and diligently morning and evening need not fear poverty, blindness or broken bones. He will be in God's secure custody en route and at rest on land and at sea… He need not fear highway robbers, for God will rip to utter shreds anyone who stands against him.'[929]

v. Conclusions: identity and borderlands:

Within the matrix of shared saints and common saintly devotions—only aspects of which, just within the life of Ṭaha al-Kurdī, we have been able to touch on here—there emerged among people from across the Ottoman world a shared sense of belonging and even what we may tentatively call identity, reinforced by and a piece with other shared markers of belonging

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[929] Cited and translated in ibid., 70.

and identity, from allegiance to a single sultan to shared poetic canons to overlaps of dress,[930] even as differences and divergences remained. This is not an Andersonian imagined community, to be sure, and while Ṭaha was in his own way a loyal Ottoman subject it is doubtful whether he would have consistently imagined himself to have much more in common with the bulk of (Muslim) Ottoman subjects beyond common loyalty to the sultan in Istanbul and opposition to the various enemies of the empire, most notably for Ṭaha, Nādir Shāh and his forces. What Ṭaha did recognize, along with others, were overlapping conceptual communities in which he participated, and which were themselves entirely, or almost entirely, within the Well-Protected Domains, an enclosure that was not purely incidental. Devotional regimes were one such overlapping conceptual community, with adherence to particular saints another such community. Significantly, Ṭaha's conceptual communities did not necessarily include every Muslim man within the empire—but they could have, potentially, and the spatial horizon of these communities was for the most part confined to the empire.

Ṭaha's performance of Kurdishness, and his presentation of Kurdish saints and sanctity, clarifies matters somewhat: for him his Kurdish origins mattered a great deal, but they were but part of him, and his Kurdishness existed at the time of his composing his *riḥla* alongside and within his place in the wider empire. His careful articulation of his own life and the lives of others in the Kurdish lands of his birth was clearly meant for non-Kurdish consumption, as a way of demonstrating that the Kurds fit within the wider Ottoman world, precisely because great and holy saints came from those Kurdish lands, along with other pious and lettered people. Ṭaha

[930] Ṭaha was himself once mistaken to be a 'Turk' by a beggar woman in Syria, who assumed that he could not understand Syrian Arabic and so cursed him when he did not give her anything as he rode past; he understood her poetic curse and made a joke back, at which the woman exclaimed at his understanding Arabic, they both laughing about the matter in the end. The humorous tale points well to the complications involved in parsing identity for this period. Al-Kurdī, *Riḥlat,* 122.

neither attempted to plow his Kurdishness into something more general—Sunnism, perhaps—nor did he attempt to render Kurdishness separate or autonomous from the rest of the Ottoman sphere. Rather, he demonstrated that the Kurds, in their distinctiveness, belonged, that they were a part of the Ottoman-wide economy of saints and sanctity, whether resident in the great cities of the empire or back in the villages and hamlets of the mountainous borderlands.

The ambiguity of Ṭaha's position, finally, may serve as another entry point for understanding his performance of what to us sounds like particularly subjective writing and self-understanding, his autobiographical realism and candor, or his constant articulation of his social self at various points and places, some of which we have seen expressed in his interactions with the al-Sāmman family. He is not unique in this profile. His near-contemporary al-Suwaydī has a markedly similar voice, albeit one marked by the sophistication of a Baghdadī scholar with a trenchant for the literary. Baghdad may have been 'Arab' and known for its glorious early Islamic past, but by the eighteenth century it was far indeed from the imperial center (though it was pushed to the forefront of imperial attention by Nādir Shāh, at least for a time), a prestigious backwater. It was, like the Kurdish regions, very much a part of the Ottoman borderlands, looking—even if often in apprehension—towards the Iranian lands as much as back west towards Syria and Rūm. Al-Suwaydī goes to great pains in his autobiographical narrative to present his own self and identity in a way that will be both legible and attractive to readers to the west, showing himself to simultaneously be a part of the wider Ottoman world and belonging to a place that stood out as its own, distinct from the rest of the empire. To these two voices from the eighteenth century borderlands we may add a rather different third voice, that of Paisius Velichkovsky (1722-1794), an Orthodox Christian monastic, scholar, traveler, and eventual saint from what is now Ukraine, who, among other things, wrote a detailed autobiographical

travelogue. Like Ṭaha's, it begins with an account of his family, childhood, and 'conversion' process, followed by travels among monastic sites and holy places, primarily in the Ottoman Empire.[931] Like Ṭaha, Paisius' writing is marked by close descriptions of quotidian details and of his own inner conditions and thoughts, and, like Ṭaha's, evidences an ambiguity of identity ultimately oriented around his encounters with holy people, living and long departed.[932]

For both, the Ottoman domains were marked by the presence of sanctity and of important and vital communities to which one might hope to belong, even if the specific communities they envisioned, and the way in which they framed (or did not) their relation to the Ottoman center obviously varied.[933] What mattered, I want to suggest, is that for Ṭaha al-Kurdī, Paisius Velichkovsky, and al-Suwaydī, to different but related degrees, was their origin and formation in or along the Ottoman borderlands, coupled with their participation in conceptual communities—*especially,* if not quite exclusively saintly and devotional conceptual communities—whose centers lay firmly within the domain of the House of ʿO̱smān. The sense of belonging and not belonging, of being of multiple places at once, of speaking—literally and metaphorically—multiple languages and registers, all oriented along transcending and transcendent ties of sanctity and sainthood, gave rise to their particular autobiographic projects and performed sense of self.

[931] On whom see John McGuckin, 'The Life and Mission of St. Paisius Velichkovsky. 1722–1794: An Early Modern Master of the Orthodox Spiritual Life,' in *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, no. 9 (Fall 2009, number 2): 182–202.

[932] For instance, his love of grapes, in Paisius Velichkovsky, *The Life of Paisij Velyčkovs'kyj,* trans. by Jeffrey Featherstone (Cambridge, Mass.: Distributed by the Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, 1989), 82-83.

[933] Here my findings are mostly in line with Sajdi's, with the difference that I would substitute the more capacious concepts 'sainthood' or 'sanctity' where she has 'Sufism'—not to discount the role of sufi practice and formation, but rather to place it within a larger frame: 'The focus on the individual that arose out of the common Sufi experience rendered the place of the author in the quotidian here and now as valid a subject for contemplation and intepretation as great battles and the rise and fall of dynasties. In other words, the contemporary chronicle was now a maleable enough genre for any individual who wanted to become a historian to join the chronicling project.' Sajdi, *Barber*, 140.

They drew upon both long-existing genres, hagiographic and literary, as well as emergent literatures of the autobiographical, using them to explore and present their own situations as men of the Ottoman borders. If there is a teleological aspect here that points to the coming of modernity, just over the horizon now, it lies in the sharpened significance of borders, an important development of the second half of the eighteenth century across Eurasia. Otherwise, what has appeared to be especially redolent of modernity in this final chapter—subjectivity, narrative realism, interest in ethnic and other forms of identity and belonging, and participation in large-scale imagined communities—developed along largely Ottoman-internal lines, and cannot simply be seen as genealogical links in the march to the modern. In Ṭaha's case most obviously the role of saints and sainthood was paramount. Far from declining into twilight, the friends of God remained as potent a force as ever, including in the articulation of social and cultural changes we are usually primed to see as evidence of modernization.

Conclusions

Of an Armenian Neo-Martyr and a Seventeenth Century English Prophetess: Putting the Story of Ottoman Islamic Sainthood in Larger Frames

i. Towards a shared history of Ottoman sanctity, and suggestions of a global history of early modern sainthood and sanctity:

1. Mkhitar, Van, 1655: Although he was himself a member of the large Armenian Orthodox community of Van, Mkhitar was a popular auxiliary soldier who served alongside the local Ottoman janissaries stationed in the town, being known among them as a brave and generally enjoyable companion. One day while Mkhitar was hosting festivities at his house, with singing and drinking and the like, a group of Muslim children (our source is unfortunately no more specific than that) tried to barge inside, but Mkhitar pushed them out, insulting and manhandling some—did he fear further trouble, perhaps, should the Muslim youth drink and carouse on his premises? Our source does not say. Regardless, when word of this little altercation got out to 'the people of the *sūḳ,'*[934] Mkhitar was seized and dragged before the Ottoman administrative elite up in the fortress looming above Van. Given their personal appreciation of Mkhitar—and, most likely, unexpressed tensions and negative sentiments prevailing between the Ottoman military force (which is pointedly described as being rather small) and the 'people of the *sūḳ*,' the Ottoman officials refused to rule against Mkhitar and instead ordered his release. Mkhitar, upon being released, did not meekly return home, but instead mocked his would-be captors, who once again hauled him before the Ottoman muftî, the

[934] The Armenian here transliterates the Arabic term (received via Ottoman Turkish) directly into Armenian, one of many borrowings from Turkish visible in Armenian texts from this period.

paşa, and all the rest, seeking a death sentence this time. Once again the officials refused, and Mkhitar was released again, though not before the paşa asked him to convert and offered him gifts—though this seems more out of concern for his safety than anything else, since they quite clearly had no intention of enforcing the sentence desired by the townspeople upon him. This time the discontents of the market gathered 'in the mosques' and stirred up their ranks against Mkhitar. Shortly thereafter, someone from this group assassinated Mkhitar in the street with a dagger, 'the people of the *sūḳ'* dragging him out of the city and covering his body with stones.[935] That night, a janissary patrol saw the martyr's body illumined and shining forth from beneath the stones, which they reported to the entire city in the morning. This led the Armenian Orthodox community to ask the paşa for permission to properly inter the body; the paşa, unsurprisingly given his previous interactions with Mkhitar, gave his permission, and Mkhitar's body was moved to the Armenian cemetery where it was interred and venerated.[936]

2. *Anna Trapnel, London and Cornwall, 1654*: One year before Mkhitar's martyrdom in Van, at the far western end of Eurasia, Anna Trapnel, a prophetess, supporter of the English millenarian movement the Fifth Monarchy Men, and author of various treatises and autobiographical texts, was arrested by Cromwelian officials during a journey from her native London to Cornwall.[937] She had gained notoriety by, among other things, publicly prophesying

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[935] By the by, this story is yet another good indication of the limits of Ottoman power in the provinces and the pervasive existence, well through the seventeenth century, of 'freelance' violence, even on a small scale, at the hands of local actors, violence which, as here, the immediate Ottoman administrators and military units were hard pressed to fully control or prevent.

[936]Anonymous, *Hayots' nor vkanerĕ: zhoghovrdakan hratarakut'iwn,* ed. by Hakob Manandyan and Hrach'eay Achaṛean (Vagharshapat: Tparan Mayr At'oroy S. Ējmiatsni, 1902), 472-476.

[937] Anna Trapnel, *Anna Trapnel's Report and Plea: Or, A Narrative of Her Journey from London into Cornwall*, ed. Hilary Hinds (Toronto, Ontario: Iter Press, 2016). On the Fifth Monarcists in general, see the

in Whitehall about Oliver Cromwell and his government, placing him rather unambiguously in the company of Satan and the Antichrist, as part of the wider Fifth Monarchist understanding and political program of ushering in the return of Christ and the institution of his rule on earth (the 'Fifth Monarchy,' in reference to a prophetic vision in the book of Daniel). Trapnel, who would eventually be released from prison in large part because of her network of friends and supporters as well as her own efforts at self-presentation and defense, enacted an elaborate script of holiness and prophetic practice that included hours long bouts of 'spiritual singing,' entry into trances, rigorous asceticism, and the experience of and claims to special experiential knowledge. She described this reception of special insight and knowledge in one of her several autobiographical writings: 'But now I shall tell you Saints, how God presented himself to me in many similitudes, which I never heard mentioned before by any, they were brought immediately from God and Scripture, presented that I never took notice of before, and God sweetly interpreted them to my spirit.'[938] The text in which these lines are found, *A Legacy for Saints: Being Several Experiences of the Dealings of God with Anna Trapnel* could best be described as an auto-hagiography, even as Trapnel frames herself and experiences through expressions of modesty and dependence on divine grace. While never martyred—the Fifth Monarchists' attempted millenarian uprising was swiftly put down, and Trapnel avoided further repercussions—she underwent suffering at the hands of a confessionalizing polity, even as her performance of sanctity was made possible by the profoundly unsettled and decentralized conditions of the mid-

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classic work by B. S. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study in Seventeenth-Century English Millenarianism* (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972).

[938] Anna Trapnel, John Proud, and Caleb Ingold, *A Legacy for Saints: Being Several Experiences of the Dealings of God with Anna Trapnel, in, and after Her Conversion, (Written Some Years since with Her Own Hand) and New Coming to the Sight of Some Friends, They Have Judged Them Worthy of Publike View ; Together with Some Letters of a Latter Date, Sent to the Congregation with Whom She Walks in the Fellowship of the Gospel, and to Some Other Friends* (London printed: For T. Brewster, at the three Bibles in Pauls Church-yard, near London-House, 1654), 33.

seventeenth century British Isles, a world in which aspirants to sanctity flourished across a vast spectrum of ecclesial and theological orientations.[939]

What do these two accounts of holy people, themselves selected from a vast field of possible candidates, have to do with the history of early modern Ottoman Islamic sainthood? That is a question that I wish to pose in a little more detail here in these final few concluding pages, as a way of pointing towards further directions that the routes laid down in this study might take and of suggesting contexts and frames into which our already vast and teeming tale of Ottoman holy people and their social publics (and foes) might be placed so as to integrate that tale into patterns and trends of not just Eurasian-wide but truly global scope.

One point of interconnectivity, suggested by the account of the Armenian neo-martyr Mkhitar, is the relationship between the Islamic expressions of sainthood that have mostly occupied these pages, on the one hand, and social expressions of sainthood coming out of other, non-Islamic traditions in the Ottoman lands. As Mkhitar's neo-martyrology also suggests, however, one of the deserved casualties of such parallel and intertwined readings might well be our sense of distinct traditions and practices of sainthood: reading ever so gently against the grain of the Armenian account we find the suggestion that Mkhitar's veneration was initiated, not by the Armenian Orthodox community of Van, but by the local janissaries, with whom he had fraternized in life, and by whom his luminous body was discovered and reported to the rest of the town. That he would be recognized as a holy person by janissaries might have to do with other factors besides his closeness to them and his adaptation of shared cultural components

[939] For an excellent overview of the complex and chronologically distended nature of the English Reformation and of the equally complex historiography that has developed in relation to it, see the introduction to Miles, *Devil's Mortal Weapons.*

common to Ottoman military men. Also at play seems to be the janissaries' and the Ottoman local administration's undisguised contempt for 'the people of the *sūḳ*,' here presumably pointing to men unaffiliated with the janissary corps, men perhaps resentful of the increasingly porous boundaries between that corps and the world of craftsman and merchant. Whatever tensions and antagonisms were at work, it seems likely that Mkhitar served as a relatively 'safe' object of collective violence directed against the Ottoman administrative officials safely ensconced up in the citadel. It is also striking that the 'people of the *sûk'* appear elsewhere in this period as being especially receptive of puritanical ideas and practices; Ḥasan Ünsī, for instance, lost one of his disciples, an Aḥmed Dede, to the '*ehl-i inkār*' with whom he associated due to his job as a broker in the marketplace, with the implication in his account that such people—traders in the market—were particularly prone to such '*inkār*,' a conclusion reinforced by Marinos Sariyannis' aforecited, if somewhat problematic, but still insightful article exploring this intersection of puritanism and the merchant community. Perhaps, then, we ought to see not just antagonism between janissaries and non-janissaries, but perhaps also violent 'policing of boundaries' on the part of a provincial manifestation of puritanism.

Returning to the janissaries' possible perspective, the story of Mkhitar (told, we should keep in mind, from not just an Armenian perspective but an Armenian perspective intent on highlighting acts of violence by Muslims with, in the retelling, both a boundary-policing and a sanctifying outcome) is striking for its divergence from the canonical script of martyrdom, divergences that are often shared with other neo-martyrs from this period. Mkhitar is not a monastic or a vardapet, nor does he come across as especially holy or pious. He spars with the Muslim youth, and he mocks his persecutors—actions which, if not very congruent with Armenian Orthodox scripts of sainthood, might fit within a janissary cultural world populated by

gazî saints like Battal Ghazî or even ʿAlī himself. Like the zealously pro-ʿAlid*şehîd* Derviş ʿAlī that Evliyā Çelebi describes from his childhood, Mkhitar does not back down from a potentially violent confrontation, and it seems likely that similar understandings of sanctity underlie the reactions recorded for both martyrdoms. We do not know, and probably never will, what became of the 'cultus' of *Surb* Mkhitar, and whether the initial act of the local janissaries in finding and reporting his shining body was translated into their later veneration of his entombed remains. But as our earlier, albeit brief, discussions of shared economies and spaces of sanctity would suggest, such a scenario is entirely plausible.

In sum, like so many neo-martyrologies from the Ottoman period, including those recently studied by Krstic and Armanios,[940] this story's actors and outcome are neither obvious nor simple, but rather pick up, in sharp relief, on both tensions and socio-political fault lines as well as points and paths of interconnectivity and shared identity and practice. The implications for the study of Ottoman saints and sainthood should be clear: a full understanding would require attention to stories and contexts like that of *surb* Mkhitar, in as many of the languages of the empire as possible. Now, to be sure, this study has not ignored the presence of non-Muslims or of economies of shared sanctity and interconnectivity. In the context of Şeyh Ḥasan Ünsī we examined—from the 'Muslim' perspective, at least—ways in which Muslims and non-Muslims might share and contest common concepts of sanctity and the healing power of holy people and places, while our discussion of Ṭaha al-Kurdī and his worlds touched on the shared religious and cultural contexts of the eastern borderlands as well as the possibility of interpreting in similar ways parallel developments in the Slavic-speaking, mostly Orthodox Christian northwestern

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[940] Tijana Krstic, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford University Press, 2011); Febe Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

bounds of the empire. All of the religious communities[941] of the empire, whether at the core or far out on the peripheries of the periphery, possessed, and argued over, concepts of sanctity and sainthood, and, on closer examination, all seem to have been effected by similar, shared rthymns of response to Ottoman authority, currents of 'confessionalization,' and manifestations of reformist and puritanical tendencies. While the immediate historical causes varied from community to community—Orthodox Christians, for instance, found themselves increasingly drawn into the post-Reformation, post-Tridentine worlds of Latinate (and post-Latinate) Christianity and its outposts and outworkings in the rest of the world—a comprehensive examination would certainly reveal social and cultural logics operative above the level of confessional or communal particularity. Some of these logics, as the story of Mkhitar, situated in the midst of Ottoman political transformation, suggests, were of uniquely Ottoman provenance (even if the origins and shapes of those Ottoman developments ought to be sought in a globalizing context), illustrating the deep interconnectivity and shared vocabularies, repertoires, and social worlds of different communities, as well as the divisions and disjunctures existing within larger religious communities such as that of Sunni Muslims.

Yet other levels of interconnectivity and of parallel, and perhaps interlinked, stories, can be descried beyond the borders or even close-by lands of the Ottoman world, interconnections and parallels that spanned the early modern globe and which point to larger logics and patterns operative in the early modern world, logics and patterns which are gradually if fitfully coming into historiographic view. While awareness of these interconnections and points of contact has informed this study—such as in my suggestions for reading ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī in dialogue with such seemingly disparate figures as Bashō and Cecilia Ferrazzi—there are many

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[941] It is worth reiterating here the inherent problems with the term 'religious community,' even as I have struggled to devise a (maneagable in length!) term to replace it.

more such lines of approach that might connect the histories described in these pages with a global early modernity. The life of Anna Trapnel, particularly her life as it unfolded during a tumultuous 1654, suggests some such further points of correspondence, with the details of divergence in different Eurasian contexts as illuminating as closer correspondences. If Trapnel herself did not explicitly articulate her own identity as a saint distinct from others (in Fifth Monarchist usage, as in the usage of other Dissenters and radical protestants generally, 'saint' meant a member of the elect community, usually regardless of personal piety), her personal repertoire of devotional practice, preaching, prophecy, and ecstatic performances fits easily into a model of sainthood, and indeed can comfortably be placed in a genealogical connection with late medieval and early modern forms of saintly aspiration in England and on the Continent, radical protestant practice here as elsewhere being closer to Catholic precedent than anyone at the time wished (or even thought) to allow. If the particular origins of her repertoire owe little in themselves to the Ottoman context, the cultural and political factors that contributed to her career do involve shared and interconnecting histories. Trapnel's use and performance—a very apt word here—of Scripture was made possible by and itself further contributed to the vernacularization of sacred texts and practices, a process that accelerated across Eurasia in the late middle ages and which dramatically expanded during early modernity, in England and in the Ottoman Empire.

Visible in our vignette of Anna Trapnel is the close correspondence between sanctity, devotional practices, 'technologies of self,' and the early modern emergence of the 'autobiographical self,' correspondences which have recurred again and again in this study and which can be discerned in many other early modern settings, even if the historiography is rarely

aware of the breadth of such correspondences. Louis Martz's still deeply insightful discussion of the development of the 'art of self-knowledge' in early modern England has much resonance in this context: 'But so far as self-examination is concerned the fact is that both Catholic and Puritan, while accusing each other bitterly of neglecting the inner life, were pursuing the art of self-knowledge by methods equally intense and effective- methods that had, on both hands, developed a subtlety of self-awareness that went far beyond the popular achievements of the Middle Ages.'[942] We might expand Martz's findings and argue that the 'subtlety of self-awareness' that he discerns as the unexpected outworking of early modern devotional life (among other factors) was not only not limited to Western Europe, but was developed across Eurasia, across confessional lines even more starkly drawn and contested than that dividing Catholic and Puritan. In looking for a coordinating agent or agents, the common proliferation and diversification of devotional life, of introspective technologies of self, and of widely distributed (and contested) repertoires of sanctity and sainthood (whether they went by such names or not), should all figure into our explanations, even as they lead to further questions, such as why all of these things would arise and develop at similar points in time and often in similar ways within traditions and historical contexts not otherwise directly connected.

Finally, Anna Trapnel's life and works point us towards a major site of global coordination in the articulation and transformation of sainthood, a site that we have only been able to touch upon here and there in these pages: namely, the role of the apocalyptic, the messianic, and the millennial.[943] The parallels between her life, work, and (de facto) saintly

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[942] Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 122.

[943] Perhaps it would be appropriate to group these all, and other themes, under the super-heading of 'understandings to time,' such that we might include, say, the historical sense of an al-Nābulusī, which is decidedly un-apocalyptic and seeks to dissolve dramatic, exceptional renderings of the present as being good,

repertoire and that of someone like Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī are not coincidental: similar, and connected, patterns of social change, political dislocation, and apocalyptic expectation, literatures, and community formation were at work in both lives, and for often similar reasons. If, as Cornell Fleischer and others have argued, the sixteenth century saw many a messianic and millenarian project on the part of sovereigns and their supporters—projects that, in the Ottoman case (and the Safavid and the Mughal) also involved claims to sainthood—the seventeenth century's apocalyptic movements tended to be generated 'from below,' monarchs taking other (not necessarily more modest, to be sure) approaches to the articulation of their authority and place in universal history. To be sure, drawing out these Afro-Eurasian, indeed *global*, routes of interconnectivity in the history of sainthood and sanctity poses much larger challenges than integrating and connecting Ottoman non-Muslim histories with Islamic ones. The history of the self and the history of early modern apocalypticism (which, notably, themselves interconnect) present two such possible avenues, but there are many others, of which this study has really only begun to scratch the surface.

As I have demonstrated in these pages, the history of Ottoman sainthood, and the analogous and interconnected histories lying within and without the Ottoman lands, are not simply interesting and significant in their own right. Examining saints and sainthood has taken us into many, many other subjects and fields of analysis, from the question of Kurdish identity to the nature of sultanic power and projection to routes and responses to early modern globalization. Communities and individuals and patterns and processes that might otherwise be opaque or altogether invisible have become manifest during this journey, sometimes incidentally, sometimes as central components of our story. The potential and promise of whole genres,

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bad, or ultimate. 'Theory of history' is not quite the term here, though it points in the right direction provided we understand 'history' in a very expansive sense.

largely marginalized in Ottoman historiography, from *menāḳıb* to *shurūḥ*, has been demonstrated, acting, I hope, as a spur to greater engagement and continuing reordering of Ottoman history. There is much more that remains to be done, other approaches, both of a more concentrated nature, and, as argued in this conclusion, working along lines of global interconnectivity and shared histories. The company of the Friends of God of the Well-Protected Domains will continue to reward the scholarly visitor, now and for long to come.

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