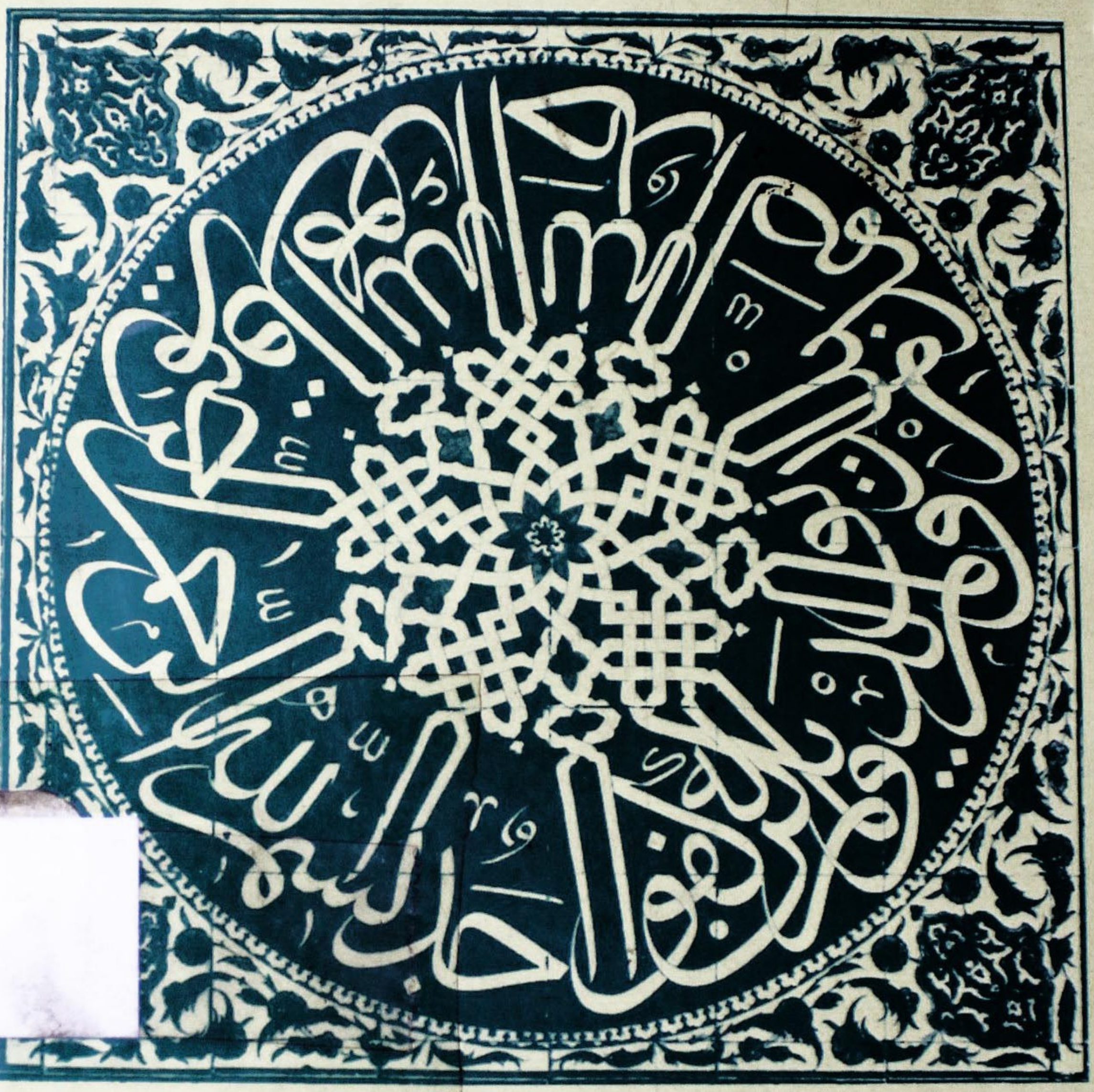
Imaginary Muslims

THE UWAYSI SUFIS OF CENTRAL ASIA



JULIAN BALDICK

IMAGINARY MUSLIMS

The Uwaysi Sufis of Central Asia

JULIAN BALDICK

I.B. TAURIS & Co Ltd
Publishers
LONDON – NEW YORK

To Junaid and Yusuf

Published in 1993 by
I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd
45 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2HY

175 Fifth Avenue
New York
NY 10010

In the United States of America
and Canada distributed by
St Martin's Press
175 Fifth Avenue
New York
NY 10010

A full CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloging-in-publication card number: available
A full CIP record is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN 1-85043-497-2

Photoset in North Wales by
Derek Doyle & Associates, Mold, Clwyd
Printed and bound in Great Britain by
WBC Ltd, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful for the advice given to me, in the course of writing this book, by Oleg Akimushkin, Simon Digby and Albert Hourani. I must also acknowledge the financial assistance of the British Academy and the USSR Academy of Sciences, which enabled me to work on manuscripts in the latter's Institute of Oriental Studies (St Petersburg Branch). Many thanks are due for the kindness shown me by the members of the Middle East Department there, especially by Sergey Turkin. I must also express my indebtedness to the staff of I. B. Tauris and in particular to Anna Enayat; to the librarians of the Bodleian Library, Oxford; and, above all, to my wife for her great patience and help.

INTRODUCTION

The word 'Uwaysi' designates a Muslim mystic who looks for instruction from the spirit of a dead or physically absent person. It is derived from the name of a legendary contemporary of Muhammad, Uways, who is supposed to have communicated with the Prophet by telepathy. Usually there are only isolated references to Uwaysis in Islamic literature, but around 1600 CE one Ahmad of Uzgen in what is now Kirghizia (in ex-Soviet Central Asia) wrote a *History of the Uwaysis*, in which he presented an evidently imaginary brotherhood as flourishing from the seventh to the fourteenth centuries. Much of this 'history' is set in East Turkistan (now Xinjiang in north-west China). The book consists of a series of biographies, usually of people who never existed. It is a kind of imaginary history of Islam, which mirrors the religion's spread and development, and is also intended to teach the reader to become an Uwaysi himself.

The main aim of the present study is to analyse the *History of the Uwaysis* and see what can be learnt from it. This, then, is a book about another book. In order to make the analysis easier to follow, I have begun by providing a survey of the legend of Uways himself and of the Uwaysi phenomenon in Islam's main mystical tradition, Sufism. Then I have given a brief outline of the sixteenth-century background to the composition of the *History of the Uwaysis*, looking at an Uwaysi movement in East Turkistan. After this I have analysed the book's structure and summarized its contents, adding a commentary at the end of each chapter or section. Finally, I have considered the work's treatment of the themes of women and death and its mystical doctrine, before proceeding to general conclusions about the 'imaginary', religious biography and the figure of the Uwaysi in Islam.

First of all, though, it will be as well to make some general

observations about Islam itself and then about Sufism, since these are subjects which have given rise to many prejudices and misunderstandings. In doing so we can anticipate some of the problems which both Islam and Sufism present for somebody wishing to become an Uwaysi mystic. It also seems advisable to give a general introduction to the region of East Turkistan, which, by virtue of its remote and isolated position, is almost completely unknown to the outside world. I have also judged it expedient to provide a preliminary explanation of the methods which I have used, since these are bound to strike some readers as unusual and, indeed, objectionable.

ISLAM

Islam is both a religion and a civilization. In the areas of its greatest concentration in Asia and Africa it has produced a shared cultural heritage, which is often far more important than regional or ethnic elements. Here, however, we shall encounter Islam mainly as a religion. The word *islam* is usually taken to mean 'submission' (to God). Muslims claim that their religion is that of the biblical patriarchs and prophets, which the Jews and Christians have corrupted. It was restored in Arabia by the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century CE. Muhammad, according to Muslim doctrine, is the last of the prophets. After him there can be no more revelation. The Qur'an, revealed to Muhammad by God via the archangel Gabriel, is final and definitive. Henceforth there can be only divine inspiration, communication on a level lower than that found in scripture, just as all other human beings are inferior to the prophets. Islam is most often represented as founded upon five pillars: bearing witness that there is no god except God and that Muhammad is his Messenger; performing the daily worship; paying the alms tax; fasting in the month of Ramadan; and making the pilgrimage to Mecca. But this apparent simplicity is misleading. The believer requires guidance in the rest of his activities, and the Qur'an has to be interpreted and supplemented to cover them. Who is to give guidance? Here the Muslims are split into two main groupings. The larger is that of the Sunnis, so called because they try to follow the normative practice (*sunna*) of Muhammad, as transmitted, they believe, by his Companions in a corpus of Traditions, reports of his sayings and exemplary actions. The

smaller is that of the Shiites, so called because they belong to the party (*shi'a*) of Muhammad's family, in which they venerate a succession of infallible Leaders (*Imams* – a term usually left untranslated), commanding intense devotion and obedience.

Now Islam recognizes Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, and thus is technically a form of Christianity. However, it sees him as a man and a prophet, not as God incarnate or God's Son. It has no church or priesthood. Instead, there are jurists (in effect rabbis) and Sufi 'elders' (very like the *startsy* of Russian Orthodox monasticism), who provide advice to the faithful and answer their queries. Jurisprudence, not theology, is the 'queen of the sciences' in Islam. The conventional 'theology' which the Muslims possess (as opposed to the mystical theology of Sufism) is largely defensive, apologetic theology, and is seen as constituting a minor, ancillary discipline. Islamic law, by contrast, is all-important: it is supposed to regulate every detail of the believer's life. Precisely because it concerns itself with so many details, it tends to be a rather dry and uninspiring branch of study. Usually it is based on the Traditions about Muhammad, and these do not really succeed in bringing the Prophet to life. By the late Middle Ages the mainstream, Sunni lawyers had given up thinking for themselves, and simply referred to their textbooks in order to repeat the decisions of their predecessors. Similarly, outside Iran and Iraq, where Shiism triumphed in the sixteenth century and protected theology and philosophy under its aegis, these disciplines died out in the Muslim world, and remained effectively extinct for centuries. The institution of the caliphate had previously provided a 'deputy' ('caliph', from the Arabic *khalifa*) for God among the Sunnis, reigning first as both a religious and a temporal sovereign. But the temporal power had soon slipped away, and after the Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258 the caliphate survived only as a pale shadow. In the sixteenth century it disappeared completely.

Thus, by *c.* 1600, when the *History of the Uwaysis* was written, the position of the individual Muslim was in many ways uncomfortable. The 'Uwaysi' tradition, namely the practice of looking for guidance to the spirit of a dead or physically absent instructor, offered many advantages. An Uwaysi could communicate directly with one of the prophets. Not all of these were dead. One of them, Khidr (literally 'the green one'), the famous Green Man of ancient European and Near Eastern folklore, was believed to be immortal. According to Muslim commentators he was to be identified with the anonymous

and enigmatic instructor of Moses in the Qur'an (18:59–81). Khidr could appear to a Muslim in the flesh, but an Uwaysi might believe that he was receiving instruction from Khidr in the 'world of the unseen' (*'alam al-ghayb*). Alternatively, one might, like Uways, communicate with Muhammad himself. Muhammad's spirit would be envisaged as in some way partly resident in his tomb at Medina, in central western Arabia. An Uwaysi could actually go there and hear Muhammad speak. Otherwise, he could legitimately engage in the common Muslim practice of deliberately preparing oneself to have a dream in which Muhammad appears and gives advice. The ancient practice of 'incubation', sleeping at a holy spot in order to see a divine adviser in one's dreams, had continued in both Christian and Islamic adaptations. In this way the manifold difficulties presented by the Qur'an could be bypassed. The words of the Qur'an are extremely hard to understand, and Arabic is not the native tongue of most Muslims. Accordingly, the Uwaysi method had the advantages of overcoming barriers of time, space and language. It produced fresh utterances of Muhammad for the Uwaysi who heard him speak. The Uwaysi had no need to become a Shiite in order to find an infallible Leader – in any case, most Shiites believed that the last of their leaders, the twelfth in the line, had gone into hiding in the ninth century and was still waiting for the right time to reappear (so that direct communication with him would in any case have to be of an 'Uwaysi' type).

In this perspective the Uwaysi tradition seems at first sight to fill a gap in Islamic, or at least Sunni institutions. Since Islam lacks the concept of a church, preferring that of a community, the individual has no obvious source of authority to which to turn. In the absence of a priesthood, direct instruction by a prophet has evident advantages. Islamic law is not easily adapted to the believer's quest for spiritual self-fulfilment, and so the jurists were naturally challenged by the mystics as an alternative embodiment of religious guidance. The seventeenth century was characterized by open warfare between these two classes of Muslim, and the *History of the Uwaysis* contains colourful evocations of their mutual hostility. For the period between 1500 and 1700 was one in which lawyers and Sufis vied for the patronage given by three great empires: the Turkish Ottoman Empire, the Iranian Safavid Empire and the empire of the Moghuls in India. Within these empires, in contrast to the respectable, establishment men of religion, great popular appeal was exercised by wandering libertine mystics, noted for

their use of alcohol and cannabis and their tendency to pederasty. 'Uwaysi' was a term which could designate a vagabond and beggar of this kind. The state often found it convenient to subsidize and make use of libertine mystics, and one can see why: in the absence of the legitimacy attributed to the now defunct caliphate or ruling Leaders from Muhammad's family, there was great pressure on the empires to find support where they could.

SUFISM

Islam, then, would appear by its very nature to favour the spread of the Uwaysi tradition. In practice, however, as we shall see, Sufism has usually managed to keep the Uwaysi phenomenon in check. For Sufism has great institutional adaptability of its own. It stands somewhere between monasticism and freemasonry, if one chooses a Christian and European yardstick of comparison. It preaches austerity, and commends the ideal of poverty, but includes both world-renouncers and people who lead an ordinary existence: Islam has no distinction of clerical versus lay. Thus the word 'Sufi' is usually derived from the Arabic word for wool, *suf*, since the early mystics of Islam wore woollen clothes, like some of the humbler classes of society. Sufism also lays much stress upon the love of God, and the Sufis aspire to be God's special friends. So 'Sufism' (*tasawwuf*) is an ideal as well as a set of practices. It is also one of the Islamic religious sciences, an organized discipline. It is by no means coterminous with the whole of Islamic mysticism, as is often imagined: both Shiism and the Greek philosophical tradition as continued in the Muslim world developed strong mystical tendencies of their own. Sufism is also a Path, which starts with repentance and leads through the acquisition of a number of virtues to higher experiences of ecstasy. Normally these are seen as ending in 'passing away' (*fana'*) in God and the 'survival' (*baqa'*) of one's transformed personality. Sufism has many other themes, notably the contemplation and vision of God, and knowledge of him through increased knowledge of oneself. Thus Sufism is a movement, a tradition and an ideology systematized as a science. It does not represent a sect.

The origins of Sufism are still shrouded in mystery, and remain a controversial topic. Some specialists, myself included, have argued that Sufism grew out of eastern Christianity. The term 'Sufi' is not attested before the ninth century. It was really only in the tenth

century that a coherent body of doctrine was put together to form a new discipline. From the eleventh century the institution of the 'lodge' (*ribat*) was developed to shelter and feed travellers and the poor. Sufis would meet there, and could be permanent residents. In the thirteenth century brotherhoods (literally 'paths', as opposed to the single Path, *tariqa*, Sufism itself) began to be founded, with recognized leaders and their deputies teaching disciples in distinctive programmes of instruction. These brotherhoods were often associated with temporal rulers in the wake of the Mongol conquests. The thirteenth century also witnessed a major and influential reformulation of Sufi teachings by Ibn 'Arabi of Murcia in Spain (d. 1240), whose sophisticated theory of the 'unity of existence' (*wahda al-wujud*) shocked the jurists by its exaltation of the mystic's personality. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Sufism was often combined with Shiism in the context of revolutionary political activity, but on the other hand there was a lot of unoriginal, academic writing of commentaries on earlier masterpieces, along with superficial displays of literary virtuosity. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the vicissitudes of Sufism were largely bound up with the fortunes of the three great empires which dominated the Muslim world. Some jurists made strenuous efforts to get rid of the Sufi brotherhoods altogether. By the eighteenth century, however, the Sufis were frequently well entrenched in positions of great influence. From around 1800 onwards some Muslim rulers tried to control Sufism by an increasing use of bureaucratic regulations, and had a fair degree of success. In the twentieth century, in spite of great hostility from the founders of the Turkish Republic and Saudi Arabia, Sufism has often flourished, commanding plenty of popular support.

Now Sufism usually insists that it is absolutely essential for the aspiring mystic to have an 'elder' (*shaykh*), a spiritual director to whom absolute obedience is owed. By the fourteenth century this need for an elder was virtually unquestioned among the Sufis of the eastern Islamic world, though it was still much debated in Muslim Spain and North Africa.[1] According to a well-known adage, 'He who has no elder has Satan for his elder.'[2] The elder is the indispensable physician of the soul.[3] However, there always had been some mystics outside the pale of Sufism and the usual elder–disciple relationship. These mystics would often fall under the general heading of 'dervishes', a word which literally just means

'poor people' (Persian *darwishan*), but came to mean 'people of the spiritual life'. Sufis also fall under this heading, but not all dervishes are Sufis. An Uwaysi, then, is a dervish who apparently has no elder or instructor, but claims to receive guidance from Muhammad or some other invisible teacher. He might claim to be a Sufi, and there is a famous example of a leading eleventh-century Sufi who sought instruction from the tomb of a ninth-century mystic.[4] Nonetheless, Sufi masters would tend to condemn the practice of going to a tomb and shaving one's head there in order to become a disciple of the elder in the grave.[5] They would insist on the necessity of a real hand clasp with a living elder. The Uwaysi tradition, then, has been a marginal one, with a certain dubious appeal: by calling oneself an Uwaysi one can avoid the unpredictable and often severe demands of the living elders available.

The institution of the brotherhood has also served to marginalize the Uwaysi tradition, either by keeping it outside the structures of the brotherhoods and thereby limiting its social influence, or by integrating it within the brotherhoods' own patterns of belief and practice and granting it a limited and controlled status. For the brotherhoods have insisted on the importance of the mystic's spiritual pedigree, literally his 'chain' (*silsila*), a list of masters and disciples stretching back to Muhammad. Scholars have cast doubt upon the genuineness of such affiliations in the earlier generations of Islam, but later on they were real enough. The brotherhoods have often been extremely powerful international organizations, well connected to Muslim rulers. Religious foundations have paid for the continuity of instruction at lodges and shrines, obviously putting Uwaysis at a disadvantage. One brotherhood in particular has distinguished itself by integrating the Uwaysi tradition within its own practices. The Naqshbandi fraternity, so called after its founder, Baha' al-Din Naqshband (d. 1389) of Bukhara in what is now ex-Soviet Uzbekistan, has had a strong Uwaysi colouring from the start. The founder, apart from having an ordinary Sufi elder and 'chain', claimed to have been taught by a mystic who had died centuries earlier.[6] Not surprisingly, his successors would also favour the Uwaysi technique. There was an extremely strong Naqshbandi presence in East Turkistan at the same time as the emergence of the Uwaysi movement which gave rise to the *History of the Uwaysis*. Later, in the nineteenth century, we find academic Sufis in India trying to exert telepathic influence on their disciples'

behaviour, as well as teaching them the old practice of conceiving a mental image of one's elder.[7] Thus the original Uwaysi method of learning from a distance, attributed to Uways himself, was simply absorbed in the practices of the brotherhoods.

EAST TURKISTAN

The composition of the *History of the Uwaysis* in East Turkistan reflects strong ethnic and regional feelings. In that area the indigenous population is Turkic, with a long and chequered political and religious history. Conventionally one refers to East (or Chinese) Turkistan as part of Central Asia, along with the five ex-Soviet Republics to the east of the Caspian Sea. More recently, however, some scholars have preferred the expression 'Inner Asia', as a historico-cultural term, designating the part of the Eurasian land mass surrounded by the great civilizations of Europe, the Middle East, India and China. Inner Asia is characterized by conflict with the sedentary populations on the outside: inside there has been the 'barbarian', the nomad with his horse. The climate has been cold and dry, preventing the cultivation of the soil, and so the people have been poor.[8] East Turkistan itself consists mainly of the Taklamakan Desert. To the west lies what was to become Russian Turkistan, an area including the fabled cities of Bukhara and Samarqand, and representing a long and imposing record of achievement in the arts and Islamic sciences. In the south-west are Afghanistan and India, to which the region had many connections, mercantile and dynastic. To the south lies Tibet, and to the east China, which was eventually to conquer and rule East Turkistan from 1759. In the north-east is Mongolia, the land of the greatest Inner Asian invaders, and in the north Siberia. Within East Turkistan itself one notes in the far west a range of mountains, including one most important for religious beliefs, Muztagh Ata. To the east of these mountains stand the main urban centres, including the two alternative capitals, Kashghar and Yarkand. Eastwards still, routes skirt the desert to the north and the south, forming part of the Silk Road to the Far East. These routes have been equipped with *langars*, buildings functioning as rest-houses and soup-kitchens for travellers and the poor, run by dervishes. (In East Turkistan this term also designates alms houses or small residences for Sufis.)

The main Turkic people of the country are the Uighurs. They had a colourful religious past before Islam. To begin with, they had their own indigenous Turkic religious traditions, notably a veneration for heaven and magical practices designed to produce rain, snow, cold and wind. From 744 to 840 the Uighurs had a great empire, and during its existence they adopted Manichaeism, the mystical religion founded by the prophet Mani (d. *c.* 274) in Iran. This religion is distinguished by its images of light and darkness, its hostility to the flesh and the material world, and its emphasis on gnosis, a special form of knowledge reserved for a spiritual elite. The region was also acquainted with Buddhism and Christianity. Here, however, Buddhism was very largely combined with the 'shamanism' of Turkic society. 'Shamanism' is a confusing word, since it is used by academics to mean both the ancient religious tradition of Central and North Asia and this type of religion as found all over the world. A 'shaman' is a magician, witch-doctor and priest who makes rain and is supposed to fly through the heavens. The shaman is initiated by an extraction of his organs. An experience of this kind, according to Islamic legend, was granted to the young Muhammad. In the *History of the Uwaysis* we shall repeatedly encounter similar initiations. The most dominant motif of the Turkic religious traditions, however, was the role of the animal as the guide of human beings. The early Turks were entirely dependent upon animals for food and clothing, and saw them as possessing magical powers and wisdom.[9] This theme also recurs frequently in the *History of the Uwaysis*.

Islam, like Christianity, seems to have come to this area through the activities of merchants. In the tenth century a large number of Turks went over to Islam, and this mass conversion, attributed to the influence of one trader, is described in two of the biographies which we shall study. Here, for once, we are dealing with historical figures (though the personalities portrayed are nonetheless highly imaginary). The author has a deep feeling of devotion to one ruler of the Karakhanid dynasty, Satuq Bughra Khan (d. 955), who appears to have led his fellow-Turks into the Muslim fold. The book is dedicated to the memory of this ruler, and evidently reflects an 'Uwaysi' attachment to his tomb. Thus its original title is 'The Bughra-Khani History' (or 'Memorial', *Tadhkira-yi Bughra-Khani*), but I have preferred the alternative title, 'The History of the Uwaysis' (*Tadhkira-yi Uwaysiyya*), as given in an Oxford manuscript.[10] The Karakhanids reigned in both West and East

Turkistan before coming under the control of another Turkic dynasty, the Saljuqs, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Saljuqs also conquered the area stretching from north-eastern Iran to Arabia and what is now Turkey. However, in the course of the twelfth century the dynasty lost control of Turkistan to new Inner Asian conquerors. After the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century Mongol princes, soon converted to Islam, ruled in East Turkistan until the seventeenth century, when they lost control to the local Naqshbandi Sufi leaders. These, after a long period of wielding the real power, eventually replaced their royal patrons completely. After the Chinese conquest in 1759 the Naqshbandi masters were prominent in Muslim rebellions. As is common in Sufism, succession in the regional branch of the Naqshbandi brotherhood has been hereditary. Communist rule has for a time involved considerable disruption to the practice of Islam, and resistance to the Chinese authorities is widespread.

It can be seen, then, that the population of East Turkistan has sometimes been under Muslim rulers controlling a much wider area, sometimes under its own Muslim rulers, and eventually under non-Muslim control. Not surprisingly, the variety of Islam prevalent in the region, while connected with that of the rest of the Muslim world, has been quite distinctive. Western visitors have noted that whereas West Turkistan is distinguished by its religious zeal and severity, East Turkistan is extremely relaxed in matters of the faith. In particular, women have had very great freedom, in disregard for the norms which have usually been developed in Islamic societies. Nineteenth-century French visitors were struck by the power which the women of East Turkistan had retained, and the ease with which they replaced their husbands.[11] East Turkistan has produced very little in the field of Islamic literature: a famous 'mirror for princes' and a fine narrative of local events in the sixteenth century are the only two literary monuments of note, apart from the *History of the Uwaysis* itself.[12] Western writers have referred condescendingly to the alleged 'mediocrity' of the population, relieved in their eyes only by an extraordinary enthusiasm for the pilgrimage to Mecca.[13] East Turkistan has its own, much adapted version of veneration for the Twelve Leaders (*Imams*) of Muhammad's family, but this is exercised in a Sunni, not a Shiite framework.[14] Thus the *History of the Uwaysis* has, as we shall see, performed an important service in unifying pan-Islamic and regional religious traditions.

METHODS

The present study belongs to the history of religions, not in the North American sense of 'religious studies in general', but in the European sense of the expression: history as applied to religions, in an attempt to analyse patterns or configurations as they reappear from one religion to another, or from one period of religious history to the next. Thus I have not hesitated to look to the pre-Islamic past in order to find the sources of the Islamic materials studied here. This method has been unfashionable since the First World War: increasing overspecialization has made it less practicable, while political developments have led Islamicists to avoid it for diplomatic reasons. The result has been singularly paradoxical: Western academics have sought to placate Muslims by refraining from pointing to the sources of Muslim beliefs, while the Muslims themselves have claimed that their religion represents a return to earlier revelations. Fortunately, the *History of the Uwaysis* is rich in explicit references to biblical figures, accompanied by obvious reminiscences of the legends concerning them, and so the text itself greatly supports the method which I have chosen. It is rarely possible, when faced with a work of this kind, to try to reconstruct an Islamic social reality around it. There is not usually enough supporting documentation, and what there is tends to belong to the same 'hagiographical' tradition. The meagre details which can be gleaned from such sources are trivial compared to what can be learnt by looking for transformations and adaptations of religious beliefs across the millennia.

The *History of the Uwaysis* possesses a carefully planned structure of its own. In the past it has been normal for Western scholars to imagine that Muslim writers composed their works in a sustained rhapsody of free improvization. Here, as elsewhere, I have tried to point out the obvious: these writers have in most cases worked out a plan and kept to it. Since the book is very long (300 to 400 folios in the various manuscripts in which it is preserved), I have had to summarize it as concisely as possible. Thus I have tried to concentrate on retaining only the salient 'facts' in the biographies, and this has meant suppressing much detail. In particular, I have omitted much of the narratives about the Uwaysis' deaths. These narratives are extremely repetitive, and it seemed better to compress their significant elements into a separate section. I have

also judged fit to consider the book's treatment of women in a section of its own, since here there are a number of important materials which need to be taken together.

My emphasis on structure may lead to the charge that my work belongs to the outmoded fashion of French structuralism. On the contrary, it is intended as part of the current return to traditional scholarship. I have tried to avoid imposing any artificial grid of structures, and I have not assumed the existence of any universal structures in the human mind. Rather, I have attempted to allow the structures in the text to emerge of their own accord, and to point to earlier patterns in their historical and literary antecedents. Sometimes, to be sure, I have found the methods used by Claude Lévi-Strauss in the study of American Indian mythology helpful when analysing the legends of Sufi 'friends of God', but I have usually taken my inspiration from Georges Dumézil's prestructuralist, historical reconstructions of the ideology behind Indo-European mythology. In a concluding section I have referred to recent discussions of the 'imaginary', but really to test their authors' views by confronting them with the Islamic evidence, not in order to subject the latter to any preconceived line of interpretation.

In my conclusions I have also considered the differences between Christian hagiographies and lives of the Sufi 'friends of God'. The latter are not 'saints'. That the Arabic term *wali Allah* means 'friend of God', not 'saint', is made abundantly clear in Persian literature, especially in the *History of the Uwaysis*. Here the ordinary Persian word for 'friend', *dust*, is repeatedly used as an alternative for *wali*. God is represented as speaking in Persian about 'our friends'. Similarly, the abstract concept *walayat* cannot mean 'sainthood', but must mean 'friendship with God', having God as one's patron (in the Roman sense), and being his protégé or client.

As for the author of the *History of the Uwaysis*, it has not been possible to submit his personality to any kind of analysis. Nothing is known about him except the little that can be inferred from his book. I shall refer to Ahmad of Uzgen as 'Uzgani' from now on, since this is the surname which he himself gives. He provides legends attached to his native city and to many other localities. How many of these he visited one can only guess. Like other Muslim writers, he does not provide naturalistic descriptions from which one could decide that he had really seen a given spot. He seems familiar with a number of places in East Turkistan, and also

appears to have some acquaintance with what is now northern Afghanistan. As is normal with writers in Persian (the high literary language of the region) of his period, his style is bombastic and full of clichés, but he can tell a story well enough, as has been shown by his work's posthumous popularity.

As regards the presentation of the materials, I have tried to make it as simplified as possible. The manuscripts of the *History of the Uwaysis* have been listed and described by others.[15] They fall into two families, one representing a censored and the other an uncensored version. By comparing the readings in both families (using manuscripts in Oxford, London and St Petersburg) I have often been able, when in difficulty, to establish the reading of a common, earlier archetype. However, I have not wished to trouble the reader with unimportant variants. Technical information has been consigned as far as possible to the notes, and even these have been kept to a minimum. In Part Three, when repeating materials from the summaries of the biographies and mentioning their subjects by name, I have frequently refrained from adding references: the specialist who wishes to check my work can easily find his place in the manuscripts with the aid of the chapter headings and numbers. Often it has seemed advisable to restrict bibliographical details to a brief reference to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (EI^1 for the first, EI^2 for the second edition): there the reader will find excellent reading lists for the topics discussed. The dates given throughout are those of the Christian calendar, except in the summaries of the biographies themselves: there the Islamic calendar has had to be retained, since the dates often have a religious significance, but the Christian equivalents have been provided as well.

PART ONE

THE BACKGROUND TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE *HISTORY OF THE UWAYSIS*

THE LEGEND OF UWAYS

The period of history in which the life of Uways is set is an extremely difficult object of study. Not only are the sources very late, but they also reflect changing doctrinal and political views. Many legends surround Muhammad and the rise of Islam, and in recent years scholars have grown increasingly sceptical about the possibility of finding an historical kernel of truth in them. The texts usually consist of anecdotes or 'Traditions', provided with pedigrees of transmitters, in the form 'I was informed by A, who was informed by B, etc.' Such pedigrees have often been severely criticized by Muslim scholars, and Western academics have been even more doubtful about them. In the case of a striking and colourful figure like Uways especial caution is essential, for very little research has been done about him, despite the widespread veneration which he receives. The first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* even failed to include an article about him. A short, pioneering study has been written by A.S. Hussaini.[1] This is exceptionally useful, but contains numerous important omissions. So, while acknowledging our indebtedness to Hussaini, we shall have to go over the same ground again.

The name 'Uways' means 'wolf' in Arabic and his surname, 'Qarani', designates his tribe. His legend always puts his early life in the Yemen, i.e. southern Arabia. The oldest biographies of

Muhammad do not mention him at all, and this gives substance to the view that he never existed.[2]

The earliest source: Ibn Sa'd

The earliest source for the legend of Uways is a collection of biographies compiled by Ibn Sa'd of Basra in southern Iraq, who died in 845. Ibn Sa'd prefaces his stories about Uways with lists of the people who handed them down over the generations; there are always five intermediaries between Ibn Sa'd and Uways himself. According to these stories, Uways lived in Kufa, in western Iraq, in *c.* 640. He was either naked, because of his extreme poverty, and thus unable to go out of his room, or at least shoeless, and very badly dressed in what his friends gave him by way of charity. Once he declared, weeping, that he did not want to be a judge, or one of the Muslim scholar-jurists, or a recognized transmitter of Traditions (although he had been a member of a group of transmitters). Then, after reciting a passage from the Qur'an, he fainted, and after regaining consciousness declared that he wished to live a life of solitude. People used to laugh at him, but he was honoured by the conqueror and ruler 'Umar (reigned 633–44), one of Muhammad's successors. Muhammad had foretold that a man called Uways would come from southern Arabia, leaving his mother behind: Uways would have suffered from leprosy, but, after praying, would have been cured, so that only a mark the size of a coin would remain. 'Umar had been ordered by Muhammad to ask Uways to pray to God to forgive 'Umar's sins. This duly happened. Uways tried to ensure that the story should not spread, demanding silence from a man who had heard it from 'Umar, and insisting on this condition before praying for the man's sins to be forgiven. Nonetheless, Uways's fame spread, and he left Kufa. He was killed at the famous battle of Siffin in 657, taking the side of Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law 'Ali against his fellow-Muslims. Muhammad was supposed to have said of Uways that he was his bosom friend (*khalil*) in the Islamic community of believers, and that he would be the best of the generation of 'Followers' (*Tabi'un*, the one following that of Muhammad's 'Companions', *Ashab*).[3]

These accounts assembled by Ibn Sa'd contain a number of points of interest, and also the germ of future development. Uways appears as a familiar type of figure on the fringes of Islamic society: badly dressed, mocked, and deliberately excluding himself

from respectable institutions. The specially favoured recipient of divine intervention stresses that his secret must not be revealed: this is a much-repeated theme of the *History of the Uwaysis*. There is an apparent contradiction between Muhammad's saying that Uways is his bosom friend and the presentation of him as a member of the next generation, whose encounter with his Companions is set in the future. This contradiction is resolved in the subsequent legend of Muhammad and Uways's telephathic contact.

Other early sources

Another early source is the celebrated jurist Ibn Hanbal (d. 855), whose collection of Traditions about Muhammad contains references to Uways. At the battle of Siffin a Syrian is made to recall that Muhammad had said that Uways would be the best of the Followers. Ibn Hanbal also gives the story of 'Umar's meeting with Uways.[4] Ibn Hanbal's son 'Abd Allah (d. 903), in his supplement to his father's work, gives a different account of Uways's death: he went on a military expedition to north-western Iran during the reign of 'Umar, and on his return died of natural causes.[5] Also in the ninth century, the Iraqi theologian Muhasibi (d. 857), speaking of early ascetics' unwillingness to live off funds provided by unjust rulers, and their consequent tendency to eat what others had thrown away, reports that Uways would take things from dunghills.[6] The Iranian mystic Tirmidhi, who was born sometime before 835 and lived at least to the age of 65, in what was Soviet Central Asia, provides more information about Uways. According to Tirmidhi, Muhammad referred to people who could not come to the mosque because of their nakedness: one of these was Uways. Tirmidhi relates a story in which Uways meets somebody for the first time and already knows his name, explaining, 'My spirit recognized your spirit.'[7] Here one can see an anticipation of the telepathic communications in the *History of the Uwaysis*.

In the tenth century Islam's most famous historian, Tabari (d. 923), related that Muhammad had said that, through the intercession of Uways, the equivalent of two whole tribes would enter paradise. Tabari also notes differences of opinion about the date of Uways's death.[8] The Sufi mystic Sarraj (d. 988) also refers to Uways's piety and powers of intercession, and his fellow-Sufi

Kalabadhi (d. 995) puts him in a class of people who, after 'passing away' from themselves, are both wise and mad, so that they have no social mission.[9]

Among eleventh-century writers, a specialist in the study of Traditions, Hakim of Nishapur in north-eastern Iran (d. 1014), in his collection of texts with 'sound' pedigrees that had been omitted from the canonical collections, says that Uways and his friends used to gather in a special mosque of their own for worship and recitation of the Qur'an. He wore rags of wool and had his head shaved.[10] The Iranian Sufi Kharaqani (d. 1033), who will be discussed in detail below, refers to Uways in the sayings which were collected after his death. Once he dreamt that he and Uways were together in one shroud, with the famous mystic Abu Yazid of Bastam (d. *c.* 875), whom Kharaqani saw as his master in the 'Uwaysi' manner.[11] Uways is given greater powers of intercession by the heresiographer 'Abd al-Qahir of Baghdad (d. 1037): 70,000 people, including Uways, will go to heaven without being called to account for sins, and each of them will intercede for 70,000 more.[12] The Sufi biographer Abu Nu'aym of Isfahan in central Iran (d. 1038–9) provides a graphic picture of Uways (and people like him) as described by Muhammad: living in hiding, with dishevelled hair and dust on his face, not admitted to the presence of princes, unnoticed and ignored, and dressed in wool. In 644 'Umar and 'Ali, after almost twenty years of searching, found him grazing camels near Mecca.[13] Another Sufi writer, Hujwiri of Ghazna in what is now Afghanistan (d. 1072), relates that Uways, in addition to a white spot on his left shoulder (attributed to leprosy by other writers), had another on the palm of one hand, and that these spots were not caused by leprosy. Hujwiri explains why Uways, although living in the time of Muhammad, had not met him: he was overpowered by ecstasy and also kept at home by his duty to his mother.[14] Hujwiri, like Abu Nu'aym and a couple of twelfth-century writers, quotes pious remarks of Uways on solitude and asceticism.[15] He quotes Muhammad as saying that Uways will intercede not just for as many people as are found in two tribes, but for as many people as the sheep which two tribes possess.[16]

The eastern Iranian traveller 'Ali Harawi (d. 1215), in his *Guide to Places of Pilgrimage*, which is based on journeys which he made in the 1170s, notes tombs of Uways at Damascus (seen by other authors, but today no longer there),[17] Raqqa (also in Syria), in Egypt, at Alexandria, and in Diyarbakr in south-eastern Turkey.

He says that the most reliable account is that Uways is buried at Raqqa (the grave is still venerated there today, and marked by a small mausoleum).[18]

Uways in the Memorial of the Friends

The legend of Uways finds a significant expansion in the *Memorial of the Friends (Tadhkira al-awliya'*), a collection of Sufi biographies attributed to the Persian poet 'Attar (d. 1221). This compilation is preserved in manuscripts from the thirteenth century onwards, and is extremely important for the Uwaysi tradition in general. The biography of Uways begins by evoking a saying ascribed to Muhammad, 'I find the breath of the Beneficent from the direction of the Yemen', and connecting it with Uways. This motif has been dominant in the legend of Uways ever since. The name 'Rahman' ('Beneficent', often translated as 'Merciful') was the South Arabian name for God before Islam. The biographer also credits Muhammad with the statement that at the Day of Judgement God will create 70,000 angels in the form of Uways, so as to camouflage his entry into paradise, which must be as well concealed as his terrestrial devotions. Anonymous reports repeated by the compiler relate that in heaven Muhammad will try to visit Uways, but God will stop him. Just as they did not meet in this world, they will not meet in the next. Besides, God will say, Uways's vision of God will render seeing Muhammad unnecessary. The number of Muslims for whom Uways will intercede is now put at the number of hairs on the sheep, cows and camels of two tribes. In his lifetime, Muhammad is presented as saying that Uways has not seen him with his outer eyes. When Muhammad is dying, he instructs that his patched cloak (the distinctive garment of the Sufis) should be given to Uways. In sympathy for Muhammad's having a tooth broken, Uways had lost all his teeth. The author relates that the Sufi Abu 'l-Qasim of Gurgan in northern Iran (d. 1076–7) used to recite 'Uways! Uways! Uways!' as his formula of 'remembrance' (*dhikr*). The biography concludes by presenting Uways as the prototype of the Uwaysis, instructed by Muhammad without seeing him with his outer eyes.[19]

From the fourteenth century to the present

One important late source for the legend of Uways is the Syrian

historian Dhahabi (d. 1348). He explains that earlier writers, notably the most respectable of all Tradition-collectors, Bukhari (d. 870), had expressed doubts about pedigrees in which Uways's name appeared. Indeed, one of the founders of Islamic law, Malik of Medina (d. 796), had denied Uways's very existence.[20]

A member of the Naqshbandi brotherhood, the famous Ottoman Turkish poet Lâmi'i (d. 1532–3), composed a long verse account of Uways's legend. He states that he did so at the request of a hatter who was himself an Uwaysi.[21] The Shiites have also tended to show a particular interest in Uways, not surprisingly, since he is said to have been killed fighting for the first of their 'Leaders', 'Ali: the Shiite martyr Nur Allah Shushtari (d. 1610) presents Uways as insulting 'Umar (who is detested by the Shiites as a usurper).[22] The attention given to Uways in East Turkistan in the sixteenth century, and the biography of him in the *History of the Uwaysis*, composed *c.* 1600, will be considered later, in the relevant sections.[23] In the Indian subcontinent, we find seventeenth-century manuscripts, now in Pakistan, of the 'Sayings (*Malfuzat*) of Master Uways Qarani' – an example of a particularly Indo-Muslim literary genre, in which the conversations of a mystic are recorded or forged. The work also contains accounts of Uways's life and miracles, and stories about the Prophet's patched cloak, supposedly given to him.[24]

In the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century one 'Uthman Uwaysi (d. 1724) claimed to be descended from Uways and to possess a piece of his cloak. Pilgrims would come to venerate this, and the grand vizier 'Ali-Pasha of Çorlu built a shrine for it, with a fountain and a hospice attached.[25] Later in the century a Christian observer in the service of the empire, Ignatius Mouragea d'Ohsson, gives an account of Uways. One day Uways announced that Gabriel had appeared to him in a dream and told him to abandon the world. Gabriel had also laid down the rules of Uways's religious association: abstinence, isolation, perpetual recitation of prayers (this looks like a reminiscence of the 'Conclusion' of the *History of the Uwaysis*).[26] Uways demanded that his disciples should follow him in losing all their teeth, and said that an angel would remove them in their sleep and put them by their bedside.[27]

The extreme veneration of Uways in Central Asia was observed by the Hungarian orientalist Ármin Vámbéry, in his travels in 1863. Uways had given his name to a mountain range near Khiva (in what is now Uzbekistan), and on one of its heights was his tomb,

a famous place of pilgrimage.[28] In the twentieth century its fame has remained undiminished, and in spite of the hostility of the Soviet authorities it has been the object of much veneration.[29]

THE UWAYSI TRADITION

Kharaqani

Perhaps the most significant figure for the study of the Uwaysi tradition is the Iranian Sufi Kharaqani (d. 1033), so called after the name of his village, Kharaqan in north-eastern Iran. Later sources invariably present him as the model of the Uwaysi pupil, learning – just as Uways had done from Muhammad – from the spirit of an earlier mystic, Abu Yazid of the nearby town of Bastam (d. *c.* 875).

We have information about Kharaqani from a few eleventh-century writers. Some of this information is certainly relevant to the history of the Uwaysi phenomenon. The Sufi author Ansari of Herat in western Afghanistan (d. 1089) relates that Kharaqani said to him, 'If you associate with Khidr [the immortal prophet linked with the Uwaysis], then repent of that, and if you go by night from Herat to Mecca, repent of that as well.' Ansari also relates, on the authority of an 'elder', that Kharaqani had said that God had hidden his friends. Ansari listed Kharaqani among ten people out of recent elders who were in a class of their own. Kharaqani had told Ansari that he had seen the famous 'drunken' and ecstatic Sufi Shibli of Baghdad (d. 945) dancing in front of him in the air. Ansari also tells us that Kharaqani did not pronounce Arabic correctly, since he was 'a man of the local people' (*ummi*, a word often taken to mean 'illiterate').[30]

We have already encountered the *Memorial of the Friends* attributed to the poet 'Attar, and apparently dating from around the start of the thirteenth century. Its chapter on Kharaqani evidently consists of quotations selected from a lost work entitled the *Light of the Sciences* (*Nur al-'ulum*), which is also partly preserved in another selection (considered below). This anonymous *Light of the Sciences* was clearly composed long after Kharaqani's death, by a Sufi disciple attached to his lodge. He refers to another disciple who died thirty years after Kharaqani's death. At one point, however, he relates a conversation of Kharaqani's on the authority of a first-hand source.[31] The section on Kharaqani in the *Memorial of the Friends* begins by presenting Abu Yazid as prophesying

Kharaqani's greatness. It continues by telling us that Kharaqani, when young, would go to Abu Yazid's grave every night, stand there and ask God to give him a smell of the robe of honour which he had given to Abu Yazid.[32] Both the *Memorial of the Friends* and the independent *Selections from the Light of the Sciences* (preserved in a manuscript dated 1299) give a story in which a disciple of Kharaqani asks for permission to go to Mount Lebanon to see the Pole (*qutb*, the head of the Sufi hierarchy at a given time). After receiving permission and going to the Lebanon the disciple comes upon a funeral, at which those present are not performing the ritual worship. He asks why this is so, and is told that they are awaiting the Pole, who leads the worship there five times a day. When the Pole arrives he turns out to be Kharaqani. The disciple asks to be transported back to Kharaqan. He faints on clasping Kharaqani's hand, and comes to his senses in the city of Rayy, in northern Iran. On arriving at Kharaqan he is told by his master not to reveal their secret. Kharaqani explains that he has asked God to conceal him from other people, and so only one person has seen him, Abu Yazid.[33] In another story Kharaqani is contrasted with a collector of Traditions: the mystic says that he receives his traditions directly from Muhammad, and, by looking at Muhammad's face, can tell if a spurious Tradition is being quoted.[34]

The sayings attributed to Kharaqani which appear at the beginning of the section on him in the *Memorial of the Friends* are quite extraordinary. They go as far as any known Sufi text in the self-glorification of the mystic, and have an uncompromisingly direct tone of their own. Later on the sayings quoted seem conventional and repetitive, and concentrate on the standard Sufi theme of man's passing away so that God alone survives. In the earlier passages we find one remarkable anecdote: a Sufi comes down from the air and refers to three great mystics of the past, saying, 'I am the Junayd, Shibli and Abu Yazid of the age!' Kharaqani replies, 'I am the Muhammad and the God of the age!' In another anecdote God threatens to reveal Kharaqani's secrets, so that people will stone him. Kharaqani persuades God not to do so by threatening in turn to reveal God's secrets, so that people will stop worshipping him. God, says Kharaqani, wanted others to be slaves, but Kharaqani to be a master. He could turn sackcloth into expensive brocade. What God has given him is absolutely unique. Kharaqani is completely omniscient. God has made him travel

everywhere.[35] His body fills the world, and the heavens revolve around him. One word from him would be enough to stop scholars ever teaching again. Paradise is looking for him, and hell is afraid of him. After the resurrection of the dead he will be placed above the people presented by Muhammad. God communicates with Kharaqani by revelation (*wahy*, reserved for the prophets according to Islam). Those who go on pilgrimages to his grave will intercede for others at the Last Judgement. The prophets and the friends of God will be placed on special pulpits of light, but Kharaqani will be seated upon God's Uniqueness.[36] God has one slave on the face of the earth whose quality is such that when he engages in 'remembrance of God' lions urinate.[37] Kharaqani claims that God said, 'I have created all these creatures, but I have not created the Sufi.'[38] (Kharaqani is famous in Sufi literature for having said, 'The Sufi is uncreated.')[39]

Kharaqani's spiritual master, Abu Yazid, figures largely in the sayings attributed to him. Whoever has seen Abu Yazid will be saved from hellfire.[40] Kharaqani, like Abu Yazid, uses the imagery of trees and birds, though it is difficult to find here the unmistakably Indian inspiration of his predecessor.[41] In one saying he explains that he is prevented from repeating what Abu Yazid had said to God because people would accuse him of lack of respect. In another saying, however, he claims to have reached in practice heights which Abu Yazid reached only in theory. Kharaqani records that Abu Yazid said, 'I am neither resident nor traveller', and comments, 'I am a resident, travelling in God's Oneness.' When Kazaruni says, 'I came out as a snake comes out of its skin', we certainly have an echo of one of Abu Yazid's incontestably Indian sayings.[42] Commenting on a moral precept of Abu Yazid's which enjoins one not to follow a good action with a bad one, Kharaqani expresses the hope that one will forget both good and evil.[43] This also seems Indian, not Islamic.

As regards the miraculous quality of the travelling which characterizes the *History of the Uwaysis*, Kharaqani explains that some people can go to Mecca and back in three days, some in twenty-four hours, some in a night, and some in a moment.[44] He says that he has had no master to teach him except God, and also that he has no disciples.[45] As is normal with the Sufi masters in the *History of the Uwaysis*, Kharaqani is distinguished by a special theme: sadness. Here the Persian word *anduh* is doubled by the Arabic *qabd*, meaning literally 'contraction', and what today would be

called 'depression'. Kharaqani's 'contraction' is contrasted with the 'expansion' (Arabic *bast*, meaning 'happiness') of a Sufi contemporary.[46] The contrast between the two concepts is a notable theme of the sayings attributed to Abu Yazid, in which R.C. Zaehner saw the opposite poles of a manic-depressive psychosis.[47] Kharaqani explains that his own special road to God is that of sadness, granted to him in reply to a request for a road on which others would not be able to join him.[48] But he tells others to weep much and laugh little, and speaks of an elite of 'youngmanly ones' (*jawanmardan*) whose sadness cannot be contained by this world and the next put together.[49]

The independent *Selections from the Light of the Sciences* provide little of importance that is not already found in the *Memorial of the Friends*. Kharaqani is shown imitating Abu Yazid in bullying his lower soul (*nafs*) into worship.[50] When he first comes to Abu Yazid's tomb he has a conversation with the dead mystic, explaining that he does not know Islamic law and has not memorized the Qur'an. Abu Yazid replies that Kharaqani's greatness had been foretold to him. By the time that Kharaqani has returned home from his visit to the tomb he has recited the whole of the Qur'an.[51]

It may be concluded that Kharaqani, a man of humble origins like various fellow-Sufis whom he mentions (such as a butcher and a farmer),[52] acquired a knowledge of sayings attributed to Abu Yazid and handed down in Bastam. It is known from independent evidence that these sayings of Abu Yazid's were being transmitted there at this time.[53] Although Abu Yazid's sayings have an Indian character of their own, this is almost entirely absent from Kharaqani's mysticism, owing to subsequent Sufi development and adaptation. What is left is a wild self-exaltation and a refusal of conventional religious instruction in favour of immediate experience. The mystic learns directly from God, Muhammad, or his dead predecessor. This, and another element in the story of Kharaqani, that of flying to Mount Lebanon to preside over the hierarchy of God's friends, provide the essential prototypes for the Sufi ideology of the *History of the Uwaysis*.

The continuation of the Uwaysi tradition

Up to now the only Uwaysis whom we have encountered have been Uways himself and Kharaqani. However, the *Memorial of the Friends*, in the biography of Uways, explains that there is a whole

class of people called the Uwaysis. They do not need an 'elder', because they acquire their instruction from Muhammad directly. This, says our author, is an exalted station.[54] It has been noted above that the same text presents Abu 'l-Qasim of Gurgan (d. 1076–7) as repeating the formula 'Uways! Uways! Uways!' Later the Naqshbandi brotherhood will claim Abu 'l-Qasim, linked with Kharaqani, as Uwaysi predecessors of their own masters. Around 1320 one Taqi al-Din of Wasit in Iraq writes that there had been an Uwaysi pedigree of initiations, but it is now extinct.[55]

One important piece of evidence for the use of the word 'Uwaysi' is also important for the study of the most famous of Persian poets, Hafiz of Shiraz in southern Iran (d. 1389 or 1390). Hafiz once had a Sufi visitor, called Ashraf al-Din Simnani, who died in 1405–6, after dictating an account of his travels to a disciple. Simnani relates that Hafiz was an Uwaysi, but also says that he would go to the meetings of an elder called Qiwam al-Din 'Abd Allah.[56] In the fifteenth century the Sufi poet Jami (d. 1492) says that Hafiz does not seem to have had an elder.[57] On the other hand, another late fifteenth-century source asserts that one Mahmud 'Attar had been Hafiz's Sufi instructor.[58] Scholars have spilt a lot of ink over the question of whether Hafiz's poetry is mystical or not. It would now seem that some of the poems are just celebrations of the temporal joys of court life, but that others certainly do have a Sufi content. One question which needs to be addressed here is whether any of the poems can be seen as specifically 'Uwaysi'. The answer is that the traditions of Persian Sufi poetry insist on extolling the direct experience of ecstasy (symbolized by the language of libertinism) as opposed to conventional religious behaviour and the stages or stations of the Sufi Path. When Hafiz shows 'our elder' going to the tavern he is echoing a motif used in the Sufi poetry of 'Attar a hundred and fifty years before.[59]

The Naqshbandi brotherhood

The Uwaysi tradition acquires a new significance from the fourteenth century onwards, with the foundation of the Naqshbandi brotherhood. Baha' al-Din Naqshband himself is recorded as having not only a living master, one Kulal (d. 1371), but also a dead Uwaysi elder, 'Abd al-Khaliq Ghujdawani (d. 1179–80). Before Naqshband there had been a line of 'Masters' (*Khwajagan*). It was now claimed that some other figures in his

spiritual genealogy, stretching back to Muhammad, had also been Uwaysis, notably Abu 'l-Qasim of Gurgan in the eleventh century. This claim was made by a member of the brotherhood, Muhammad Parsa (d. 1420).[60] Thus the poet Jami, himself also a member of the Naqshbandi brotherhood, explained that the Uwaysis were not just disciples of Muhammad: the spirits of individual Sufis, after death, could guide others and make them independent of a living master. For example, one Abu Bakr Tayabadi (d. 1388) counted as an Uwaysi, since he was guided by the spirit of Ahmad of Jam in north-eastern Iran (d. 1141). Another Uwaysi noted by Jami was assisted by Muhammad, however: Jalal al-Din Purani (d. 1457–8), who had no living elder.[61] The Naqshbandi Sufi culture represented by Jami was inherited by the Mongol princes of sixteenth-century East Turkistan (the Uwaysi movement there will be considered later).

The seventeenth century

One very important Uwaysi was Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624), who was born in the city of Sirhind in northern India. He was both a Naqshbandi and an Uwaysi. Thus, he explained, he was a disciple of Muhammad via intermediaries in the Naqshbandi brotherhood. However, after studying with a Naqshbandi elder he became an Uwaysi, apparently in the sense of no longer having any visible instructor. Although he was an Uwaysi, he declared, he did have an instructor: God himself (a similar claim of being instructed by God was made by Kharaqani, as we have seen). Thus he was also a co-disciple of Muhammad, having the same divine teacher. Although he was a 'Follower' (*Tabi'*), in the sense of coming after Muhammad, he sat at the same table as the Prophet, like a servant sharing food with a master, invited by him.[62]

The pen name 'Üveysi' is used in a remarkable Ottoman Turkish poem, which dates from the reign of Murad IV (1623–40) and attacks the degeneracy of the empire. It is usually attributed to the famous writer and poet Veysî (1561–1628), whose real name was Üveys ibn Mehmed, and who was also a leading judge. He presumably took the pen name 'Veysî' from his own first name. Doubt has been expressed about his authorship of the strange polemic against the Ottoman Empire. The author presents himself as the disciple of an elder called Mühîtî, now dead. He attacks the jurists, administrators and Sufis of his day, but says that there are

many hidden 'friends of God'. The choice of the pen name 'Üveysi' may thus be appropriate, since the poet claims that his spirit has always served to help God manifest himself, and that he knows God's secrets.[63]

A treatise on the Chishti brotherhood of Sufis, which has been extremely successful in India, was composed in 1699–1700. It lists the Uwaysis among a number of 'families' (*khanawadaha*) or 'chains' (*silsilaha*). We are told that this 'chain' takes its origin from Uways, and has included the celebrated Persian poet Nizami (d. 1209) of Ganja in what was Soviet Azerbaijan, along with 'other great elders'. Whoever is instructed by the spirit of Muhammad or of an elder of the past without any intermediary, thereby obtaining 'deputyship' (*khilafat*), is called an 'Uwaysi'.[64]

From the eighteenth century to the present

The most significant Islamic thinker of the eighteenth century, Wali Allah of Delhi (1703–62), puts forward a theory of types of 'relationship' (*nisba*) with God: each Sufi brotherhood has as its goal the acquisition of a special relationship with God, peculiar to that brotherhood. He says that the relationship of the supposed founder of the Qadiri brotherhood, 'Abd al-Qadir of Gilan in northern Iran (d. 1165), was the relationship of Uwaysi-hood: this gives information about how God rules the universe, and by it links are formed with the spirits of Sufi elders and Muhammad.[65] In the late eighteenth century we encounter a very different kind of source, d'Ohsson, who asserts that the Uwaysi association had a certain prestige in the first centuries of Islam, and afterwards was restricted to the Yemen, where it had originated, and where its members were still reduced to a very small number.[66] I have not been able to find any evidence to support these assertions, and strongly suspect that they represent pure fantasizing.

In the nineteenth century Vámbéry, speaking of the Uwaysis as members of a 'fraternity', 'order', or 'sect', says that they are most frequently encountered in Iran.[67] Here again one doubts whether there was any form of organization: 'Uwaysi' would have meant any independent dervish outside the brotherhoods. Since, in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire and Egypt imposed bureaucratic controls to limit the activities of dervishes of this kind, it is not surprising that they were most often found in Iran, where, in contrast, the brotherhoods were weak.[68]

In twentieth-century Iran there has been a new Uwaysi movement, in a conscious reaction to the brotherhoods and their elders. This movement has centred around Muhammad 'Anqa (1887–1962) and his son. It has been characterized by attempts to improve Sufism by integrating modern Western findings in the natural sciences. Under the reign of Muhammad Reza Shah (1941–79) its meetings were attended by members of the imperial court. Since the revolution of 1978–9, the movement's activities have been continued in exile in a largely antiquarian spirit: leading Sufis of the past have been annexed and incorporated in the imaginary history of an Uwaysi brotherhood, very much in the style of the *History of the Uwaysis*.[69]

OTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF THE UWAYSI PHENOMENON

There remain considerable problems with regard to defining the Uwaysi phenomenon. Up to now we have examined only instances in which the names 'Uways' and 'Uwaysi' have appeared. But there is much more evidence about the practice of looking for guidance from Muhammad, the spirits of the dead and hidden 'friends of God'.

Guidance from Muhammad and the spirits of the dead

In Islam there is one well-known tradition of turning for advice from on high. The practice is called *istikhara*: one engages in formal worship and asks God for assistance, and then goes to sleep. The answer is revealed to one in a dream. This practice is legitimized by sayings attributed to Muhammad, and it is often Muhammad himself who appears in the dream to solve the problem. Many doctors of the law have condemned this practice, especially when it involves sleeping in a mosque or other holy place.[70] That is not surprising, since the tradition is obviously a continuation of the ancient practice of 'incubation', that is to say deliberately going to sleep in some sacred spot in order to have a dream, either to find a remedy for illness, or to obtain advice, good fortune, or information about the future. The answer is given by some divine being. This ancient practice, associated in particular with the Mediterranean and the cult of the Greek god of medicine,

Asklepios, has survived in Christianity, notably in Greece and Iraq, up to our own time. Its Islamic continuation has often involved sleeping in grottoes and the shrines of Sufis.[71] Authors of books often say that they have performed an *istikhara*, obtaining advice from Muhammad or a dead Sufi, before beginning to write.[72]

Apart from dreams of Muhammad, it has also been common to try to find guidance from him in the waking state. This has been emphasized by the Sanusi brotherhood in Libya in the nineteenth century: the ultimate goal is not to lose oneself in God, as is usual in Sufism, but to reach union with the Prophet.[73] By the nineteenth century the practice of 'passing away' or annihilating oneself in Muhammad is standard among the Sufis of Deoband in northern India. In the same way, one forms a mental image of one's living elder and 'passes away' in him as well. The two practices are put together in a schematic representation well known in the Sufi brotherhoods, along with attempts by elders to influence their disciples by telepathy.[74] In medieval India it is normal to look for assistance from the spirit of a dead elder who has guided one when he was alive.[75] On the other hand, to go to the tomb of a Sufi whom one has not met when alive and try to make oneself his disciple by an initiatory shaving of the head is a practice which is condemned by Sufi leaders.[76]

Sufism's most influential theorist, Ibn 'Arabi of Murcia (d. 1240), has been seen as an Uwaysi, and this is not inappropriate, given his enthusiasm for frequenting the tombs of dead mystics. He himself speaks of the importance of benefiting from their spirits. His own literary activity is presented as being inspired by God and Muhammad. There is no evidence that he had a real master to instruct him when young. He speaks of mysterious encounters with hidden 'friends of God' and the enigmatic prophet Khidr. Such encounters are the dominant features of the biographies in the *History of the Uwaysis*.[77]

Khidr and the hidden friends

Khidr ('the green one') is a legendary figure, the famous 'Green Man' of ancient Europe and the Near East. He is identified with an anonymous teacher of Moses in the Qur'an (18: 59–81). The Qur'anic story shows Moses and his teacher going on a journey together, and the teacher performing a number of outrageous actions. This story has been linked with the epic of Gilgamesh, the

Alexander romance and a Jewish legend about Elijah. In Islam Khidr is sometimes identifed with Elijah and sometimes just linked with him as sharing immortality. Modern scholarship has pointed out similarities between Khidr and St George. Being immortal, he is put in various biblical periods by Muslim authors, and is connected with the spring of the water of eternal life. He is also linked to Idris, a pre-Islamic figure who appears in the Qur'an and whose name has been derived by modern scholars from those of Ezra and St Andrew. It is believed that Khidr continues to rule, invisible, over the world. He flies through the air and worships every Friday at Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem.[78]

Khidr is connected with the hidden 'friends of God', and in particular with a class of these known as the 'substitutes' (*abdal*). It is not entirely clear why these are so called. They are mentioned by the famous early Arabic prose writer and theologian Jahiz, in a work composed between 842 and 847, which consists of a series of ironic questions about aspects of Arab folklore. Are the 'substitutes' now at a place called al-'Arj (this is the name of a number of places) or Baysan (Beth-San in Palestine – a modern editor of Jahiz thinks that the text should read 'Lubnan' (Lebanon) as this is supposed to be where the 'substitutes' live)? Are they Arabs, non-Arabs, or a mixture? And what was done by the master of Antioch? (Here Jahiz may be referring to a legendary martyr buried there.)[79] Why was Salman placed after Bilal (the reference is to two famous Companions of Muhammad), and who was put after Salman? Who are their relatives?[80]

Some information about the 'substitutes' is found in the canonical collections of Muhammad's sayings. They number either thirty or forty and live in Syria.[81] The Sufi writer Abu Talib of Mecca (d. 996) explains how they fit into the hierarchy of God's friends. At the top of the hierarchy stands the Pole (*qutb*), who is the 'substitute' of Muhammad's first successor, Abu Bakr. Beneath these are the three *athafi* (the word means the three stones which support a pot over a fire), who are the 'substitutes' of Muhammad's next three successors. After these come the seven 'pegs' (*awtad*), who are the 'substitutes' of seven other early Muslims to whom paradise was promised.[82] Then come the 'substitutes' proper: they number 40, 70, 300, or 313. They are the 'substitutes' of the Muslims who fought for the Prophet at the battle of Badr.[83]

The Arabic writer Tha'alibi of Nishapur in north-eastern Iran (d. 1038) explains that the 'substitutes' always number seventy.

When one dies he is replaced. They all live on Mount Lebanon or the mountain range to the north of it in Syria. This area had always been distinguished by the devotions of Jewish prophets and 'friends of God'.[84]

The idea of the 'substitutes' is in fact anticipated in Judaism before Islam, though Islamicists do not seem to have noticed this. The Babylonian Talmud, composed around 500 CE, says that the world must contain not less than thirty-six righteous men in each generation, who are granted the vision of God.[85] Jewish tradition also gives the number as thirty or forty-five: the latter number is divided into thirty in Israel and fifteen abroad. The number thirty-six, however, has become most popular, owing to speculation concerning it in Judaism's main mystical tradition, that of the Kabbalah, from the thirteenth century onwards.[86] Thus the thirty-six are expanded into seventy-two, half in Palestine, half elsewhere. They are hidden, usually disguised as artisans.[87]

Shiite influence

There remains one last problem: to what extent might the Uwaysi phenomenon be a reflection of Shiism? As regards looking to Muhammad for guidance, this could obviously represent an influence from Shiism's veneration of the Leaders in Muhammad's family. It has long been a commonplace in the history of religions that the enormous increase in devotion to Muhammad in Sunni Islam must have happened in response to Shiism's devotion to 'Ali and his descendants.[88] As for Shiite influences on Sufism, the scholars have quarrelled violently, but it has been normal to suspect that the hierarchy of the Sufi 'friends of God' is of Shiite origin.[89]

THE UWAYSI MOVEMENT IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY EAST TURKISTAN

There seems to be some connection between the composition of the *History of the Uwaysis* and a dynasty of Mongol rulers in sixteenth-century East Turkistan. An especially strong manifestation of the Uwaysi tradition evidently took place there at that time. Modern writers have linked the *History of the Uwaysis* to what they have seen as the foundation of an Uwaysi brotherhood by one Muhammad Sharif (d. 1556–6).[90] 'Hagiographical' and historical

sources show this figure as enjoying the patronage of a Mongol ruler of East Turkistan, 'Abd al-Rashid (reigned 1533–60). Study of this ruler does in fact produce a certain amount of information which helps one to appreciate the contents of the *History of the Uwaysis*.

Royalty and Sufism in early sixteenth-century East Turkistan

As it happens, there exists one excellent first-hand historical source for this period, dedicated to 'Abd al-Rashid, and consequently entitled *The Rashidi History* (*Tarikh-i Rashidi*). It was composed by someone who was himself a Mongol prince, known as Mirza Haydar (d. 1551). The value of his work is to some extent diminished by his evident belief in the miraculous interventions of Sufi writers whom he knew. On the other hand, he often reproduces original documents for the study of Sufism in his time, and the importance of these has not been noticed by modern scholars. The late nineteenth-century specialists who examined the *Rashidi History* and other books composed after it dismissed the Sufi passages as examples of childish fanaticism, which did not deserve to be translated.[91]

Haydar has much to say about 'Abd al-Rashid's father, Sa'id (reigned 1514–33) and relations with leading Sufis. Sa'id had begun by ruling to the north of East Turkistan, in an area which one branch of the Mongols had made its own, and which was consequently called (from the Persian word for 'Mongols') 'Mughulistan'. However, he found himself under pressure from his neighbours and, consequently, in 1514, pressed southwards and conquered one of East Turkistan's most important cities, Kashghar (where fellow-Mongols had long been ruling). Later, in 1525–6, he moved his Mongol followers to the hills near Kashghar.[92]

Haydar refers to the original conversion of Kashghar and the surrounding country to Islam. This, as we have already noted, is credited to a ruler called Satuq Bughra Khan, who reigned in the tenth century and to whom the *History of the Uwaysis* is dedicated. The alleged founder of the Uwaysi brotherhood in East Turkistan, Muhammad Sharif (who is not mentioned by Haydar, but will be discussed shortly), is supposed to have been instructed by Satuq's spirit while engaged in devotions at his tomb. Haydar says that he has heard from dervishes that visiting Satuq's tomb brings great

spiritual advantages.[93] Other tombs are mentioned by Haydar; he explains that in East Turkistan in general there are innumerable unidentified graves of Muslims of the past.[94] Muhammad Sharif, as we shall see, is recorded as having rediscovered many of these, and as having renewed the veneration of leading Sufis at them. Haydar tells how Sa'id visited the shrine of a famous Sufi called Habib, near Kashghar, and asked to profit from his spirit. This Habib appears in the *History of the Uwaysis*.[95]

Haydar relates that at one point Sa'id repented of his excessive consumption of alcohol and turned to Sufism. Such consumption, judging from the pages of the *Rashidi History*, often caused the deaths of Mongol princes, and Sufism frequently served the function of discouraging a reformed alcoholic from returning to a habit which had almost completely ruined his heath.[96] Sa'id was advised in his Sufi studies by Haydar's uncle, who had been a disciple of masters of the Yasawi brotherhood, so named after a leading Central Asian mystic, Ahmad Yasawi, who died in 1167.[97] These masters had long been implanted in this region. Sa'id now wished to abandon his throne for the mystical life, but his plans were interrupted by the arrival of a Naqshbandi elder, who advised him to remain king.[98] Another Naqshbandi master, called Nura, subsequently arrived and became Sa'id's spiritual director.[99] Haydar reproduces a letter by him on Sufi matters, part of which refers to the Uwaysi tradition. It explains that Abu Yazid of Bastam, for example, had no elder in this visible world, but was instructed by someone who had died a century earlier, the sixth Leader of the Shiites, Ja'far (d. 765).[100] Haydar himself, writing on the basis of Naqshbandi books, says that the discipline of 'remembrance of God' (*dhikr Allah*), that is to say the repetition of a formula containing one of God's names, was transmitted from one heart to another: from Ja'far's to Abu Yazid's, then to Kharaqani's, Abu 'l-Qasim of Gurgan's and so on.[101]

As for 'Abd al-Rashid, Haydar, although he dedicates his *History* to him, is a hostile witness, since the ruler put a number of the historian's relatives to death. Nonetheless, he pays tribute to 'Abd al-Rashid's abilities as a musician, painter and archer. The impression given by Haydar and by a later historical source is one of a highly accomplished monarch, within the Irano–Turkic royal tradition of cultivating the arts and crafts (his father Sa'id had given him a thorough education in these).[102] Haydar calls him a good Muslim who was led astray by bad advisers, but his religiosity

appears not to have been one of formal, legalistic conventions. He seems rather to belong to the world of poetry and song – a suitable sovereign to act as patron to 'Uwaysi' Sufis.

Muhammad Sharif: founder of an Uwaysi brotherhood?

There exists a short anonymous biography of Muhammad Sharif. I am inclined to suspect that it is by Uzgani, the author of the *History of the Uwaysis*.[103] In any case it probably dates from around 1600. The author does not present himself as having first-hand knowledge of Muhammad Sharif. He refers to the death of 'Abd al-Rashid as happening a couple of years after that of the Sufi master, when in fact there was an interval of four years.[104] The contents of the biography are highly fanciful, and must be treated with the greatest reserve, but are valuable for the study of 'imaginary history' itself.

The biography relates that Muhammad Sharif was born at Sayram (near Chimkent in ex-Soviet Kazakhstan). At the age of 7 he lost his father, and at that of 10 his mother. Some time after the latter's death a man came and told him to go to Samarqand, and then disappeared. Muhammad Sharif realized that the spirits of Sufi elders were helping him. He visited his parents' graves, and his mother told him to obey his visitor, so as to obtain instruction from the elders' spirits. Muhammad Sharif arrived at Samarqand and was directed to the famous college of Ulugh Beg (built in 1424), where he was given a room. He then devoted his life to study and religious exercises. Thirty years passed. Muhammad Sharif acquired one disciple, a slave-girl who came to him as the result of a dream. One day two men appeared, dressed in white. One was Satuq Bughra Khan, the tenth-century ruler, and the other was Yasawi, the twelfth-century Sufi. Satuq told Muhammad Sharif to give him his hand and close his eyes. When he opened his eyes again he found himself in the desert. After returning to Samarqand he decided to set off on a journey, and made his way to Kashghar. There he made his way to Satuq's tomb, and Satuq appeared to him again. Muhammad Sharif made a habit of visiting the tomb, until the man in whose house he had been staying followed him there. Satuq manifested his displeasure, and Muhammad Sharif, spotting his host, rebuked him: a Sufi secret had been discovered, to the detriment of both Muhammad Sharif and the man himself. The latter begged for forgiveness, and

Muhammad Sharif told him to become a cleaner at the tomb, and not reveal the secret to anyone.

A heavenly voice now directed Muhammad Sharif to go to Mecca in order to make amends for what had happened. He set off, deciding to go by way of India. When he got to the port of Surat he joined a party of pilgrims on a ship. A storm arose, and the pilgrims begged Muhammad Sharif to intercede. He begged God to intervene, and they were saved. Muhammad Sharif himself was snatched away by Satuq. He came to Mecca and was given great honours by the population, as one whose prayers were answered. Muhammad Sharif then visited the Prophet's tomb at Medina. The Prophet told him to obey his instructions, and gave him permission to leave.

Muhammad Sharif returned to East Turkistan. There, while still on his travels, and engaged in his usual practice of communing with the 'good spirits' (*arwah-i tayyiba*), he was greeted by a man who explained that he had died 300 years before. A jurist, he had made an error in a legal opinion (*fatwa*) which he had given. In punishment for that a tree had grown through his right eye, so that whenever the wind blew he was in pain. Muhammad Sharif duly started to have the tree dug up. The woman who owned it complained to 'Abd al-Rashid, but the jurist's body was nonetheless disinterred. 'Abd al-Rashid, as a result of this incident, met Muhammad Sharif and became his disciple. Muhammad Sharif founded a Sufi lodge there. 'Abd al-Rashid took his mentor with him. When they reached a place called Qarghaliq (south of the city of Yarkand, in the west of East Turkistan), the Sufi master decided that he had discovered a good spot for another lodge to be founded, along with a mosque. However, one of the walls of the mosque kept falling down. Muhammad Sharif decided to devote the night to concentrating on the 'good spirits'. A white camel appeared and explained that it represented the spirit of a 'friend of God' called Muhammad of Hormuz (in the Persian Gulf), buried there. An unbeliever had buried one golden idol and one wooden one in his side. Muhammad Sharif had the spot dug up and reburied the body in a proper shrine. Then he accompanied 'Abd al-Rashid to Kashghar. Here the notables all became his disciples and brought him offerings. He spent seven years at the shrine of Satuq, spending the offerings given to him on a Sufi lodge which he founded here, along with a mosque.

At the time, says the biography, 'Abd al-Rashid's son 'Abd

al-Latif was ruling in Kashghar, while 'Abd al-Rashid himself ruled in Yarkand, to the south-east. The nomadic people of the Kirghiz were kept at a distance, and paid the Islamic alms-tax. Islam was strong: the revenue was used for colleges and mosques. One year, however, the Kirghiz refused to pay. 'Abd al-Latif and his army attacked and the Kirghiz fled. Unfortunately, he relaxed his guard, pausing to celebrate, and the Kirghiz caught him unawares. He was killed in the massacre which followed. 'Abd al-Rashid, wanting revenge, asked Muhammad Sharif whether the Kirghiz would be aware of his imminent counter-attack. The Sufi elder replied that he would have to consult the 'friends', the 'good spirits'. They went together to the shrine of Yusuf Qadir Khan (reigned 1024–32), one of the country's greatest rulers. There they saw the prophet Khidr, Muhammad's friend Bilal, Uways, the famous preacher Hasan of Basra (d. 728), Satuq, and the great mystic Junayd of Baghdad (d. 910), as well as the founder of the Kubrawi brotherhood, Kubra (d. 1221) of Khwarazm in what is now ex-Soviet Turkmenistan, and the founder of the Hamadani brotherhood, 'Ali of Hamadan in western Iran (d. 1385). These gave their permission for the attack, and said that they would come along. 'Abd al-Rashid and Muhammad Sharif now visited other shrines, where the dead 'friends' duly appeared. Finally, they obtained the blessing of the royal martyr 'Ali Arslan Khan (d. 998) at his tomb. Then 'Abd al-Rashid attacked the Kirghiz, while Muhammad Sharif, staying at the shrines, concentrated on the spirits of the elders. The Kirghiz were defeated, and 'Abd al-Rashid brought Muhammad Sharif to stay in Yarkand. Here he spent ten years. Sometimes he would leave the city, discover the grave of some 'friend of God', and found a shrine. He revisited Qarghaliq, and, nearby, encountered some people who complained that they had no water. He miraculously caused water to flow there, and great agricultural and commercial activity resulted.

Muhammad Sharif lived to the age of 95. One night a heavenly voice reminded him that everyone must die. He addressed his followers, saying that his death was imminent. He exhorted them to cling to Islamic law and be kind to one another. Then he designated his successor, one Muhammad Wali Sufi, and died. His successor was installed in his place. This was in 1555–6. After two (in fact four) years had passed 'Abd al-Rashid also died.[105]

Muhammad Sharif and his successor in the work of the Sufi historian Churas

Mahmud Churas (fl. *c.* 1675) was a retainer of the Mongol rulers of East Turkistan and also a follower of the Naqshbandis. He wrote two books, one a history of the rulers, the other a history of the Naqshbandi masters of his country. He evidently drew much of his information from oral tradition in his family, which had played a leading role in the affairs of the state. In his history of the rulers of East Turkistan he refers to the tragic death of 'Abd al-Rashid's son, killed by the Kirghiz, and tells the story of Muhammad Sharif's involvement in 'Abd al-Rashid's revenge, but in a sober manner: the Sufi master is asked for assistance, visits Satuq's shrine with 'Abd al-Rashid and gives him permission to attack, while going on to visit more shrines in the meantime.[106] But this looks like a reduced version of the narrative in Muhammad Sharif's biography, rather than an independent corroboration. Churas says that 'Abd al-Rashid used to travel in the guise of a wandering libertine dervish, a *qalandar*. This is not mentioned by Haydar, but then Haydar predeceased 'Abd al-Rashid by several years. It looks like a legendary development out of 'Abd al-Rashid's composition of verses in the Persian Sufi tradition, in which the language of libertinism is used.[107]

Churas provides information about the relationship between 'Abd al-Rashid's second son and successor, 'Abd al-Karim (reigned 1560–91) and Muhammad Sharif's successor, Muhammad Wali Sufi. 'Abd al-Karim was pious and fond of dervishes, and a disciple of this master, who is here described as one of Muhammad Sharif's great friends. However, we are also told that 'Abd al-Karim went to see a dervish in Kashghar who was particularly wild and ecstatic, called Mirza Zirak. The latter told the prince, before his father's death, 'The great ones of religion (*akabir-i din*) – may Almighty God sanctify their spirits – have promoted you to Khan (supreme ruler of East Turkistan).' Evidently dead Sufi masters are intended. Three days later Muhammad Wali Sufi told the prince the same thing. Assistance was sought from the spirit of the martyr 'Ali Arslan before the prince was proclaimed Khan in his father's place.

Churas now tells of the coming from Samarqand to Kashghar of a Naqshbandi leader, Muhammad Ishaq (d. 1599). He found a devoted disciple in 'Abd al-Karim's brother and successor, Muhammad Sultan, later known as Muhammad Khan (reigned

1591–1609). The Naqshbandi master now moved on to Yarkand. There he encountered the hostility of 'Abd al-Karim and his chief minister. This hostility was due to their being disciples of Muhammad Wali Sufi. The Naqshbandi visitor soon left to enjoy the support which he found elsewhere in East Turkistan, before eventually returning to Samarqand. One of his followers suggested that a slight concentration of effort on the master's part would be enough to annihilate 'Abd al-Karim completely. Muhammad Ishaq replied that he was a just monarch, and that the Prophet was giving him instruction. 'Abd al-Karim reigned for thirty-three lunar years before dying and being succeeded by Muhammad Khan. With the latter's accession the triumph of the Naqshbandi brotherhood was complete, since he was not just a disciple but himself a leading member of it: Churas presents him as a 'deputy' (*khalifa*) of Muhammad Ishaq, and tells a story of someone who decides to go to Mecca to find the 'Pole', but is told on the way by a heavenly voice that this is Muhammad Khan. The parallel with the story of Kharaqani's disciple and his visit to Mount Lebanon is obvious enough.[108]

In his history of the Naqshbandi brotherhood Churas provides more details of the rivalry between its masters and Muhammad Sharif's successor. Here the quarrel between Muhammad Ishaq and 'Abd al-Karim is presented as due to the influence upon the latter of enemies envious of the Naqshbandi leader, in particular 'Abd al-Karim's chief minister. The latter is told by Muhammad Ishaq that his gilded palace will be turned into an ass's stable by a mad deputy of the Sufi master's. The prophecy is fulfilled after the minister's death, when his family is sent elsewhere by Muhammad Khan and the mad Naqshbandi deputy comes in triumph to Yarkand.[109]

Churas's Sufi history contains interesting indications of the Uwaysi tradition within the Naqshbandi brotherhood. Satuq is presented as an ancestor of Muhammad Ishaq.[110] One Sultan Burhan al-Din, who appears in a story of another ancestor, is called an 'Uwaysi'.[111] Muhammad Ishaq's father is shown as receiving instruction from the 'men of the unseen'.[112] His mad deputy performs an *istikhara* when the people of Kashghar and Yarkand rebel against his own authority. Usually this procedure results in a dream about Muhammad, but here it is Muhammad Ishaq himself whose spirit comes to give advice.[113]

Conclusions

It is evident from the materials which we have considered that there was not, as has been thought, a powerful Uwaysi brotherhood in existence in East Turkistan in the sixteenth century. There was an Uwaysi movement, centred around Yarkand, and enjoying the support of two successive rulers. It is not surprising, given the apparent character of the first of these, 'Abd al-Rashid, that he should have given his patronage to Muhammad Sharif. There have been two types of king in the Muslim world. The one represents the Irano–Turkic tradition of kingship, which involves wine-drinking and taking an interest in music and painting (Islam forbids most musical instruments and representations of living things). The other type has been piously Islamic in a conventional manner, and deferential to main-line Muslim religious leaders. 'Abd al-Rashid seems to have belonged to the former type. But mystics who appeal to such a sovereign are bound, sooner or later, to fall foul of better-organized men of religion and be defeated by them: such was the fate of Mani himself, and of the cabbalistic gnostics on the fringes of late medieval Persian Sufism.[114]

PART TWO

THE *HISTORY OF THE UWAYSIS*: ANALYSIS, SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK'S STRUCTURE

The *History of the Uwaysis* is divided into a Foreword, an Introduction, three 'Points' (excursuses on matters of Sufi doctrine), forty chapters, thirty sections and a conclusion. The forty chapters constitute the body of the work: forty biographies of male mystics. As for the first seventeen of the thirty sections, these are appendices to some of the chapters: they usually give accounts of minor figures attached to the male mystics, such as sons or successors. The last thirteen sections come shortly before the end of the book, and consist of biographies of women mystics, who, being women, are presumably not thought important enough to merit the heading 'Chapter'. These thirteen sections form a structure of their own, in which that of the forty chapters is to some extent paralleled.

The structure of the forty chapters

If we analyse the forty chapters relating to male mystics and the seventeen sections which are appendices to them, while leaving the women mystics till later, an overall pattern emerges. First we shall list these chapters and sections, noting the mystics' instructors and the prophets upon whose 'hearts' or 'backs' they are said to be (this peculiar aspect of Sufi doctrine is explained in the commentary on

the summary of Chapter 1). We shall also note the main themes. Then we should be able to see how the correspondences between the various chapters and sections work. The chapters are designated here by Arabic numerals and the sections by Roman ones:

1 'Abd Allah Yamani ('of the Yemen'): instructed by Moses and Uways; 'on the back of Moses'. Themes: companionship with Uways; teaching; an ancient hermitage; 'being without trace'; rejecting riches; avoiding humiliation in death; Arabia; turning a withered tree green.

['Point' 1 follows, on the goal and the Uwaysi 'path'.]

i Mu'izz al-Din of Herat (in western Afghanistan): corresponds to the preceding and is his pupil. Themes: teaching; turning withered plants green with a glance; avoiding humiliation in death.

ii Ahmad Sabuni of Damascus: pupil of 'Abd Allah, instructed by permission of Muhammad's spirit (as Muhammad instructed Uways). Themes: teaching; transforming things with a glance; kingship; rejecting riches.

2 Jalil of Damghan (in NE Iran): instructed by Moses, 'on the back of Jacob'. Themes: teaching; rejecting riches; angels; the ancient hermitage.

3 Nizam al-Din of Bazda (in Uzbekistan): instructed by David and on his back. Themes: teaching; Khidr (met in the desert); transforming with a glance; ecstasy; an ancient place of worship (rebuilt); singing.

4 Baha' al-Din of Ghazna (in Afghanistan): instructed by Khidr, on back of David. Themes: God's Uniqueness; Khidr (met in the desert); teaching; transforming with a glance; building a place of worship.

5 'Allama Huqqabaz (of central W. Arabia): instructed by Moses, on heart of Joseph. Themes: knowledge miraculously granted to an illiterate; advising a king; teaching.

6 Abu 'l-Nasr Samani (the teacher of Satuq Bughra Khan): instructed by Abu Bakr (the first successor of Muhammad), on heart of Jacob. Themes: Muhammad; frontier warfare; teaching; advising a king.

7 Satuq Bughra Khan: instructed by Muhammad and the preceding, on back of Solomon. Themes: conversion to Islam; the difficulties of living under unbelievers; frontier warfare; kingship; being a Turk; hunting; the animal as guide; *not* teaching.

iii 'Abd al-Fattah (deputy of the preceding): obtains 'rapture' from 'Ali, the son-in-law and fourth successor of Muhammad. Themes: doublet of the preceding; rapture; frontier warfare.

8 'Imran of Yazd (in central Iran): instructed by Job, on heart of Solomon. Themes: the Qur'an; Tradition; contentment and rejecting riches; dervishhood; teaching; bringing people to the goal with a glance.

9 'Abd al-Ghaffar of Multan (in what is now Pakistan): instructed by Joseph, on back of Lot. Themes: Khidr; rejecting riches; giving food and clothes; nakedness; silence; the successor.

10 Sadr al-Din the Greengrocer of Farah (in south-west Afghanistan): instructed by Ishmael and on his back. Themes: nakedness; miraculous production of food for pilgrims to Mecca and Medina (the cities of Muhammad); the successor.

iv 'Abd al-Rahim of Medina: instructed by Jesus, Khidr and 'Abd Allah Yamani. Themes: grandson of the preceding; abstinence from sexual intercourse; the *na-mahram* (a person whom one is not allowed to meet in private); parallels with stories of Mary; giving food; revelation of miracle shortening life; testing God's friends; nakedness; Arabia.

11 Baha of Balkh (in northern Afghanistan): instructed by Seth and on his back. Themes: descendant of Muhammad; scholarship; the father–son relationship; marriage; teaching.

12 Muhammad Baqir of Syria: instructed by forty prophets, the first being Adam, the last Muhammad. Themes: Khidr; transforming with a glance; teaching; anger; exile (= martyrdom); fraternality; Hasan and Husayn (the grandsons of Muhammad).

v Qutb al-Din of Multan: instructed by Lot, on back of Noah. Themes: doublet and successor of the preceding.

13 Sa'd al-Din Damdar of Bastam (in north-eastern Iran): instructed by Muhammad, on back of Seth. Themes: agriculture; silence (restraining his breath); Muhammad, Mecca and Medina; testing God's friends; hospitality; leaving descendants in the world.

14 Muhammad Sadiq of Alma-Ata (the capital of Kazakhstan): instructed by 'Ali, on back of St George. Themes: Qur'anic exegesis; Muhammad; teaching; anger, shortening life with miracle (expelling his breath); the sun; the 'Night of Power'; leaving the world 'without fruit'.

15 Naji of Bukhara: instructed by Khidr, on back of the immortal prophet Idris. Themes: poverty; wealth; the illiterate who is given knowledge; transforming with a glance; kingship; testing God's

x 'Abd al-Wahhab of Nishapur: instructed by Khidr, on back of Simon (St Peter). Themes: son and successor of the preceding; an orphan (like Muhammad); teaching.

24 Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat (in the west of East Turkistan): instructed by Elijah. Themes: Muhammad (the ancestor of his mother); the orphan; the parent–child relationship; teaching; appointing one's successor.

xi Ahmad of Shikarmat: on heart of Jacob. Themes: deputy and successor of the preceding; constant activity.

25 Burhan al-Din Qilichi of Uzgen: instructed by Moses and on his back. Themes: the sword; rapture; anger; killing one's adversaries; the ancestor; the book; not teaching; the vision of God.

26 Sa'adat of Hormuz (in the Persian Gulf): instructed by the prophet Shu'ayb, and on his heart. Themes: the libertine dervish; salvation; transforming with a glance; music and singing; the 'Night of Power'.

27 'Abbas of Khwarazm (in Turkmenistan): instructed by Elijah, on back of Job. Themes: the orphan; the wise mother; the parent–child relationship; another immortal figure (Khidr); the number seven; travelling; Turkey and Turkistan; appointing one's successor; bathing; death by drowning.

xii Abu Sa'id of Turkey: instructed by Khidr and the preceding, on back of Aaron. Themes: successor and pupil of the preceding.

28 Farid al-Din of Bakharz (in north-eastern Iran): instructed by Khidr, on heart of St George. Themes: the orphan; the Jew; Khwarazm; testing God's friends; teaching; pain; the love of God; death by burning.

29 Muhammad 'Attar in Hisar (in ex-Soviet Tajikistan): instructed by Abraham and on his heart. Themes: the father–son relationship; descendants; hospitality (miraculously distributing food to pilgrims); appointing one's deputy and successor; Muhammad; Mecca; the animal as instructor.

xiii Abu 'l-Qasim of Farkhar (in north-east Afghanistan): on heart of Moses. Themes: son of the preceding; Mecca and Medina; the Jew; children; East Turkistan.

30 Sam'an of Simnan (in north-eastern Iran): instructed by Khidr, on back of Noah. Themes: being adviser to a king; intuition; the numbers ten, eleven and twelve; Mecca; anger; shortening one's life by a miracle.

31 Jamal al-Din of Kadak (in the south of East Turkistan): instructed by Khidr. Themes: East Turkistan; intuition; being

adviser to a king; 'fraternality': anger; Mecca; immortality.

32 Ayyub the Jurist (of East Turkistan): instructed by Khidr. Themes: East Turkistan; the orphan; scholarship; looking after one's mother; parting the waters; 'fraternality'; Mecca.

xiv Mansur of the Hijaz (central western Arabia): instructed by Ja'far (the sixth Leader of Muhammad's family). Themes: spiritual brother, deputy and successor of the preceding; East Turkistan; persecution; fire-ordeal, testing the friend of God, water-ordeal.

33 Husayn Fadli of Kashghar: instructed by 'Umar (Muhammad's second successor), then Muhammad, on back of Job, then heart of Shu'ayb. Themes: Qur'anic exegesis; scholarship; East Turkistan; Abu Hanifa; the orphan; the father–son relationship; not mourning; Mecca; punishment.

34 Abu 'l-Futuh Alma'i of Kashghar: instructed by Abu Hanifa, on back of Seth. Themes: son of the preceding; East Turkistan; the father–son relationship; scholarship; marriage; early death; Muhammad.

35 Faqih Muhammad of Yarkand: instructed by his father and Moses. Themes: rapture; Solomon; wisdom; East Turkistan; vision of God; fire-ordeal; the father–son relationship; not teaching.

36 Shadkam of Machin (in the south of East Turkistan): instructed by Qanbar (a famous slave in the generation after Muhammad). Themes: the slave; East Turkistan; Khidr; Mecca; anger; not teaching; the animal as guide.

37 Muhibb Kuhmar (of East Turkistan): instructed by 'Abd Allah Yamani. Themes: love; descent from Hasan (Muhammad's grandson); scholarship; hunting; the animal as guide; East Turkistan; Khidr.

xv The snake of the preceding. Theme: posthumous advice.

38 Taj al-'Ata'i of Najaf (in Iraq): apparently instructed by Muhammad. Themes: scholarship; Mecca and Medina; East Turkistan; marriage.

xvi Hasan and Husayn, the twin sons of the preceding: instructed by their parents. Themes: orphans; looking after their mother; Mecca; corresponding to Muhammad's grandsons; martyrdom.

39 'Abd al-Rahman of Aleppo (in Syria): instructed by Uways. Themes: descent from Abu Bakr; baptism; the prophet Idris; producing water by striking ground with staff; teaching; Khidr; East Turkistan; Uways.

xvii Ghiyath al-Din of Herat. Themes: chief disciple (and doublet) of the preceding; the animal as guide; producing water by striking

ground with staff; East Turkistan.
40 Habib of Kashghar: instructed by 'Ali, on heart of Idris. Themes: Sufi knowledge; East Turkistan; symbols of libertine dervishes; testing the friend of God; ecstatic listening to poetry; rapture; the vision of God (in particular the 'theophany of inner meaning').

The forty chapters are evidently divided into two halves of twenty each, the latter being further subdivided into two groups of ten. The first twenty take us from the time of Uways to *c.* 1200 CE. They deal in particular with teaching (thus being linked to the first 'Point'), and also with fairly standard Sufi themes such as poverty and hospitality. The second twenty begin with Uways and are then set in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They deal in particular with Muhammad (being linked to the second 'Point'), and also with the problems of the brotherhoods, such as the naming of a deputy and successor and the father–son relationship among Sufi leaders. In the first twenty, the first ten, together with the four sections attached to them, begin and end in Arabia, with 'Abd Allah Yamani; the second ten chapters are dominated by the theme of immortality. In the second twenty, the first ten are distinguished from the second ten in that they are not usually set in East Turkistan, whereas the latter are (and are dominated by the figures of famous early Muslims). The chapters usually come in pairs, the two halves of which are thematically linked.

Thus Chapter 1 (which is followed by Sections i and ii, devoted to 'doublets') and Chapter 2 both have Moses as the instructor and the motifs of rejecting riches and the ancient hermitage. Chapters 3 and 4 have the figure of David and repeat the motif of transformation with a glance from Sections i and ii, along with that of building a place of worship from Chapters 1 and 2. Chapters 5 and 6 are both biographies of advisers to kings. Chapters 7 and 8 are linked by Solomon: the subject of Chapter 7 is an 'external' king, on Solomon's back (or 'exterior'), but Chapter 8 represents contentment, the inner meaning of sovereignty, symbolized by Solomon's heart. Chapters 9 and 10 have the themes of nakedness and giving food. Section iv sums up much of the sub-series, containing the figure of 'Abd Allah Yamani, the motif of distributing food and the setting of Arabia.

Chapters 11 and 12 do not have much in common. Chapter 11 is opposed to Section iv by the contrast between marriage and

celibacy. Section v has as its subject a doublet of the hero of Chapter 12. Chapters 13 and 14 are well connected: 13 has Muhammad as instructor, and its subject, restraining his breath, has valuable descendants, whereas 14 has 'Ali, the interpreter of Muhammad's revelation, as instructor, along with the motif of Qur'anic exegesis, and its subject, failing to restrain his breath, leaves the world 'without fruit'. Chapter 15 seems to correspond to Chapter 5: an illiterate is given knowledge and is close to a king. Chapters 15 and 16 are connected by the theme of immortality. Chapter 16 and Section vi deal with the vision of God. Chapter 17 corresponds to 7, the biography of Satuq Bughra Khan. Both subjects are Turks, hunters and warriors on the frontier of Islam, are instructed by an animal and refrain from teaching. Section vii (one notes the number!) just deals with the last days of the subject of Chapter 17. Chapters 17 and 18 are linked by the topic of anger. Chapters 19 (which has Section viii devoted to its subject's deputy and successor) and 20 share the theme of immortality. Immortality, piety and the vision of God figure in both Section viii and Chapter 20; the latter sums up much that has gone before, and has Section ix attached to it, dealing with a deputy and successor, in parallel to Section viii.

After 'Point' 2, which deals with Muhammad, comes Chapter 21, on Uways, who is instructed by Muhammad and teaches 'Abd Allah Yamani. This chapter corresponds to Chapter 1. Chapters 21 and 22 are linked by the continuing appearance of Uways, the instructor of the subject of 22. Chapter 23 has Muhammad as the instructor and ancestor of its subject, and is followed by Section x, on the latter's son, deputy and successor, an orphan, and as such compared to Muhammad; Chapter 24 is about an orphaned descendant of Muhammad and a parent–child relationship, and is followed by Section xi, on a deputy and successor. Chapter 25 seems to correspond to 5: Moses is again the instructor. We have already noted a correspondence between Chapters 5 and 15. Chapters 25 and 26 have instructors who also support the subjects of the biographies, in the former case 'on the back' and in the latter 'on the heart'. Chapter 27 evidently corresponds to 7 and 17: here too one notes the prominence of Turkistan, and also the number seven as an important theme in the chapter itself. Like 7 and 17, it is followed by a section, xii (about a successor and pupil). Chapters 27 and 28 are both partly located in Khwarazm and contain the figures of the orphan and Khidr. They are opposed to each other

by different modes of death: drowning in the one case, burning in the other. Chapter 29, like 9, has the element of distributing food. Like 19, it is followed by a section, xiii, which is devoted to a successor. Chapters 29 and 30 do not have much in common. Chapter 30, like 20, has Khidr as the instructor.

Chapter 31, which inaugurates the sub-series set in East Turkistan, is closely bound up with the last chapter of the preceding series: again, Khidr is the instructor; the subject is an adviser to a king; anger and Mecca both appear as topics. Chapters 31 and 32 are also connected by the figure of Khidr as instructor and by Mecca. Chapter 32 is followed by a section, iv, which is devoted to a deputy and successor. Chapters 33 and 34 are about a father-and-son pair. They are linked by the figure of Muhammad, the theme of scholarship and the concentrated attention given to the father–son relationship. This pair corresponds to Chapters 13 and 14, where Muhammad, scholarship and a premature death also appear, and to 23 and 24, where Muhammad and the parent–child relationship are prominent. Chapter 35 apparently corresponds to 5 and 25: Moses is the prophetic instructor. As in 5 and 15, wisdom is divinely bestowed. Chapter 35 is also linked to 25 by the elements of rapture and the vision of God. Chapters 35 and 36 are bound together by the theme of abstaining from teaching. Chapter 37 corresponds to 7, 17 and 27: all four chapters are located mainly, if not entirely, in Turkistan and include the figure of Khidr; 7, 17 and 37 have the motifs of hunting and the animal as guide; like 7, 17 and 27, this chapter has a section (xv) attached to it (dealing with the subject's companion, a snake, and his posthumous advice). Chapters 37 and 38 are linked by the figure of Hasan. Chapter 38 has a section (xvi) attached to it, dealing with twins who correspond to Hasan and Husayn. Chapter 39 (which resembles 1 and has a section (xvii) attached to it, about the chief disciple and doublet of its subject) and 40 form a pair (linked by Idris): the first of the four 'rightly guided' caliphs, Abu Bakr, is the ancestor in 39, while the fourth, 'Ali, seen as more mystical, is the instructor in 40. Chapter 40, like 30, makes use of the numbers ten and twelve, and like 20, deals with the vision of God: here the supreme 'theophany of inner meaning' provides an appropriate conclusion.

This arrangement of chapters in pairs and correspondences between different sub-series strongly resembles what has been discovered by Michel Chodkiewicz in Ibn 'Arabi's *Meccan*

Illuminations and by the present writer in 'Attar's long didactic poems.[1] However, in order to appreciate the structure of the forty chapters more fully it is necessary to examine the thirteen sections on women mystics.

The sections on the women mystics

After the forty chapters come the last thirteen sections, all on women mystics. They may be briefly summarized as follows:

xviii Khadima of Egypt: instructed by Jesus, Khidr and 'Abd Allah Yamani. Themes: service; sexual abstinence; parallels with legends of Mary and Jesus; the *na-mahram* (someone whom it is forbidden to meet in private); the father–daughter relationship; distributing food; having one's life shortened by the revelation of a miracle.

xix Saliha of Baghdad: instructed by Zahir al-Din Suhrawardi (an apparently imaginary representative of a family of pious Sufis). Themes: conventional piety; descent from Abu Hanifa (a famous founder of Islamic law); the *na-mahram*; sexual abstinence; the father–daughter relationship; turning a withered tree green; shortening one's life with a miracle; lying beneath a tree in spring.

xx Safiyya of Ethiopia: instructed by Bilal (Muhammad's Ethiopian slave). Themes: the father–daughter relationship; marriage; bearing twins; sexual intercourse; having valuable descendants.

xxi Khadija the descendant of Muhammad: instructed by 'Uthman of Bazda (whose identity is not clear). Themes: cemeteries; the father–daughter relationship; seclusion; sexual abstinence; conventional piety.

xxii 'Ataba of Turkistan: instructed by Khadija (Muhammad's first wife). Themes: Being a Turk; Turkistan; the *na-mahram*; the father–daughter relationship; sexual abstinence; killing one's adversaries; Mecca.

xxiii Funduqa of Baghdad: instructed by Abu Hanifa. Themes: the libertine dervish; singing; being a prostitute; the father–daughter relationship; repentance; rapture; living on a mountain; the vision of God; the alter ego; dying beneath a tree; having one's life shortened and being harmed by the revelation of her miraculous condition.

xxiv Zuhra of Egypt: instructed by Jesus and on his heart. Themes: marriage to a pious husband; conversion to Islam; the difficulties of living under unbelievers; the degree of 'Pole'.

xxv 'Alima of Hormuz: instructed by Sa'id ibn Zayd (one of the ten people promised a place in paradise by Muhammad). Themes: knowledge; singing; repentance; marriage to a pious husband; sexual abstinence; the miraculous plant (an inexhaustible source of income) which withers in spring when she dies.

xxvi Sakina of Baghdad: instructed by Jesus. Themes: descent from Abu Hanifa; the parent–child relationship; martyrdom; sexual abstinence; destiny.

xxvii Sa'ida of Khwārazm: feels 'enrapturing force' from 'Abd Allah Yamani. Themes: descent from 'Umar Nasafi (a famous lawyer and theologian); rapture; living on a mountain; sexual abstinence; nakedness; silence; the hunter; the numbers seven, seventeen and sixty-seven.

xxviii 'A'isha of Kashghar: instructed by Khidr. Themes: East Turkistan; being a Turk; the bird as guide; the number twelve; marriage; the fire-ordeal; the love of God; early death.

xxix Ummiyya of Uzgen: instructed by Abu Bakr. Themes: descent from Ilik-i Madi (a Karakhanid ruler); the Karakhanid royal house; repentance; sexual abstinence; miraculous production of food for pilgrims to Mecca and Medina; Muhammad; East Turkistan; the deputy.

xxx Maryam (Mary) of Kashghar: no instructor mentioned. Themes: martyrdom in the holy war; the Karakhanid royal house; East Turkistan; service; the father–daughter relationship; frontier warfare.

['Point' 3 follows, on the Sufi hierarchy, dealing notably with the degree of 'Pole' and including numbers of women who have qualified for it.]

Before considering these sections on women in the *History of the Uwaysis* it seems advisable to examine the influence of Christian hagiography upon Islamic portrayals of women mystics. Then we shall analyse the structure of the part of the book devoted to women, and see how it corresponds to the forty chapters on male figures. (The portrayal of women in the book as a whole will be discussed separately, in Part Three.)

Rabi'a of Basra, Sufism's most famous woman, is presented in the source materials as having lived in the eighth century CE. She appears in Arabic texts dating from the ninth century onwards. However, these texts are not really biographical. They provide only very brief allusions to Rabi'a, and are in any case too late for the

historian to use in any attempt at reconstructing her life or teachings. Usually there is a literary device: somebody else says or does something, and Rabi'a speaks to demonstrate her superior wit or wisdom. This device goes back to the anecdotes of witty answers provided by classical Athenian courtesans and is also found in stories of pious replies given by women in early Christian literature.[2] One finds the device in the *History of the Uwaysis*: 'Alima of Hormuz vanquishes her husband in discussion, and her victory is presented as a 'charism' or minor miracle (*karama*). The point, as in early Sufi anecdotes of women, is that it is most remarkable, indeed miraculous, that a woman should say something particularly intelligent, even putting men to shame.

Now Rabi'a of Basra eventually acquires a biography, which relates that according to one version of her legend she 'fell into minstrelsy' before her repentance.[3] As the verb suggests, this would usually have meant being a prostitute. In the *History of the Uwaysis* Funduqa of Baghdad and 'Alima of Hormuz are both singers, and the former is a prostitute; then both repent. Rabi'a of Basra, like Funduqa, stands in contrast to a very different figure, called Rabi'a of Syria, who is supposed to have lived in the early ninth century. The latter's main characteristic is that she does not have intercourse with her pious husband.[4] Thus behind the two contrasting Rabi'as one can discern pairs of contrasting Marys. Rabi'a of Syria and her husband would appear to duplicate Mary the mother of Jesus and St Joseph, as well as a couple called Mary and Theophilus of Antioch.[5] The tradition of sexual abstinence within marriage is well attested in the early Christian East. Rabi'a of Basra, however, corresponds to the anonymous woman penitent in the New Testament (Luke 7: 37–50), sometimes called 'Mary the Sinner' and eventually identified with Mary Magdalen (although Eastern Christianity has been reluctant to do this) among the Nestorians of Iraq in the ninth century.[6] There is a strong parallel between Funduqa of Baghdad and another penitent, St Mary of Egypt (in whose conversion legend Mary the mother of Jesus plays an important part,[7] intervening through the form of her portrait in a church in Jerusalem). Thus we can say with confidence that the antithesis of the penitent courtesan is the sexually abstinent wife. This perpetuates an opposition found in the ancient Near East: a woman would obtain holiness either by complete sexual abstinence or by becoming a sacred prostitute. The opposition is well preserved in the Gospels, the most important model for Christian hagiographers.

Now the contrast between these types of women is reflected in the biographies of Khadima of Egypt, Saliha of Baghdad, Funduqa and 'Alima. The first two correspond to Mary the mother of Jesus, while Funduqa is like Mary of Egypt and 'Alima combines both types in her own person: first she is an entertainer, and then she repents to become a sexually abstinent wife. How does this structure fit into the pattern of the thirteen biographies of women? The answer is that the sequence of the thirteen sections makes very good sense. Sections xviii (Khadima) and xix (Saliha) form a pair, followed by xx, which provides a change. Sections xxi and xxii form a pair and resemble xviii and xix. Section xxiii (Funduqa) provides a change and is opposed to xviii and xix. Sections xxiv and xxv ('Alima) form a third pair, again resembling xviii and xix, but with xxv summing up much of what has gone before. Section xxvi provides another change, while introducing the theme of martyrdom. Section xxvii is very like xxiii. Section xxviii develops the theme of martyrdom, while moving the action to East Turkistan for the remaining biographies. Section xxix reminds us of the link between Muhammad on the one hand and the Karakhanid family on the other. Section xxx sums up much of what has gone before, and ends, aptly, with the supreme degree of martyrdom in the holy war, before 'Point' 3's account of women who have qualified for the degree of 'Pole'.

How does this sequence fit in with the framework of the forty chapters? The answer is that the biographies of the women do to some extent correspond to those of the male mystics and help to provide an overall structure for the book. However, the correspondences are not always clear. One has to remember that while the thirteen sections on the women are numbered xviii to xxx they may also have hidden numbers representing their positions in the sequence (i.e. I to XIII).

Section xviii (I) is obviously a duplicate of Section iv, the appendix to Chapter 10 which closes the first sub-series of ten chapters and in some ways corresponds to Chapter 1 (with the figure of 'Abd Allah Yamani and the setting of Arabia). Section xix (II) is really about a doublet of xviii: Mary the mother of Jesus is still the prototype. The motif of turning a withered plant green is found here and in 1, i, iv and xviii (I). Section xx (III) corresponds to Chapter 13 in that both have the theme of leaving valuable descendants (friends of God) in the world. Section xxi (IV) does not seem to be like any of the biographies of male mystics. Section

xxii (V) may correspond to 25: both subjects live in Turkistan and kill adversaries. Section xxiii (VI) is in parallel to Chapter 3, having the elements of ecstasy and singing, to 16 (rapture, living on a mountain, the vision of God) and to 26 (singing and the libertine dervish). Section xxiv (VII) resembles Chapter 7 (the life of Satuq Bughra Khan): both biographies deal with conversion to Islam and the difficulties of living under the rule of unbelievers. Section xxv (VIII) is similar to Chapter 15 in having the themes of marriage to a pious spouse and an inexhaustible source of income which ends with one's own death. Section xxvi (IX) would not appear to correspond to any biography of a male Sufi. Section xxvii (X) is in parallel to Chapter 17 in having life on a mountain, to 27 in having the location of Khwarazm and play on the number seven, and to 37 in having the figure of 'Abd Allah Yamani. The last three sections correspond to Chapters 31 and 40 in being set in East Turkistan. Section xxviii (XI) resembles Chapter 28 in having Khidr as the instructor and the ingredients of the love of God and fire. Section xxix corresponds to Chapters 9 and 10 (which form a pair) in the element of distributing food (though more to 10 in the miraculous production of food for pilgrims to Mecca and Medina); to 29, again in the miraculous distribution of food to pilgrims in the Hijaz; and to 39 in having the figure of Abu Bakr. Section xxx (XIII) resembles Chapter 20 in being followed by a 'Point' and 40 in that the last biography in each series is characterized by what is, in different ways, the 'highest degree': martyrdom in the holy war and the 'theophany of inner meaning'.

Thus the sequences of male and female lives are joined together in some patterns but not in a mechanical or automatic manner. The emphasis on the number seven gives us an added awareness of its importance in the structure of the forty chapters and the dominant figure of Chapter 7 itself: Satuq Bughra Khan.

THE *HISTORY OF THE UWAYSIS*: SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY

The Foreword

At the start of the book God is praised and asked to bless Muhammad and his Companions and family. The text continues by evoking the creation of Adam and his temptation by the devil. The main reason for Adam's consequent expulsion into the world

was, we are told, the manifestation of Muhammad's light. Another reason was the production of an elite: the elite of God's friends. The lives of some of these friends of God have been recorded in such works as the *Memorial of the Friends*. The author also mentions, as a source-book of Sufi biography, a work which he simply calls the *Illuminations (Futuhat)*. He then refers to the well-known collection of Sufi biographies by Jami, the *Breaths of Familiarity (Nafahat al-uns)*. However, there exists no collection of biographies of the Uwaysi elders, and their lives are buried in obscurity. For this reason the author, a member of the 'chain' of Satuq Bughra Khan, had for many years thought of writing such a book. Eventually he concentrated on the spirits of the dead elders, in order to ask them to help him and tell him about their lives. They appeared, but at first refused. He asked Muhammad to intervene, and again petitioned the dead masters to dictate their biographies. This time he was successful, but they agreed only to the dictation of a condensed version, amounting to one-thousandth of the whole, and insisted that the language be Persian and comprehensible to the author's contemporaries. So the contents descended to his heart, and from there to his tongue, which dictated to his hand as it moved the pen. The point, explains Uzgani, is that he did not intervene. He dedicated the book to Satuq. It was arranged in the form of an Introduction, three 'Points', forty chapters, thirty sections and a Conclusion.

Commentary

The Foreword is conventional enough. Its opening formulae are Sunni, with an accommodation of Shiism's veneration for Muhammad's family. The idea that the world and life in it exist for the sake of Muhammad is a familiar one in classical Sufism.[8] The *Illuminations* mentioned by Uzgani would normally be taken to be the famous *Meccan Illuminations (al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya)* by Ibn 'Arabi, a work which, however, is one of Sufi theory and practice, not of biography (except in so far as it provides an autobiographical account of Ibn 'Arabi's own experiences).[9] To represent oneself as asking Muhammad for help before writing a book is quite common.[10] It is noteworthy, however, that Uzgani presents himself as lacking written sources for the lives of the Uwaysis which he is to write. Later, on the other hand, he sometimes mentions conflicting accounts about them.

The Introduction

The Uwaysis, Uzgani explains, are a class of people, every one of whom is instructed by the spirit (*ruh*) or 'interior' (*batin*) of a prophet, or invisibly, in this visible world, by the spirit or 'interior' of a friend of God, just as Muhammad taught Uways, bringing him to his goal. The word 'Uwaysi', represented by the five letters A-W-Y-S-Y in the Arabic script, in fact only has four, since the adjectival termination (-Y) does not count. These four letters have a mystical significance, which will now be expounded.

The A stands for Allah, the name of God's Essence. For every friend of God who is an Uwaysi is specially affected by God's creative power, since God creates the 'degree' (*martaba*) of friendship with himself in the very essence of mankind. In the case of the Uwaysis God creates more of this, and displays himself in his attributes of overwhelmingness (*qahhariyyat*) and grandeur (*'azamat*), moment by moment. Every kind of theophany (*tajalli*), whether of outward form (*suri*), or of light (*nuri*), or of inner meaning (*ma'nawi*), or of spiritual experience (*dhawqi*), or of any other kind, is increased in the case of the Uwaysis. Sometimes the varieties of theophany descend upon someone in such a way that he is said to have the degree of 'accumulation' (*ijma'*). The Uwaysis do not neglect God for a single moment, and necessarily are well disciplined, never breaking the Islamic code of law. Consequently they are quick to reach their goal and attain the object of their desires.

The W stands for *walayat*, friendship with God. Every 'friend' who is an Uwaysi is promised the friendship indicated by God in his saying, 'My friends are beneath my tabernacles: nobody knows them except me.'[11] The theophany of the vision of God increases daily, since the Uwaysis bring nothing else into their sight.

The Y stands for *yagana*, 'Unique'. The Uwaysi searches for 'unitive fusion' (*ittihad*) with God, of such a kind that duality cannot enter into it. The veil of corporeality and pollution coming from the lower soul, which prevents unitive fusion, is removed and annihilated by a massive amount of endeavour and self-mortification. Then the drop of water which has come from the limitless ocean of the mystic's origins is reunited with the ocean, and the cloud disappears. This is also called the degree of 'togetherness of togetherness' (*jam' al-jam'*). Here the author addresses the reader with the words 'O dervish!' [In Persian it is

normal to use this kind of apostrophization to mean 'O you who would like to become an x!'] This is the highest degree of dervishhood, which the dervish must try to reach, since if he fails to reach it he is lost and ruined.

The letter S stands for the *siyasa* (discipline) of the Sultan. A Sultan is someone of whose discipline people are afraid. Thus the Uwaysi elders are disciplined, perpetually subjected to God's attributes of anger (*qahr*) and overwhelmingness, as has been observed above. But a vast amount of God's kindness is included in this, in a way which only the Uwaysi can know. The point is that the dervish *qua* dervish should (paradoxically) not be afraid of God's discipline, but should throw himself into the arena of the mystical elite, imitating its members, drinking from the cup of God's primordial Covenant with them and thus joining their number. This concludes the analysis of the four letters.

Uzgani continues by dividing the Uwaysi elders into groups. There are really twelve of these, but since his book is only an abridged exposition of its subject they are presented as three. The first are the *rusumiyya*, the ones of external traces; the second are the *'uluhiyya*, the godly ones; the third are the *ulwiyya*, the ones of the sublime heights.

The first, the people of the external traces, are the ones who have lived according to the outward form of God's friends in this visible world, taking disciples and training them therein. They and their disciples go through the prescribed mystical stations (*maqamat*) and reach their goal, but they obtain their instruction from another place. Some of them become enraptured (*majdhub*) in the course of the Path, and others go from rapture to the Path.

The second, the 'godly ones', are mystics who drown themselves in the ocean of God's kindnesses, so as to see nothing but him. Their formula of 'remembrance' (*dhikr*) is just 'Allah', the name of God's Essence, which vouchsafes perfect friendship with him. Uzgani describes the discipline of breath control with which this name is repeated. The Uwaysi must keep his tongue pressed against his palate, holding his breath. Starting with the initial A, he makes his breath ascend from his navel. Then he forcefully drives the name on to the pineal heart,[12] which is the organ for contemplating the unseen world. Then the heart becomes a pure mirror and the mystic reaches God's court. The A of Allah (spelt A-L-L-H in the Arabic script) represents oneness, the point being that for these mystics sincere belief in God's Unity is the first foundation of the Path. The two Ls (in the usual numerical

correspondences attached to the letters of the alphabet) add up to sixty. God, in the Uwaysi 'path', has created sixty dangerous seas, representing sixty stations. The mystic must pass through these to the ultimate, highest degree, which is that of God's hidden friends. The H means 'five' in arithmetic (as an Arabic numeral). Here the number five is appropriate because it is an odd number. The mystics of this class do not like the duality of even numbers: the beginners, as they start to recite 'Allah', say it five times with one inhalation of breath, and progress to 5,000 times. Moreover, no more than five people assemble to do this, except at the times of formal worship. The name of Allah is repeated 5,000 times in meetings.

The third group, the 'ones of the sublime heights', have as their lowest degree on the Path the greatest 'station' (*maqam*) that is known – their own highest degree is not known to anybody except the one who vouchsafes it. This lowest degree of theirs involves beginning with rapture (*jadhba*), in such a way that they do not journey on the Path, and no stations are revealed to them: they have no consciousness of themselves or anything else. Then they reach the station which is the end of their rapture. Ordinary pilgrims on the Path spend their entire lives in self-mortification in order to reach this lowest degree of theirs, which is five degrees lower than the highest. All the members of this group are granted this good fortune equally, but of others only one in a thousand obtains it. Another reason for their title is that they are in the world of the sublime heights, and do not look at anything in this world except with the assistance of the angels. So in this external world they appear extremely lowly, but in the world of inner meaning they are perfectly installed in the degree of 'highness' (*'uluw*). This much has been said because the Uwaysi elders permitted the writer to say it, although at first they did not want it to be divulged.

Commentary

The mystical analysis of the letters in the word 'Uwaysi' is similar to other Sufi analyses of technical terms.[13] As for the various kinds of theophany, we shall encounter them in the biographies, and then it will be possible to arrange them in a hierarchy in our concluding section on the Sufi teachings of the *History of the Uwaysis*. It is remarkable that Uzgani should uphold the doctrine of 'unitive fusion' (*ittihad*), the mystic's becoming one with God. Although this is occasionally found in early Sufi literature it is usually

condemned.[14] In contrast, the primordial 'Covenant' between God and the mystical elite is a standard Sufi theme, based on a passage in the Qur'an (7: 172), where God asks the spirits of mankind, 'Am I not your Lord?' and they reply, 'Yes!' The prescribed technique for 'remembrance' of the name 'Allah' is given in greater detail in the book's Conclusion.[15]

The *History of the Uwaysis* refers throughout to an opposition between different worlds. Although Uzgani is never entirely clear on this subject it would seem that there are in general, for most purposes, two of these. One is this visible world of ours, the phenomenal world (*'alam-i shahadat*), the world of outward form. The other is the world of inner meaning (*ma'na*), identified with the world of spirits, which is also called the world of the unseen (*ghayb*). In a different schema our everyday world is called the world of God's kingdom (*mulk*), or of humanity (*nasut*), and is contrasted with the world of 'sovereignty' (*malakut*), or of divinity (*lahut*), which seems to include heaven and hell.

Chapter 1 'Abd Allah Yamani

'Abd Allah Yamani ('of the Yemen'), as well as being taught by Uways himself, was instructed by Moses, and was also upon his 'back' (*zahr*, signifying also the 'exterior'). Some teaching was given to him by Uways 'externally'. In the Yemen, at a place called Mughtanima,[16] there was a hermitage in which one of the prophets had been accustomed to worship. 'Abd Allah, when he reached puberty, during the night of 27 Ramadan (the especially blessed 'Night of Power' in which the Qur'an is believed to have been sent down), saw Moses in a dream and was told by him to turn to a life of piety and retire to this hermitage, in order to obtain grace (*fayd*) from that prophet's spirit. Although 'Abd Allah was only 12 he was happy to devote himself to asceticism, but thought it impolite to take over a hermitage which belonged to so great a figure. An old man appeared to him (while awake, not in a dream) and approved of his idea of building another hermitage near the old one. On his advice, 'Abd Allah made its dimensions 5 spans long and 2½ spans wide, and shut himself up in it, cutting himself off from his friends for seven and a half years. He engaged in self-mortification and received indescribable instruction from Moses. Then the latter told him to go to Uways, because he (Moses) was dead, and 'Abd Allah had to have an elder who was also an Uwaysi. For although the

Uwaysis do not need an 'external' elder, it still seemed necessary that someone should give him guidance as regards the Uwaysi method. So 'Abd Allah went to Uways, who agreed that they should keep 'company' (*musahabat*).

'Abd Allah attended on Uways for twenty-five years, and then Uways died. He was buried at Maskan, the place where Khidr worships, a quarter of a parasang (*farsakh*, one hour's walk) from the 'Hill of the Poles' (*Till-i qutbiyya*). At his funeral 70,000 angels came to be led in worship by 'Abd Allah. Then Uways's spirit told 'Abd Allah to go to Mecca. On the way he was separated from the caravan and came to an oasis. A voice told him to contemplate God's creation and separate from himself. He lost consciousness for one and a half days, and spent a whole year there in contemplation, hoping that the original gift of unconsciousness would return. When the year came to an end it did, and he reached his goal. This time the loss of consciousness lasted twice as long. He spent three more months there in the hope that this would happen again, but a voice told him that it would not. He came to Mecca, and had performed five ritual circlings of the Ka'ba (the cube-shaped shrine which is the centre of the pilgrimage rites), when a voice told him to stay in Mecca and teach Uwaysi pupils. He stayed in Mecca for thirty years, and gave instruction to eighty people there, who were also instructed by eighty prophets in the world of the spirits. 'Abd Allah gave them his instruction in this visible world, and they reached perfection. However, this was by keeping company with him, not by formal discipleship (*iradat*). Their degree was 'passing away' in God.

Various miracles were performed by 'Abd Allah. One day his fellow-dervishes had no food. He started reciting poetry to himself, and all sorts of food and drink poured from his patched frock. Another day he satisfied his pupils' thirst by taking a black stone in his hand: water flowed out of it. On another occasion he set off for the oasis where he had stayed before, and the dervishes went with him. They had no provisions, but were miraculously preserved from hunger and thirst. After twelve days they found that the oasis had dried up. 'Abd Allah wept and prayed. Then he struck the ground with his staff, and water gushed forth. At his prayer a withered tree became green again and bore fruit. 'Abd Allah's aim in this exercise was to make the dervishes understand the inner reality (*haqiqat*) of friendship with one another. He now went home and resumed his life of austerity. He fasted all the year round

except for one day a month. Then he would break his fast in order not to be cut off from people entirely. For the real dervish is he who practises isolation (*khalwat*) in the company of other people. When he was fasting, however, he would allow only his companions to visit him, and even then only at specified times. The reason why he kept company with those eighty people was that elders must teach and appoint deputies, and make them similar to themselves. All night he would engage in worship and meet the Pole of Poles, after which he would sit with the other Poles. At dawn he would join his companions. He was rich, thanks to an inheritance, and would keep giving his wealth away, but in spite of this it would keep on doubling every day. For whoever rejects this world finds it coming to him. This is always the case with the Uwaysi elders. The dervish should remain contented in the midst of riches.

'Abd Allah lived to the age of 81, and in his lifetime 80,000 Uwaysis obtained instruction. He appointed eighty deputies, whom he brought to perfection. One day Uways appeared to him in the world of inner meaning and announced that he would be promoted to the rank of Pole. The Poles brought him the vestments of Polehood and clothed him in them, after which they made him sit on the throne of Polehood. He was duly appointed to this position, and remained in it for three years. During this period he made three people qualify for it. Then, one day, the Angel of Death arrived. 'Abd Allah asked for time, because he had promised friends that they should be at his death-bed. The dervish does not break his promise. A delay was granted. Then 'Abd Allah asked God not to let him be humiliated in his death. God replied that nobody humiliates someone whom he has made dear to himself. 'Abd Allah told his friends that he was about to die. Then he started reciting poetry to himself, and after a while sat down, made the standard profession of faith in Islam (thereby avoiding the humiliation of dying with his faith in doubt) and died. One dervish present realized that 'Abd Allah had really rendered his soul up to God when starting to recite the poetry, but, owing to the power of his 'friendship with God' (*walayat*) had not fallen down. So he died according to the exemplary practice of Muhammad, on a Monday (as Muhammad had done). The people of Mecca assembled around him. Shaykh Sa'id of Syria sewed his shroud. Shaykh Bilal of Ta'if (a town near Mecca), Shaykh Muqaddam of Medina and Shaykh 'Ali Jili washed the body. The worship at the funeral was performed by 7,570 people, who held hands when the

bier was picked up so that the 'blessing' (*baraka*) should be transmitted to all of them. From the grave a voice said, 'Peace to you, friend of God of the age!' 'Abd Allah replied, 'Peace to you, O place of examination!' A tomb was built over the grave, but it disappeared twelve years later. After his death one of the dervishes saw him in a dream and asked what God had done with him. He replied that God had accepted all his acts, and also prophesied that his tomb would be destroyed. For the dervish should be without name or trace in this world. He also said that his friends should follow his example in all things, since differences of opinion are inappropriate and impolite. Then he vanished.

Commentary

'Abd Allah Yamani belongs to a special class of imaginary mystics in Sufi theorizing about the hierarchy of the 'friends of God'. These mystics always have names beginning with 'Abd ('slave of') followed by one of God's names. They are put in correspondences with given prophets or 'messengers' and deputize for them. Here Uzgani has been largely anticipated by Sufism's main theorist, Ibn 'Arabi.[17] These figures, both in Ibn 'Arabi's works and elsewhere, are often said to be 'on the heart' (Arabic *'ala qalb*) of a prophet. Ibn 'Arabi also has the expression *'ala qadam*, literally 'on the foot of', in practice 'on the steps of', for the Sufi understudy's relationship with the prophet or messenger.[18] Here Sufi theory has much to say about the 'substitutes' (*abdal*), in the sense of replacements for the prophets.[19] Uzgani is unusual in referring to mystics who are on the 'back' (*zahr*) of a prophet. The word also signifies the exterior as opposed to the inner meaning. Later he explains that a Sufi who is on the back of a prophet resembles him a great deal. Thus 'Abd Allah has many external resemblances to Moses, producing the same miracles.

This biography has various other points of interest. The theme of 'companionship' as opposed to the formal elder–disciple relationship will recur as a constant theme of the *History of the Uwaysis*. 'Solitude in the assembly' is seen as a characteristically Naqshbandi teaching.[20] Other themes which will be taken up again are: avoiding humiliation in death; 'being without trace'; teaching; rejecting riches; and making a withered tree turn green again.

'Point' 1

The Arabic word *maqsid* ('point, destination') means, philologically, the place or time at which one tries to reach one's goal (*maqsud*). For the Sufi, however, the goal (God) is ever present to one's gaze: one does not look at anything else. So the goal, being in a sense already there, is reached extremely quickly. The would-be dervish must follow those mystics who have achieved this. Their spirits are in the world of divinity but intervene in the world of humans, acting on dervishes' minds. One must study this book constantly and enter the Uwaysi 'path'.

Commentary

Here Uzgani engages in typically Sufi word-play. *Maqsid* has much the same ambiguity as the English word 'point': it means 'significance', 'import', and also 'place of destination'. A related word, *maqsud*, means the 'goal' of the mystic: in the *History of the Uwaysis* this is the vision of God, in effect God himself. One of Uzgani's repeated themes is that the Uwaysi 'path' brings one to the goal very quickly. It is a sort of short cut compared to the routes of the other Sufi brotherhoods. Here we also see the main purpose of the book: teaching the reader to become an Uwaysi mystic.

Section i Mu'izz al-Din Husayn of Herat

Mu'izz al-Din of Herat (in western Afghanistan) was extremely eloquent and erudite. He had 600 pupils, who had all reached perfection, and was unequalled in asceticism and piety. This was due to the secret influence of 'Abd Allah Yamani, from the moment of his birth. As soon as he began to speak he began to recite from the Qur'an: 'You are of a mighty nature (68: 4); and you are powerful over everything (3: 25); and you are the knower of things unseen (5: 108).' His father, realizing that his son was specially blessed, entrusted him to a teacher. For twenty-two years he studied the 'external' sciences and reached perfection in them. Then he renounced the world and lived piously for three years. During all this time 'Abd Allah's inner influence took care of him in his mystical 'states' (*ahwal*), but did not instruct him, because Mu'izz al-Din was too young and 'Abd Allah himself had not yet become Pole. When he did become Pole instruction began and continued until 'Abd Allah died. When Mu'izz al-Din realized who

his instructor was he wanted to visit him and bring a hundred of his own pupils. But 'Abd Allah appeared to him in a dream and said that this was inappropriate. After 'Abd Allah's death Mu'izz al-Din followed his pattern of teaching, sometimes with added effort. Thus he instructed 500 people in this visible world, bringing them to perfection, and in the inner world he did the same with nine people. He also performed numerous miracles. A single glance of his would transform a dunce into the best of pupils in the formal sciences. His glance would also turn green anything withered. He was always fasting and keeping vigils, and transporting himself to Mecca and back at the time of the dawn worship. Mu'izz al-Din would join the Poles every morning and exercise his control in this world and the 'world of sovereignty' (*malakut*). He would contemplate the whole of this world reflected in a thumb-nail. As an instructor he was very gentle. He explained that this was because young pupils do not have the capacity to bear great burdens, and he himself was not overburdened by his teacher. The dervish who related this explanation of his added that Mu'izz al-Din was just hiding his real powers: in reality, with the slightest 'concentration' (*tawajjuh*)[21] he could make dervishes' hearts reach the angels.

One day Mu'izz al-Din set off with 200 dervishes to perform a 'circling' of his elder's grave. After three months he arrived. Then his elder told him to give circling the Ka'ba priority. He objected that he had formed an intention to circle 'Abd Allah's grave first. 'Abd Allah insisted that the Ka'ba must have priority, and he gave in. When he returned to his elder's grave 'Abd Allah appeared to him in a dream and told him to stay for twelve days before going home. In those twelve days Mu'izz al-Din obtained more benefits from his elder's spirit than in the whole of his life. Then he returned to Herat, where he died two years later. His life had corresponded to that of his teacher's, apart from giving more instruction and being Pole for only five days. The year of his death was 138 AH/755–6 CE. Before he died he told his friends that his life had been spent entirely in sin, and that he wanted them to tie a black rope round his neck and parade his corpse in public, so that he should die humiliated. After his death they wondered whether to obey him and do this. His most senior deputy, Sa'd al-Din of Bakharz (a neighbourhood in north-eastern Iran), said they should not. Another deputy, however, was about to tie the rope round Mu'izz al-Din's neck when a divine voice said that a friend of God

could not be humiliated in this manner. Mu'izz al-Din was duly buried. That night he appeared to someone in a dream and said that he had been exalted above God's other friends, and that his pupils should follow his example. Mu'izz al-Din was on the back of Aaron.

Commentary

The main theme of this section, as is appropriate for an appendix to the first chapter, is that of teaching. The subsidiary theme of being able to turn withered plants green by looking at them will be picked up in the next section. As for the question of whether one's elder's grave has priority over the Ka'ba, this is a well-established motif of classical Sufism.[22] The subject of humiliation in death provides another link with the first biography. Aaron the brother of Moses (both are seen as prophets in Islam) is a natural prophetic counterpart of Mu'izz al-Din, because the latter's teacher was instructed by Moses himself.

Section ii Ahmad Sabuni of Damascus

Another Sufi who was instructed by 'Abd Allah Yamani in the world of the spirit was Ahmad Sabuni of Damascus. He was called 'Sabuni' (soap-maker) because the soap factory of Damascus was entrusted to him. He would bring in 1,000 silver *tankas*[23] a year and give them to the king. He was generous and good-natured. One day he decided to retire to a hermitage and embrace the ascetic life. In a dream he saw a wonderful meadow and a man who confirmed that it was one of the gardens of paradise, to which Ahmad had to earn admission by rejecting the world. He himself had come to instruct Ahmad by permission of Muhammad's spirit. Ahmad went to the king and explained that his previous service had been a metaphor and preparation for the service of the real king, God, to whom he now wished to devote himself. He gave all his worldly belongings to his family and the poor, and went into seclusion.

Fifteen years passed, during which Ahmad obtained instruction from his elder's spirit and 'reached the goal', easily, because his instructor was at the height of his powers, and because of his own experience in serving a terrestrial king, which is extremely useful for spiritual progress. Then his instructor told him to become an elder himself. Ahmad asked for two more years, in order to improve himself, and was given them. After the two years had

passed he settled in a mosque, and used his powers to attract the king and convert him to the religious life, so as to bring about the conversion of his subjects. The people of Damascus flocked to Ahmad, but there was no formal tie of discipleship (*iradat*). Instead, he brought them all to perfection by force of spiritual concentration, except for fifty people, who, lacking aptitude, remained in the degree of 'flying over the earth'. This, for Ahmad and his fellow-dervishes, was the lowest of degrees, though earlier mystics had taken a lifetime to obtain it. Then Ahmad occupied himself with instructing dervishes, now being given the name Sabuni, we are told, by reason of his purifying people, not because of his previous occupation. Eighteen years passed. He decided to go to Mecca, and arrived there after a journey of five months. While circling the Ka'ba he was asked by a voice why he did not accept people as his disciples. He replied that he did not want to leave the Uwaysis. The voice replied that to take disciples would not bring him out from among the Uwaysis, and henceforth he should accept as a disciple anyone who repented. Ten days after he returned to Damascus he found a group of people in his room. They clothed him in the vestments of Polehood and gave him permission to teach novices. He acquired disciples and remained in the degree of Polehood for seven years. His 'look' became so strong that it purified everything it saw, made every living thing a 'friend of God', and turned white everything that was black. For this reason God's friends called him 'Sabuni'. He died in 199 AH/814–5 CE. Afterwards the king saw him in a dream, and was told to bring sinners to God and practise justice. Ahmad also said that God had done with him what he had done with Uways.

Commentary

As in the first two biographies, the main theme is still that of teaching. More development is given to the Uwaysi paradox: for the mystic to take disciples appears anti-Uwaysi, but is nonetheless advisable. A secondary theme is that of kingship: here Uzgani's ideology is manifestly 'collaborationist'. Contrary to the earlier Sufi tradition of avoiding royal patronage (at least in theory), now such patronage is shown as welcome. Another motif is taken up from the second biography: that of transforming things just by looking at them. The subject of rejecting riches is repeated from the first chapter. As for the king presented as ruling in Damascus in the early ninth century, he is a patent anachronism: this is the heyday

of the 'Abbasid caliphs reigning from Baghdad.

Chapter 2 Jalil of Damghan

Jalil of Damghan (in north-eastern Iran) was a generous and learned man who specialized in teaching Sufism. To begin with, however, he was a rich usurer. One day he heard some children urging one another to run away from him because of his sin. He repented, cancelled all the debts owing to him, gave away all his wealth and became an ascetic. After thirty-six years he suddenly lost consciousness and saw someone in a patched frock, who gave him a drink. Jalil stayed drunk and unconscious for eight days, after which he displayed a remarkable ability to interpret the Qur'an. For the first degree which he had obtained after those thirty-six years was that of the 'unveiling of inner meanings' (*kashf-i ma'ani*), the highest of all degrees given to God's friends, or rather to one in a thousand of them. This was because he was extremely worried about his ignorance, and God generously answered his prayers. He was also granted the 'unveiling of the angels' (*kashf-i mala'ika*), and realized that the children who had brought about his repentance were angels in disguise. He had been instructed by the spirit of Moses, and was upon the 'back' of Jacob. This is also seen by God's friends as the highest of degrees, that a single individual should be given instruction by two people, especially when both are prophets. Such a privilege is rarely vouchsafed to the Uwaysis.

Moses and Jacob now told Jalil to become an elder, call the masses to God and instruct the elite, bringing them to the goal. He obeyed, taking disciples and using his spiritual powers to attract people, so that he could miraculously transport them to his presence. He instructed 870 disciples in all, in the phenomenal world, but only eighty of these were physically present. The rest never saw him. For two-thirds of the night he would travel round the world, examining people to see if they were suitable for instruction, and the remaining third he spent absorbed in ecstasy. Then, one day, a voice told him that from now on he would be fully conscious for one period of twenty-four hours and in 'absorption' (*istighraq*) for the next. Accordingly, during his periods of consciousness he used to spend one-third of the night travelling as before, and the rest of the night in devotion. In the daytime he would teach and give advice. He used to weep a lot, being on the 'back' of Jacob, and, like him, going blind. Jalil considered it

obligatory to follow Jacob, because God's friends must endeavour to resemble the prophets, whose miracles they reproduce. This resemblance is especially strong when a mystic is on the back [as opposed to the heart] of a given prophet.

Jalil became one of God's secret friends and reached the age of 83. Of his eighty-three years, thirty-six were spent in asceticism, ten more in calling people to God, three months and ten days in the degree of Polehood, and the rest in following idle desires. He was born at Damghan in 179 AH/795–6 CE, and grew up there, but he died at Konya (in southern Turkey). There, in the money-changers' quarter, beside the house of one Rukn al-Din, there was a hermitage where Bilal (the celebrated black slave who became a Companion of Muhammad) had died. Jalil, when performing the pilgrimage, had been told by a voice at the Ka'ba that he would have to go to Konya and be buried there. He died on the 14th of the month of Shawwal. On the first night after his death another elder saw him in a dream, seated on a golden throne and giving advice to a group of people. Jalil said that his present rank was due to his calling people to God, that God had treated him as he had Uways, and that his friends should do what he himself had done.

Commentary

The second chapter, as is normal with the even-numbered chapters in the *History of the Uwaysis*, forms a pair with the one which precedes it. Thus it has Moses in the role of instructor, but also brings in Jacob: presumably the idea is that in Chapter 1 the subject resembles Moses externally, but in Chapter 2 the emphasis is on Moses' spiritual intervention. We encounter the usual Islamic theme of Jacob's going blind when weeping for his lost son and the biblical motif of his vision of the angels.[24] The theme of rejecting riches is again repeated. Another element taken up from Chapter 1 is that of the ancient hermitage. Jalil also resembles 'Abd Allah in having eighty pupils who are physically present.

Bilal is supposed to have spent his last years in Syria and to have died there.[25] I have found no trace of a shrine of his in Konya.

Chapter 3 Nizam al-Din of Bazda

Nizam al-Din of Bazda (a village near Karshi in Uzbekistan) was a leading scholar who built many mosques and places of devotion (*ma'abid*). Originally he was called Qiyam al-Din Husayn, but his

services to Islam gained him the title 'Nizam al-Din' ('Order of the Religion'). At first he was a judge, who would go into purdah in order to avoid being influenced by seeing parties in a lawsuit. One night he asked God to draw him to himself, and was told to go to the site of a mosque in which David used to worship. He set off and after five days reached the spot in the desert which had been indicated, but found no sign of the mosque. An elder appeared and traced the outline of the building with the tip of his staff. Then he told Nizam al-Din to rebuild it, and vanished. A black-bearded man with a spade appeared to help him. After five days he explained that he was 'Abd al-Samad, to whom the post of Pole of Poles was entrusted, and the elder was Khidr, who had a special relationship with the Uwaysis and whose instruction was indispensable to them, since they did not have an 'external' elder except when necessary. Three days later Khidr reappeared, prayed and produced in Nizam al-Din the 'unveiling of the affairs of the unseen' (*kashf-i umur-i ghayb*): he saw all the parts of the universe, so that nothing was kept from him except the vision of God himself. Then Khidr left for a couple of days, before returning for a period of six months. People, attracted by Nizam al-Din's fame, came to him in ever-increasing numbers, so that eventually, apart from visitors, there were always 7,740 individuals around him. He gave instruction, but without the relationship of elder and disciple. Every day he would journey into the 'interiors' of the dervishes around him, until he brought them to the degree of 'unveiling of hearts' (*kashf al-qulub*, presumably meaning the ability to enter into Uwaysi communication with other instructors). Then he would leave them to themselves.

Thirty-three years passed, during which he trained 200 deputies, putting each one in charge of instructing 500 people. Eventually he was absorbed in ecstasy, so that he neglected his religious duties and committed acts contrary to established usage, for a period of six years. Then he returned to his senses and explained to his friends that the Pole had just died. Since one could not be absorbed in ecstasy while holding this post he had been brought back to normality in order to be appointed to it and be responsible for all the affairs of this world and the 'world of sovereignty' (*malakut*). After he said this his body was briefly expanded, terrifying his friends. He was Pole in that place for four years. One day all the elders of the world, together with the other Poles, came to him and said that a child was being born in Constantinople who would be a

great mystic. The command had come that they should all look at him, so that he would be a 'friend of God' from birth. Nizam al-Din joined them in looking at the baby in the world of inner meaning.

One night a voice told Nizam al-Din that he was to spend another four years in Mecca. He set off with 120 dervishes and after two years arrived in Mecca. He was told to remain there for one year. Nizam al-Din did so, but spent all his time moving between Mecca and Medina. Then he was sent to Syria. On the way he became angry with a dervish who would not wake up. Nizam al-Din angrily struck a stone with his staff. The stone flew off and hit the dervish on the head, killing him. In punishment for this Nizam al-Din was made to lose his way, and had to obtain the intercession of the elders and Poles' spirits to win God's forgiveness. He spent two months in Syria, and then went to the Lebanon, allowing only three people to accompany him. There Nizam al-Din visited the graves of the Poles and the spot where Uways had lived. Then he was told to go home, and did so.

Three months passed. He received instructions from his instructor, who was David (upon whose 'back' he also was). Consequently, like David, he would sing when overcome with desire for God. He reached the age of 98. Sixty-eight years of his life had been spent in devotion, calling people to God, ecstasy and Polehood. As Pole he had a much greater control over this world and the 'world of sovereignty' than other Poles had. One day he started reciting poetry to himself and going into ecstasy. This went on for three days. Then he died, on a Monday, on 27 Ramadan 270 AH/29 March 884 CE [in fact this was a Sunday]. Afterwards a dervish saw him in a dream, on a jewelled throne, with people standing deferentially before him. Nizam al-Din explained that this was the reward for calling people to God, and these were the people whom he had brought to him. God had dealt with him as with Uways.

Commentary

This biography is largely modelled on the story of David, who in Islam is most famous as the ecstatic singer of the Psalms. Like David in Islamic tradition, Nizam al-Din is a judge.[26] In Islamic legend David builds a hermitage (*sawma'a*) and engages in devotion in it: seventy pious people gather round him. Later he is shown returning to this life of piety, going to a mosque with seventy other devotees every day. Like Nizam al-Din, he sinfully causes the death

of a man and, after repenting, is forgiven.[27] David has a tomb and a holy spring attached to his memory by the River Qara Darya in Kirghizia.[28]

The anonymous appearance of Khidr, whose identity is subsequently revealed, is typical in Islam and in the *History of the Uwaysis* in particular. 'Abd al-Samad is another important figure in the Uwaysi hierarchy, whose position is made clear later.[29] The expansion of Nizam al-Din's body is paralleled in an anecdote told about Sufism's most famous martyr, Hallaj, who was executed at Baghdad in 922.[30] Transforming with a glance is a theme repeated from Sections i and ii. The element of the ancient place of worship is repeated from the first two chapters.

Bazda produced a few famous lawyers in the early centuries of Islam. However, none of them bore the name Husayn.[31] (For a man of religion to have a title like 'Nizam al-Din' in this period is anachronistic.)

Chapter 4 Baha' al-Din of Ghazna

Baha' al-Din of Ghazna[32] in Afghanistan, was extremely mild, generous and knowledgeable. At the age of five he was sent to a Qur'an-school. When being taught the alphabet he refused to utter the letter B, since it connoted duality, in opposition to the Oneness of God. Then he went off into the desert. There an elder met him and offered his company. Baha' al-Din accepted, and they were companions for thirty-six years. The pupil reached maturity in the Sufi Path, after which one year elapsed. He asked the elder who he was, and learnt that he was Khidr. A voice told Baha' al-Din to go to Ghazna, since there were members of the Uwaysi brotherhood there, but they lacked an instructor. He was to instruct them, but not in the relationship of elder and disciples, since he was too young. Baha' al-Din set off, and came to the mosque of 'Awq, so called because anyone who abandoned worldly attachments (*'awa'iq*) would go there.[33] People came and recognized him as the answer to their prayers. They wanted to be his disciples, but he explained that in the Uwaysi 'path' it is not the practice to have the elder–disciple relationship. Nevertheless, they built a lodge (*ma-'bad, khanaqah*), which comprised forty hospices (*zawiyas*), in each of which four people engaged in devotion.

Baha' al-Din would keep repeating the words 'I saw my Lord with the eye of my Lord', and became famous for this. Some

scholars objected that it was tantamount to unbelief, and wanted to haul him before a judge. However, one of them suggested that they should visit Baha′ al-Din first. Meanwhile one of the dervishes asked Baha′ al-Din for a commentary on the words. Baha′ al-Din told him to wait. The next day the distinguished visitors arrived, and Baha′ al-Din brought them into the lodge. Food was served: *bughra* (squares of pasta in gravy) and peas. Baha′ al-Din glanced at the food, and it was transformed first into gold coins and pearls and then into leaves and fruit. After this the dishes were turned into water-basins, and the visitors found themselves being given a ducking. They decided to keep quiet. When the meal ended Baha′ al-Din made a speech. In the womb he had asked God to bring about his birth. God had looked upon him, and out of desire for God Baha′ al-Din had said, 'I saw my Lord with the eye of my Lord', because he could not see by himself. After this speech Baha′ al-Din sighed, and a flame darted from his mouth, almost burning the visitors up.

He lived in that mosque for twelve years and instructed 12,000 people in the Uwaysi 'path'. He brought 770 people to perfection, and of these thirty-two reached the degree of deputyship (*khilafat*). Then he went into isolation, and seven more years passed. One day Khidr came to him and explained that though outwardly they had been separated, inwardly they had been close. He told Baha′ al-Din to go to Mecca and spend the rest of his life there, since in Mecca there were people who needed him. Baha′ al-Din and Khidr went there together and Baha′ al-Din lived there for twenty years, teaching Qur′an and Tradition to the people of Mecca and Sufism to the Uwaysis. Thanks to his teaching, 300 people became scholars and 900 reached perfection in mysticism. In this period he followed the Sufi Way in the manner of 'external' people. Then he became Pole, and remained in this post for seven years and ten days. In this time he was granted the privilege of ascension to heaven (*mi′raj*), which apart from him was given to only the prophets and Abu Yazid. For God's friends, by austerity and effort, have brought themselves to the degree of the prophets.

Baha′ al-Din obtained instruction from the 'interior' of Khidr and was on the heart of David. He was born in 190 AH/805–6 CE and lived for eighty years and ten days. At his funeral, a strong man arrived riding a camel. The man picked the body up and rode off. A fellow-Sufi, Shaykh 'Ali of Egypt, transformed himself into a falcon and gave chase. The chase ended on Mount Lebanon, where

Shaykh 'Ali resumed his original form and found Baha' al-Din and a number of angels digging a grave. The camel-rider, he now realized, had been Baha' al-Din himself. Later one of the dervishes saw Baha' al-Din in a dream and was told to follow his example, tell the other dervishes to accept Shaykh 'Ali as his successor, and not neglect 'remembrance of God', the only real form of work.

Commentary

Being an even-numbered chapter, this forms a pair with the preceding. Again, the connection with David leads one to look for correspondences with him. But we have been told that resemblances are most strong when a mystic is upon the back of a prophet, as is the case with Nizam al-Din but not with Baha' al-Din. So the outward similarities are minor: David and Baha' al-Din build places of devotion and recite ecstatic poetry of the love of God. As in the transition from Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, there is a shift away from external resemblances and towards spiritual reality. Doctrinally, the chapter's main theme is God's Uniqueness. The biography is of great interest for the information it provides about Sufi organization and terminology: a lodge (*khanaqah*), which is also called a 'place of devotion' (*ma'bad*), is presented as including a number of hospices (*zawiyas*). Often in Islam the terms *khanaqah* and *zawiya* are interchangeable. The Arabic verse 'I saw my Lord with the eye of my Lord' is one version of a line by Hallaj: 'I saw my Love with the eye of my heart.' The version recited by Baha' al-Din has been seen as representing the monistic mysticism of Ibn 'Arabi.[34] As for the story of Baha' al-Din's appearing on a camel at his own funeral to remove his corpse, this is copied from a famous legend about 'Ali, the first Leader of the Shiites.[35] There are noteworthy points of correspondence with Chapter 3: meeting Khidr in the desert, building a place of worship and transforming things with a glance.

Chapter 5 'Allama Huqqabaz

'Allama, a mystic of the Hijaz (central western Arabia) was the companion of a king. He was called Huqqabaz because he had been given a box (*huqqa*) which, when open (*baz*), gave him the answers to problems concerning the world of inner meaning. To begin with he was a man who lived in peace, unconcerned with the events of his time. He remained like this until the age of 36. Already he had

miraculous powers. One day he was overwhelmed by ecstasy. Reciting poetry to himself, he fell unconscious. His instructor, Moses, gave him a golden box and explained its properties. In this box all of this world, the 'world of sovereignty', the world of spirits and the other worlds were contained. Moses also told him to attach himself to a king. 'Allama waited twelve years before making use of the box. Then he asked God to justify his name ('Allama means 'most learned'), because he was ashamed of his ignorance. On opening the box a strange brightness appeared in his heart and the inner meanings of the Qur'an were revealed to him. His 'work' as a dervish reached perfection. 'Allama decided to make his way to a king. This king was himself a mystic, and wanted 'Allama to take his throne, but the latter declined, and insisted on being given the position of doorman. His aim was to make sure that the king's subjects should be safe from oppression and be given help when in distress. He also wanted the king to reach the mystical goal. 'Allama was successful in bringing benefits to the population, but concealed his benevolent activities.

Now a dervish of that country encountered a certain problem, which remained unsolved for years. Eventually God told him that the solution lay with the doorman. The dervish, in the course of repeated visits, found 'Allama to be so extremely disagreeable that he could not bring himself to ask for his help. Eventually 'Allama took him by the hand and solved the problem for him, explaining that his attendance on the king was due to the fact that the dervish is the 'son of the time' (*ibn al-waqt*) and has no choice in his own affairs. He had behaved unpleasantly in order to test his visitor. The friends of God appear to be unbelievers so as to conceal their kindness.

One night the king found 'Allama praying to be released, as he had failed to bring him to God. The next day he told 'Allama that he wanted to renounce his throne, but 'Allama replied that they should just spend their nights together. They did so for seven years, and the king reached perfection and the goal. 'Allama lived to the age of 97, spending forty-five years in the service of the king. One night God summoned him to Mecca. The king wanted to come as well, but 'Allama told him that he would do better to occupy himself with providing justice for his subjects. After six months 'Allama reached Mecca, where he stayed for fifteen years. He instructed 500 people and brought them to perfection. 'Allama himself was instructed by the spirit of Moses, but was on the heart of Joseph.

One day a number of great 'friends of God' brought the vestments

of Polehood and told him to put them on. He was duly appointed Pole, and held the office for nine months. Then four of the 'men of the unseen' told him that he had been made one of them. He joined them and disappeared. Nobody recorded his death. Some say that he is buried in the famous cemetery of Baqi' at Medina, but the truth is that there is just an empty tomb with his name there.

Commentary

The story of 'Allama is obviously meant to correspond to part of the legend of Joseph, a favourite subject in Islamic literature. Like Joseph, 'Allama becomes the close adviser of a king, but as an Uwaysi naturally conceals his importance. He resembles Joseph in his vast knowledge: in Islamic legend Joseph knows seventy languages.[36] Presumably the resemblances are not supposed to be too great, since the relationship is 'of the heart'. As in earlier biographies, the link with Moses is connected with the theme of teaching. The story is also based on a pun: 'Allama's surname, Huqqabaz, really means 'juggler', not 'box-opener'.

Baqi', Medina's first cemetery, has traditionally been visited by pilgrims to the city. The tombs there have now been destroyed, as idolatrous, by the Saudi royal family.[37]

Chapter 6 Abu 'l-Nasr Samani

Abu 'l-Nasr Samani was extremely learned in both formal and esoteric knowledge. To begin with he was a merchant, thereby following the example of Muhammad, and with the double intention of bringing grace (*fayd*) to people and obtaining the reward for paying the alms-tax. For the rich are specially favoured in being able to pay this tax, and they reap incomparable benefits from it. He had travelled and engaged in asceticism in Egypt. One day he decided to embark on a journey, but Muhammad appeared to him in a dream and told him to wait. Six years later he explained to Abu 'l-Nasr that he was to travel to Turkistan, since there was someone there whose spirit he himself had seen beneath God's Throne during his famous Ascension. Then Gabriel had told Muhammad that this person would give life to Islam in Turkistan, but first had to be instructed by Abu 'l-Nasr, whose spirit Muhammad had seen teaching him. Abu 'l-Nasr spent six more years preparing himself for the task ahead and making his spirit acquainted with that of his pupil in the world of inner meaning.

Then he was ordered to set off. He took his son, who was called 'Abd al-Fattah, with him. On the way they asked if anybody had heard of the sort of person whom they were trying to find. After five years they reached the Farghana valley (in what is now Uzbekistan and Kirghizia) and were told that there was such a person, albeit very young, in the city of Kashghar. The pair set off with 300 fellow-travellers and accomplished their task (as is described in the next chapter).

Abu 'l-Nasr had endured austerities for seventy years. Now he spent eleven more years in devotion and instructing his important pupil. He brought 7,000 people into the fold of Islam and seventy to the degree of friendship with God (*walayat*). He lived to the age of 88, reached his goal and taught disciples. He himself had been instructed by Abu Bakr (Muhammad's first successor) and was on the heart of Jacob. Thus he had Jacob's roasted heart, weeping eyes and burning sigh. He was the greatest of the Uwaysi elders, because nobody was a greater *ghazi* (religious warrior of the frontier of Islam) than he. It is related that when he had set off for Turkistan it had been from Medina, and he had been accompanied by seventy Uwaysi elders in the external world, who were profiting from his 'interior', though the elder–disciple relationship was absent. Among them was a certain Najm al-Din 'Attar ('the pharmacist'), who was also closely connected with Abu 'l-Nasr's special pupil. One day a number of Uwaysi elders (including Najm al-Din) came and gave Abu 'l-Nasr the vestments of Polehood. He was Pole for seven and a half years, during which he was, in outward appearance, in retirement, while exerting his spiritual influence. When he died he was buried at Artush, one of the dependencies of Kashghar.[38] Afterwards one of his comrades in frontier warfare saw him in a dream, ready for the fight. Abu 'l-Nasr explained that God had given him the highest of places in paradise, dealing with him as with the martyrs of Kerbela [Muhammad's grandson Husayn and his family] and the frontier warriors of old. He urged his comrade to concentrate on this kind of warfare, the highest form of activity, which brings one to a degree equivalent to ten times that of a friend of God.

Commentary

With the biography of Abu 'l-Nasr we come close to real history and the earlier legends of East Turkistan. His most important pupil is a historical figure, Satuq Bughra Khan. Presumably his

surname, Samani, is a reflection of the name of the Samanid dynasty which reigned in Central Asia from *c.* 875 to 1005. Thus Abu 'l-Nasr would represent the real process of Islamicization of East Turkistan by merchants coming from the Samanid territory to the west.[39] It is appropriate that he should be instructed by Abu Bakr, Muhammad's first successor, since his royal pupil will be instructed by the spirit of Muhammad himself. Abu Bakr is supposed to have been a merchant and to have made an important contribution to religious warfare. He is also supposed, according to one tradition, to have died a martyr, poisoned.[40] It is equally appropriate that Abu 'l-Nasr should be on the heart of Jacob, since in Islam Jacob is usually seen as waiting for the meeting with his lost son, Joseph: Abu 'l-Nasr awaits the meeting with his spiritual son. The themes of teaching and advising a king are repeated from Chapter 5: again, an even-numbered chapter is part of a pair.

Chapter 7 Satuq Bughra Khan

Satuq Bughra Khan was a man of great strength and bravery. As has already been mentioned, Muhammad had seen his spirit during his own Ascension. Satuq was placed among the prophets, though he was not a prophet himself. Gabriel had told Muhammad that the success of Islam in Turkistan was dependent upon him. Muhammad related this to his Companions. One of them suggested that they too might be shown Satuq. Muhammad prayed, and a group of forty-one horsemen appeared from the sky, wearing felt hats. Muhammad prophesied that Satuq would be born 330 years later and become a Muslim at the age of 12. The Prophet also said, 'The first of the Turks to become a Muslim will be Satuq.' Some relate that it was 'Ali who said this. In due course Abu 'l-Nasr Samani read the text of these sayings attributed to Muhammad and set off in search of Satuq, as we saw above.

When Satuq was born there was a violent earthquake. The wise men of the day decided that he would be a great conqueror, but a Muslim. They wanted to kill him, but his mother persuaded them to wait and see if he became a Muslim or not. Seven years passed, and then Satuq's father died, whereupon his mother married his paternal uncle, Harun. When Satuq reached the age of 12 he was still in the religion of his forefathers, but was keeping company with thirty-nine of the forty-one people whom we have just encountered [he and Abu 'l-Nasr were to make up the number].

While going to visit a friend he came upon a hare, which transformed itself into a Sufi elder, informed Satuq of the imminent arrival of his real instructor, and taught him to recite the statement that there is no god but God and Muhammad is his Messenger. However, Satuq did not yet add the prefatory expression 'I bear witness that'. Some say that that elder was Khidr, others that he was an angel. Others say that the first person to introduce Satuq to Islam was Abu 'l-Nasr.

One day Satuq went hunting with his thirty-nine companions, and they found themselves coming towards a place called Buqu (in the 'Upper Artush' area near Kashghar).[41] Then they saw many strangers, and were surprised that they left their baggage unattended when they heard the call to worship. Satuq now met Abu 'l-Nasr and realized that the latter was his instructor. Abu 'l-Nasr made Satuq utter the formal expression of bearing witness to faith in Islam, and taught him that Muhammad was the most important 'friend of God'. His thirty-nine companions also became Muslims, some willingly, some at the point of the sword. Then they went home, but kept joining Abu 'l-Nasr secretly at night. After six months Satuq's uncle and step-father, Harun Bughra Khan, having realized what was happening, wanted to kill Satuq.[42] The latter's mother proposed a test of his religion. His uncle agreed, and started to build an idol-temple, demanding Satuq's participation. Abu 'l-Nasr told Satuq that some Muslim jurists allowed this in case of mortal danger, and that he should take part in building the temple after forming the mental intention of building a mosque. When Satuq passed the test the building of the temple was abandoned.

Abu 'l-Nasr and Satuq now plotted an insurrection, putting their faith in God. They had converted only about 600 people. However, God put the unbelievers to sleep, and made them sleep so soundly that the Muslims were able to steal 4,000 of their horses and one month's provisions. Then they camped at Tiva Tagh ('Camel Hill'). The infidels attacked with vastly superior forces, but the Muslims became increasingly numerous and won a victory. Eventually, though, their provisions were exhausted, and they decided to resort to a night attack. Again God enveloped the unbelievers in a deep sleep. Satuq made his way to his uncle's bedside, woke him up and demanded that he embrace Islam. He refused, and Satuq found himself unable to kill his adoptive father, partly because he had eaten his salt. God solved the problem by causing the earth to

swallow the unbeliever up. At dawn Satuq had himself proclaimed Sultan, and declared Islam to be the official religion. There was a huge battle, which the Muslims won. Satuq performed many miracles that day. Whenever he attacked his sword was miraculously elongated and his horse would breathe fire. Some say that he was 12½ when this happened, others 16, but the former are right.

From then on Satuq spent his summers in frontier warfare against the infidel, and his winters in pious devotion. He lived to the age of 96, and in his time, thanks to him, Islam flourished from the River Oxus to Kadak (the modern Keriya in the south of East Turkistan) and from there as far as Qaraqorum (in Mongolia). One day, when hunting, he prayed for salt for the game which he had cooked. Salt came down from the world of the unseen. Satuq scattered the surplus on a hill, and the whole hill was turned into salt. He was instructed by the spirit of Muhammad, but was upon the back of Solomon. In the external world his instructor was Abu 'l-Nasr. Satuq himself instructed nobody in this world, because he concentrated on frontier warfare. One year he decided to lead an expedition into China. He got as far as Turfan (in the north of East Turkistan), but fell ill and returned home, where he remained ill for a whole year. In the course of this he said one day to his friends that when his spirit was brought to the earth the angels had expressed regret that it would be polluted, but fortunately this had not happened. An Uwaysi mystic who happened to be present formed a doubt about this in his mind, and Satuq realized. At once Satuq tied the cord of his robe, and the man's 'friendship with God' (*walayat*) was 'tied up' as well. He begged forgiveness, and Satuq's leading Sufi associates interceded on his behalf. Satuq forgave him, and, at his prayer, the dervish's 'road' was opened up. Finally that illness brought Satuq to his death-agony and the arrival of the Angel of Death. (The account of his death is given in the following section.)

Commentary

Satuq Bughra Khan is a historical figure. The most recent survey of the problems surrounding his conversion, provided by Peter Golden was published in 1990. Golden points out that the sources present all sorts of difficulties. 'Bughra Khan' is a title, apparently monopolized in this period by the Karakhanid dynasty. A prince called Satuq, possibly the son or nephew of one Ogulchaq Qadir

Khan, did convert to Islam, but we do not know how or when. A very late Ottoman Turkish historian, Münejjimbashi (d. 1702), used sources preserved in Baghdad, going back to a visit made there by a Karakhanid envoy in 1105. According to this account Satuq was converted by a jurist from Bukhara, who declared that he could kill his father. This he did, before conquering Kashghar and beginning the conversion of the surrounding tribes. He died in 951. According to the historians Miskawayh (d. 1030) and Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), '200,000 tents of the Turks' were converted in 960. Apparently these were the followers of the Karakhanids, and some evidence points to the involvement of Muslim missionaries. The story of Satuq's meeting Abu 'l-Nasr and being converted to Islam is given by the historian Jamal Qarshi, writing at the start of the fourteenth century.[43]

Since Satuq is on the back of Solomon we should expect to see considerable similarities between the two figures. In Islam Solomon is above all the embodiment of sovereignty. He conquers Sidon and kills its king, whose daughter's idolatry he tolerates (thereby in effect falling into it himself). Solomon learns from the words of an ant, Satuq from those of a hare. Indeed, in Islamic tradition Solomon knows the language of all the animals and birds.[44] But here we can also see the dominant feature of Turco–Mongol religion, the animal as man's instructor, and, in particular, the veneration (later transformed into dread) already accorded by the Turks to the hare. The motif of the hare as a guide is already attested in the Middle Ages.[45]

Section 3 'Abd al-Fattah

'Abd al-Fattah, the son of Abu 'l-Nasr Samani, was Satuq's deputy, and just as brave a warrior, so that Satuq called him his equal. As time passed 'Abd al-Fattah became overwhelmed by ecstasy and spiritual 'rapture' (*jadhba*), so that he would foam at the mouth. Accordingly, Satuq would call him 'Bughra' (rutting camel). This, one of his own names, was also applied by Satuq to 'Abd al-Fattah by reason of their similarity in possessing miraculous powers. The 'rapture' which came to 'Abd al-Fattah was from 'Ali [who is famous for his bravery], and this was the source of his courage and strength. One day Khidr came to 'Abd al-Fattah and took him to Satuq's death-bed. Celestial spirits and angels also came. Satuq entrusted his kingdom to 'Abd al-Fattah, since his children were

too young. He told 'Abd al-Fattah to follow his own example. His death happened on a Monday, according to the manner of Muhammad's normative example, in 429 AH/1037–8 CE, in Kashghar. Some say that a veiled camel-rider took the corpse and disappeared, and others that it vanished of its own accord, but these accounts are not correct. The night after Satuq's death one frontier-warrier, three scholars and two other people saw him in their dreams, accompanied by a mighty army. He told them that God had granted him the same good fortune that he had in this world, and three times as much again. His friends were to follow his example. 'Abd al-Fattah was to know that Satuq was waiting for him, and should come soon. Satuq added that he could not bear to be without him. When 'Abd al-Fattah heard this summons he rejoiced. Then Satuq's spirit appeared to him in the world of inner meaning and told him to wait until his children reached puberty. 'Abd al-Fattah died three years later. Najm al-Din 'Attar saw him in a dream and asked how he was. He replied that his spirit had joined the other spirits, and that those who are 'enraptured' (*majdhub*) feel the same everywhere.

Commentary

'Abd al-Fattah is obviously a 'doublet' figure, of a kind often found in religion and literature. He is a doublet for Satuq much in the same way that 'Ali is a doublet for Muhammad in Islamic mysticism, representing the esoteric and ecstatic elements of Islam as opposed to Muhammad's statesmanship. The story of 'Ali's coming with a camel to remove his own corpse is a famous one, as has been noted above.[46]

Chapter 8 'Imran of Yazd

'Imran, of Yazd in central Iran, was eloquent, pious and possessed of copious esoteric knowledge. He would distribute all offerings brought to him to the poor, and wore only a torn black frock. 'Imran had a good knowledge of Qur'anic exegesis and the Traditions of Muhammad. He knew by heart 7,300 of the Traditions in which God speaks in the first person. In most meetings he would give an interpretation of Muhammad's saying, 'This world is cursed, and cursed is what is in it, except for the remembrance of God.'[47] He would follow this with an interpretation of another saying, 'Righteousness is that you should

worship God as if you saw him; for then if you do not see him he will see you.'[48]

One day a dervish asked 'Imran what dervishhood was, and what a dervish was. He replied that dervishhood was abandoning the world, and considering everything other than God to be non-existent; a dervish was someone who cut off attachments, closing his eyes to the vicissitudes of fate and not fearing oppression from the 'people of the exterior'. Then he told a story about Abu Yazid. The latter was hit three times by someone paid by a dervish to do so. After the third blow Abu Yazid lost his temper and glared at his assailant. Then that dervish told Abu Yazid that dervishhood did not consist in losing one's temper over such a trifle; rather, the dervish was someone who, if a stone fell on his head, would not bother to raise it.

When 'Imran was a baby he showed great abstinence, drinking his mother's milk only twice a day. His father realized that he was one of God's friends. When he started to speak he recited a verse of the Qur'an ('Our Lord, do not make our hearts swerve after you have guided us, and give us benevolence from you; you are indeed the Giver' (3: 8)) and a Tradition of Muhammad ('He who knows his self (*nafs*, lower soul) knows his Lord.').[49] After twelve years had passed he disappeared. His father found him in the bath-house, with a skull in front of him, reflecting on his own death. When he saw his father he threw himself into the bath-house's furnace, but was unhurt. Then he told his father that he was going to cut himself off from people for thirty years, and vanished again. Thirty years later he duly reappeared. His mother had gone blind from weeping at being parted from him, and now, after praying, he restored her sight to her. Then he went to sleep, but after a time got up and went out of the house. His father followed him, and saw a group of people with white beards and clothes. They were telling 'Imran about his mission: to provide teaching in formal knowledge and to instruct God's friends. These people would continue to meet him by night in the heavenly prototype of the Ka'ba (the Bayt al-Ma'mur).[50] He was to become an elder who would be 'a sculptor of God's friends' (*wali-tarash*). 'Imran got up and started to go home. Suddenly the skull which he had found in the bath-house reappeared and asked 'Imran to rescue it from its present torment. 'Imran agreed to try to help. After he came home he built a mosque and some hermitages, and occupied himself with ascetic practices. He taught Qur'anic exegesis and the Traditions of

Muhammad, calling people to God. He brought 14,000 pupils to perfection in formal study and 'sculpted' 5,000 friends of God, without their having to endure austerities, bringing them to their goal with a single glance. As for people who did undergo self-mortification, he instructed 2,500 friends of God among them. Thus he was surnamed Wali-tarash ('Sculptor of God's friends'). Every day boundless wealth would come to him, but he would give it to the poor. Thus he was also surnamed Qallash ('Wastrel', someone who spends all his money in the tavern).

Fifty years passed. By night 'Imran would keep company with the Uwaysi 'friends' and the 'men of the unseen' in the celestial Ka'ba. He would wear only a loincloth, except when teaching. Thus some people would call him *budala'* ('substituted', a word which designates a type of dervish who sits almost naked on dunghills), which was indeed appropriate, since from one moment to the next he would make 'substitution' (*tabdil*, changing) of his outward form in people's eyes. He reached the age of 92. Then God told him that he was to become Pole. He objected that the dervish aims at the vision of God, not a post. God replied that the former depended on the latter. The vestments of Polehood were duly brought and he was clothed in them. After this he dressed normally. He was granted the 'theophany of taste' (*tajalli-yi dhawq*). Five years passed, and he was then given the degree of Pole of Poles, in which he remained for another year. In this post he instructed fifty people invisibly (*ghayibana*) and brought them to perfection. He himself was instructed by the spirit of Job, whom he imitated in his patience. He was on the heart of Solomon.

One day 'Imran was sitting in a cemetery, with his back to the sun. A dervish came from Turkey to visit him, and found him in ecstasy, with sweat on his back. The dervish, in the hope of obtaining blessing, tasted a drop of the sweat. A voice told him that it was contrary to dervishhood to act without permission, but that he would nonetheless see results: seventy male friends of God, and ten more female friends, would come from 'Imran's loins, and ten friends from his own. Then 'Imran regained consciousness and realized what had happened. In his anger he stretched his fist out and clenched it. The dervish's hand was paralysed. 'Imran was now ordered to go to Mount Lebanon. He closed his eyes, opened them again and found himself there. When he had prepared his grave a number of the 'men of the unseen' and 'substitutes' appeared. God displayed himself to him, and he was overwhelmed by 'taste'

(*dhawq*, ecstasy). He recited a verse of the Qur'an ('You are my Friend (*Wali*) in this world and the next. Make me die in submission (*musliman*, 'submitting to God', 'as a Muslim') and join me to the pious' (12: 101)), producing more ecstasy and sweating, and then became silent and died.

That night one of the dervishes whom 'Imran had instructed 'invisibly', called Mas'ud, who lived in Gujerat (in western India), saw 'Imran with the men of the unseen in the world of sovereignty. He said, 'Presumably you have left the world of humanity, since I see you with the men of the unseen in the world of divinity?' 'Imran said, 'To God we belong and to him we return' (Qur'an 2: 156). Mas'ud asked 'Imran how he was, and was told to ask at the grave itself. He was unsure how to get there, but 'Imran told him to set off. He did so, and after a short distance fell unconscious. Then he found himself in a wilderness. 'Imran hailed him from the grave, and explained that for years he had been instructing him, but not in the external world. Now it had occurred to him to display himself to Mas'ud in both the world of spirits and the phenomenal world, so that Mas'ud should realize that this was the Uwaysi elders' method. They travel and obtain instruction invisibly, but in the phenomenal world they do not usually see their instructor. He instructs them without their seeing him, except in the world of the spirits, which is the world of the unseen. 'Imran, however, had now chosen, while remaining in the world of spirits, to display himself to Mas'ud in the phenomenal world. God had dealt with him as with Uways. Then 'Imran told Mas'ud to close his eyes. He did so, and when he opened them again found himself back in his own house. This happened to Mas'ud on Mount Lebanon, in 403 AH/1012–13 CE. Twelve years later Mas'ud died in Gujerat.

Commentary

It is appropriate that this chapter should follow the one on Satuq. For Satuq, being on the back of Solomon, resembles him externally, as a king, while 'Imran, being on Solomon's heart, expresses the inner meaning of sovereignty, which in Sufism is contentment. Thus the ring of Solomon, explains the poet 'Attar, in fact symbolizes being contented with very little, as sovereignty's very essence.[51]

The parallels with the biblical picture of Job are obvious enough. One may also note that the 7,300 sayings memorized by 'Imran

correspond to the seventy-three years of Job's life in Islamic tradition.[52] 'Imran, as a poor and almost naked dervish, corresponds to a certain type of Muslim mystic, often to be found sitting on dunghills, like Job himself.[53]

In the story of the dervish who takes a drop of sweat from 'Imran's back we encounter a classic motif of Sufism and the *History of the Uwaysis*: the mystic's blessed force (*baraka*) must be left to him alone, and not forced to manifest itself or be transmitted to others. If this happens, then the mystic rapidly dies.

Chapter 9 'Abd al-Ghaffar of Multan

'Abd al-Ghaffar, of Multan in what is now Pakistan, lost both his parents as a baby. A rich but childless neighbour, called Dihlu, adopted him and brought him up until he reached the age of five. Then Dihlu invited the notables of the city for a meal, and after the meal told them that he wanted to give all his possessions to 'Abd al-Ghaffar. They all witnessed the gift in due form. After another year had passed 'Abd al-Ghaffar lost his adoptive father and acquired a new one, called Buhlul, who stole all his wealth, stripped him of his fine clothes and made him go barefoot. The new master of the house sent 'Abd al-Ghaffar to look after his sheep.

Nine years passed, and then 'Abd al-Ghaffar asked God for help. Khidr appeared in the form of a dervish and told him that God had great gifts in store for him. Then he spat into his mouth three times, and reassured him, reminding him that many prophets had been shepherds. After Khidr disappeared 'Abd al-Ghaffar engaged in *sama'* (reciting poetry to oneself and producing ecstasy), with the result that he became giddy and fell down. He looked at the ground, and found that he could see right into the depths of the earth. When he looked at the sky he could again see everything, as far as God's Throne. Then he looked round the world: he could see every grain of sand. Following this experience he would meet Khidr five times a day. When a few days had passed Buhlul grew annoyed with 'Abd al-Ghaffar and hit him. 'Abd al-Ghaffar heaved a sigh, and a spark of fire leapt from his mouth. It set fire to Buhlul's house, destroying it and everyone inside. 'Abd al-Ghaffar felt remorse, since it is not good for dervishes to do this sort of thing, but Khidr comforted him, explaining that God had intended it.

Now 'Abd al-Ghaffar started spending his first adoptive father's

wealth in acts of generosity, distributing enormous amounts of food and clothing. In spite of this his flocks kept increasing, as more sheep came from the world of the unseen. He himself remained badly dressed and ate very little. Most of the time he was silent, and some people thought that he was dumb. One day one of these people went hunting with him. They heard a bird call and killed it. 'Abd al-Ghaffar remarked that if it had kept quiet it would have escaped.

Thirty years passed, and then Khidr came and told 'Abd al-Ghaffar that his instructor was Joseph and he was on the back of Lot. Now he was to help people by calling them to God and taking disciples. He obeyed, and exercised an influence on a vast number of people, while those whom he formally recognized as his disciples numbered 6,007. Of these 1,007 reached the degree of their own elder and obtained permission to take new disciples of their own. However, out of respect for their elder they would not do so, but would just give additional instruction to the other dervishes beneath him. After forty-five more years his strength was impaired by old age. He appointed his most senior deputy, one 'Abd al-Rahim, as his vicegerent, to give and organize instruction, while he himself went into retirement. Another three years elapsed. Then a voice told him that God's friends, at the end of the Way and after reaching the goal, usually come to the Ka'ba in order to obtain remission of sins committed through absent-mindedness. 'Abd al-Ghaffar duly came to the Ka'ba, and after ten days was told to go home. Ten months later he was told that he was about to die. He gave half his wealth to the poor, and entrusted the rest to 'Abd al-Rahim, to be distributed in the same way. He died in Rabi' I 520 AH/March-April 1126 CE in Multan. At his wish no tomb was built. After his death he told someone in a dream that God had granted him the reward for distributing food, and that his own friends should be told to concentrate on feeding and clothing the poor, the actions most pleasing to God.

Commentary

Again, the statement that the subject of the biography is on the back of a prophet, here Lot, enables us to decode the story. 'Abd al-Ghaffar is generous and hospitable, whereas his relative, Buhlul, is uncharitable and inhospitable, like the 'people of Lot'. Consequently, Buhlul and the people in his house suffer a similar fate to that of the 'cities of the plain'.

The connection with Joseph, 'Abd al-Ghaffar's instructor, is less obvious. In Islamic legend Joseph is stripped of his coat by his brothers. He begs to have it as a shroud. Gabriel gives him Abraham's cloak.[54] We can see the parallel with 'Abd al-Ghaffar, stripped of his fine clothing by Buhlul. This theme of clothing as opposed to nakedness is central to this chapter, as is that of generosity with regard to food. Other important motifs, repeated from earlier chapters, are the figure of Khidr and the rejection of riches.

Transmission of 'blessing' by spitting into somebody's mouth is typical in Islam, and well evidenced in Morocco.[55]

Chapter 10 Sadr al-Din the Greengrocer (Baqqal) of Farah

Sadr al-Din of Farah (in what is now south-western Afghanistan) was a very mild man, and illiterate. He was entirely lost in God, full of sorrow, and a practitioner of the discipline of 'blame' (*malamat*, deliberately incurring the blame of others). Thus, from the age of 10 to that of 30, in the town of Farah, he would sell fruit, naked, in the alleys of the bazaar. One day somebody appeared to him and told him to distribute fruit on the road to Mecca. He immediately set off with his basket of fruit and joined a caravan of pilgrims. Twice a day he would give them fruit, from this basket, without asking for money. When they reached Mecca the inhabitants were amazed at the quality of the fruit, the quantity of which never diminished. He continued distributing it during a stay of three months there. The inhabitants called the basket the 'Tray of Food' (*khwan-i qut*). Then he was ordered to go home. When he got there he was commanded to go back to Mecca. He did so, and then was told to go to Gujerat.

Sixty years passed in this way. Sadr al-Din kept travelling and distributing fruit. Then he complained that he was tired. God told him to go to Medina and then stop travelling. He was now aged 90. When he got to Medina he entrusted the famous basket to his son, Taj al-Din Muhammad, and went into retirement. Then God told him to give instruction. He instructed 1,000 people, and himself found instruction from the spirit of Ishmael and was on his back. Thirty more years elapsed. Then, in 570 AH/1174–5 CE, he died. He was buried to the north of Medina. After his death his son Taj al-Din saw him in a dream, serving people with a tray of light in his hand. He told his son to continue with his task, and explained that

he himself had been given a tray of the light of God's benevolence with which to serve deserving people. His spirit was with those of the prophets and God's friends.

Commentary

The statement that Sadr al-Din was on the back of Ishmael, as well as being instructed by him, leads one to note the connection between Ishmael and the pilgrimage to Mecca. In Islam Ishmael, as the ancestor of the Arabs, is Abraham's favoured son and thus the co-founder with him of the pilgrimage.[56] Previously, as a child, Ishmael encountered lack of water at Mecca, and discovered the famous spring of Zamzam.[57] The theme of distribution of food on the pilgrimage will be repeated later in the *History of the Uwaysis*. As an even-numbered chapter, this corresponds to the one before: the themes of nakedness and giving food are repeated, as is that of the appointment of the successor in the task of distribution.

Section iv 'Abd al-Rahim of Medina

After Sadr al-Din's death his son Taj al-Din was appointed to his father's post of elder in Medina. He gave lessons and instruction for forty years, teaching thousands of God's friends. Taj al-Din remained childless for a long time, until the birth of his son 'Abd al-Rahim. When the latter was conceived his mother, an intelligent descendant of Muhammad who had memorized the whole of the Qur'an, realized that a divine light had appeared within her. She avoided intercourse with her husband until the spirit descended into the baby in the womb. Then the baby started to make 'remembrance' with the formula 'There is no god but God; Muhammad is God's Messenger.' She apologized to her husband for breaking Islamic law by denying him intercourse for four months. Intercourse during this period, she had heard, was damaging for the child's intelligence and appearance. After the child was born he kept disappearing from his cradle at night. Angels would come and take him to heaven, bringing him back near dawn. Otherwise he would never leave the house, but would be secluded like a girl, until he reached the age of 16. Then it occurred to him to inspect the outside of his house. When he did so a beautiful woman saw him and fell at his feet with a declaration of love. He lost his temper and told her that she should not show herself to a *na-mahram*, a person whom, according to Islamic law,

one is not allowed to meet in private. Then he complained to God that he had made him sin in casting his eyes on a *na-mahram*. God replied that he would soon be put to the test.

Ten days later Khidr and 'Abd Allah Yamani came to him. He was upset, and said that as a beardless boy he was *na-mahram* to them. Khidr replied that he and 'Abd Allah were not *na-mahram* to anybody, and gave their names. He explained that 'Abd Allah was the chief of the Uwaysi elders, and that he himself was their instructor. Up to this time the spirit of Jesus had been instructing 'Abd al-Rahim in heaven. Now Khidr and 'Abd Allah had been commanded to instruct him in the phenomenal world. Accordingly, they instructed him at night for five years, and brought him to perfection. Then they told him to keep company with the Uwaysi elders. Khidr, accompanied by two dervishes, took him by night to a garden with jewel-encrusted pavilions. There a number of people with white beards were sitting. They gave him a drink, and he was overwhelmed by ecstasy. This continued for five more years. Some people learnt of 'Abd al-Rahim's activities, and slandered him as a fornicator and wine drinker. His father told them that to make accusations against God's friends is dangerous, but eventually he confronted his son with his own suspicions. 'Abd al-Rahim's accusers now had their tongues stuck to their palates, and remained in this condition for the rest of their lives. Two nights later his father followed him at midnight and saw the wondrous garden. The next day he begged his son to forgive him.

Forty years later he built a soup-kitchen (*langar*) and occupied himself with distributing soup. He did this for ten years, while instructing the Uwaysi elders. One day an elder came with forty disciples of his own. 'Abd al-Rahim went to the kitchen to prepare food. After a while the elder sent a disciple to see what their host was doing. The disciple found 'Abd al-Rahim sitting and cooking with one foot in the fire. He returned to the elder and asked for an explanation. The elder rebuked him: to reveal the secrets of God's friends is tantamount to unbelief, and shortens people's lives. Then 'Abd al-Rahim, who realized what had happened, rebuked the elder: this business had shortened 'Abd al-Rahim's life by fifteen years, and the harm done would be felt by the visitors as well. He told them that after three days news of his death would reach them, and then they would die one by one: that was the punishment for testing God's friends.

After this 'Abd al-Rahim put a black rope round his neck and

asked God to let him die without anyone seeing his genitals, since he wanted to depart from this world naked, just as he had entered it. God replied that his request was granted. Three days later the notables of Medina arrived, having heard of his death. They found him in good health, but he told them that he was now aged 65 and was about to die. Then he died. Angels bathed him, wrapped him in a shroud and put him on a bier. The bier travelled by itself for the funeral service before returning to 'Abd al-Rahim's room. Then his body vanished. Afterwards he told someone in a dream that God had dealt with him as he had with his instructor, 'Abd Allah Yamani.

Commentary

Since 'Abd al-Rahim is instructed by 'Abd Allah Yamani, the subject of the first biography, it seems that the author is bringing the first quarter of his book to a well-rounded conclusion. For the forty chapters are clearly split into two groups of twenty, and the second twenty are clearly split into two groups of ten. This section is in effect an appendix to the tenth chapter. As in Chapter 1, the action is set in Arabia.

Although 'Abd al-Rahim is not said to be on the heart or back of anyone, he receives instruction from the spirit of Jesus, and it is obvious that his story reflects the legends of Jesus and Mary in Islam, which will find echoes later in the *History of the Uwaysis*. The divine light which accompanies 'Abd al-Rahim's conception and the long wait for a child before it show a mixture of Christian traditions relating to Mary, continued in Islam, and Central Asian legends about an ancestress of Ghinggis Khan.[58] As for the story of 'Abd al-Rahim's going outside the house when in his teens and encountering a beautiful person, this too is modelled on the story of Mary in Islamic tradition.[59] The accusation of fornication made against 'Abd al-Rahim is also found in this tradition and the legends of Chinggis Khan's ancestress. In the Middle Turkic version of the *Stories of the Prophets (Qisas al-anbiya')* compiled by Nasir al-Din Rabghuzi in 1310 and much read in Central Asia, a fire falls into the mouth of someone who slanders Mary, just as 'Abd al-Rahim's accusers are struck dumb.[60] The disappearance of 'Abd al-Rahim's body parallels that of Mary's Assumption.[61] All of these elements will be repeated by Uzgani in the first of the biographies of women mystics which follow his fortieth chapter as sections or appendices (the Life of Khadima of Egypt). Uzgani also

repeats the story of a dervish improperly being sent to see what a mystic is doing and catching him performing a miracle.[62]

Now it is clear that 'Abd al-Rahim, like the female mystic whom he resembles, represents abstinence from sexual intercourse. The woman will be opposed to others in this respect. He is opposed to Chapter 11's subject, who represents marriage and plentiful sexual activity. One notes that the theme of nakedness reappears from Chapter 10, as does the setting of Medina.

Chapter 11 Baha of Balkh

Baha of Balkh (in what is now northern Afghanistan) was a descendant of Muhammad and a pious, scholarly ascetic. His knowledge was not acquired by studying with teachers, but was divinely revealed. He was an only child. His father, who had no interest in scholarship, was very rich. He wanted Baha to marry, but his son was obsessed with studying. One day Baha's father told him that study was pointless except in order to acquire riches, and he was rich already. Baha lost his temper and replied that acquiring knowledge was a religious duty. He wanted to study before marrying. Then he decided to go abroad. After he had walked for five days he found that he needed a rest, and fell asleep by the bank of a stream. In a dream he saw two men with white beards, who walked over the water without wetting their feet. They told him that his father had repented and that he should go home. Then they slit open his chest, removed his heart, washed it, put it back and sewed his chest up again. He woke up and saw them. They recited something and breathed upon his chest. After this they told him that he had acquired what he wanted, in both formal and esoteric knowledge.

Now Baha travelled back to his parents in the space of a moment, since he had obtained the skill of 'rolling up the earth' (*tayy-i ard*). That same day he had unveiled to him the spirits of the prophets, the angels, God's Throne, all of the sky and the earth, and heaven and hell. On that day he also became one of the 'chiefs' (*nuqaba'*). After a while he was given the title of 'Chief of Chiefs' (*Naqib al-nuqaba'*). Eventually he decided to marry. Then he passed through the stations and stages of the Way and reached the very end. Before the wedding his bride saw him from a distance and said to herself that he looked like a homosexual. He was aware of what she was thinking. On their wedding-night he had intercourse

with her eighty times. Next morning he apologized, explaining that this was normal in the case of men who looked like homosexuals. He became known as 'Elder Eighty-times' (Pir-i Hashtadi).

Baha would teach both formal and esoteric knowledge. He would always advise his friends to marry, so as to avoid being led by Satan into fornication. He told the story of an elder called Barsisa, who had served God for 400 years but was illiterate and ignorant. One day two brothers entrusted their sister to his care, and Satan persuaded him that she was one of the houris of paradise, sent by God as a reward for his sexual abstinence. Barsisa deflowered her and then, again at Satan's urging, killed her. Her brothers were guided to the corpse by Satan (appearing in the form of a man with a white beard) and Barsisa was duly taken to be executed. Satan duped him again (easily, since he was uneducated), falsely offering to rescue him if he renounced Islam, and so he died an unbeliever. The point of the story, Baha explained, was that Barsisa would have avoided this fate if he had been married. Baha himself would not allow bachelors near him.

For fifty years Baha lectured and gave Sufi instruction. He granted 13,000 people permission to lecture in his place and become dervishes and 'guides' (*murshids*, elders who take new disciples of their own). Then he retired from academic teaching in order to concentrate on instructing dervishes, and appointed thirteen deputies, all at his own level. After this he retired completely for twenty more years. For five months of this period he was Pole. In these five months he would meet the spirit of Seth once a day and recite the first chapter of the Qur'an with him. He explained that this was because he obtained instruction from Seth and was upon his back. Then he asked God to let him die, since he had lived for a hundred years. His death took place at Baghdad, on a Monday, in Rabi' II 525 AH/March 1131 CE. Afterwards someone saw Baha in a dream, discoursing learnedly among the angels. Baha said that God had dealt with him as he had with Abu Hanifa of Kufa (one of the founders of Islamic jurisprudence, who died in 767 CE).

Commentary

This chapter is omitted in the censored version, doubtless because of its sexual content. Since Baha was not only instructed by Seth but was also upon his back, one would expect to find significant parallels between them. Islamic tradition stresses the father–son

relationship between Adam and Seth, which is reflected here. Seth was Adam's favourite child, and a teacher, like Baha.[63] He is also the ancestor of all mankind: presumably this is reflected in the emphasis on marriage (which makes the chapter the antithesis of the preceding biography, and perhaps provides a suitable inauguration for a new series of chapters (11–20)).

One notes in particular the shamanistic story of Baha's chest being slit open and his heart taken out and replaced. This is modelled on part of Muhammad's legend. Like the equally shamanistic (but characteristically Turkic) 'breathing' which follows (and, aptly, the grant of the gift of being able to fly over the earth's surface), this theme reappears often in the *History of the Uwaysis*.

The famous story of Barsisa has been much studied by modern scholars and connected with the legends of St Antony of Egypt. Barsisa's name is of Christian, Aramaic origin, but no pre-Islamic version of the story has been discovered. It is first found in the ninth century CE, and attributed to the very beginning of the Islamic era.[64]

Chapter 12 Muhammad Baqir of Syria

Muhammad Baqir, although originally from Syria, chose exile in order to reach the rank of martyrdom, according to the saying of Muhammad that whoever dies in exile dies a martyr.[65] One day, while a child, he felt like going for a walk and finding a pleasant garden. He went outside his native city, and discovered a garden which was quite extraordinarily well equipped for pleasure. Then it vanished, and he found himself in a desert. An old man appeared and explained that he travelled round the world once a day, having no fixed abode: he was Khidr, and this was the desert of Damdama (the word means both 'destruction' and 'deception'),[66] on the frontier of India, while the garden was the garden of Iram (a legendary imitation of paradise, built near Aden and then buried in sand).[67] The point of showing the garden to Muhammad Baqir and then making it disappear was that he should realize that this world is transitory.

Khidr now told Muhammad Baqir to go to the mountain of Serendip (in Sri Lanka), on a pilgrimage to Adam's footprint. He objected that he was still a child, and moreover an exile, who consequently could not see which way to go. Khidr told him to close his eyes and open them again. He did so, and found that they were

both standing on Mount Serendip. Muhammad Baqir fasted and kept vigils for forty days. Then a white-bearded man appeared – Adam himself. He told Muhammad Baqir to go to Multan, and asked God to help him. God replied that Muhammad Baqir would give instruction, rescuing 80,000 sinners and teaching 20,000 Sufis, whom he would bring to the goal. In this task he would be helped by forty of God's messengers, the first being Adam and the last Muhammad. Adam recited Chapter 1 of the Qur'an for Muhammad Baqir and breathed on his face. Then he repeated the procedure for his chest and sides. After this he told him to go to Multan. His forty days' solitude had been the equivalent of forty years, but now he was to remain in 'solitude in the assembly' for forty more years, while instructing people and outwardly enjoying the pleasures of life. Muhammad Baqir was to be low like earth, soft like wax, sharp like iron, flowing like water, fast like the wind, hot like fire, cold like ice, supportive like the ground, light like straw, and twisting like ivy. In other words he was to be humble, amenable, sharp to God's enemies, quick to purify himself, fast in restraining his desires, hot in devotion, cold towards the lazy, patient in bearing burdens, and light in the sense of not being sluggish in serving God [the explanation of 'twisting like ivy' is given in the following section]. Muhammad Baqir now found his interior to be illuminated, and he saw all the hidden things which are revealed to God's friends. He reached the real goal. Then he turned towards Multan and arrived there in a moment.

In Multan there was a Sufi called Hashim ibn Uways, whom Khidr had told of the advent of Muhammad Baqir, the Pole of the time. The latter came to him, and Hashim and all his friends wanted the formal hand clasp by which a disciple vows allegiance to an elder. Muhammad Baqir explained that this was not customary in the Uwaysi 'path', but instruction could nonetheless be given. They made a compact (*'ahd*) of 'fraternality' (*ukhuwwat*). Muhammad Baqir did accept 20,000 people as disciples, since he had been given leave to do so, although to accept disciples is contrary to Uwaysi usage. However, he did not accept Hashim as a disciple, because he was put to shame by his extreme austerity. Muhammad Baqir busied himself with calling people to God until he had rescued 100,000 sinners [i.e. the 80,000 previously indicated plus the 20,000 to be instructed in Sufism]. Then he concentrated on giving Sufi instruction. He brought all his dervishes through the stations and stages of the Path. The 'stage of reality' (*manzil-i haqiqat*) was achieved by

1,000, while others reached only the 'greatest station' (*maqam-i a'zam*), or the 'noblest station' (*maqam-i ashraf*), or 'passing away in God' (*fana' fi Allah*), and some remained stranded on the 'journey towards God' (*sayr ila Allah*). When a newcomer arrived to be taught Muhammad Baqir would begin by looking into his interior and would instruct him. (He could revive or destroy anything just by looking at it.) Until the disciple obtained the 'unveiling of hearts' he would not give him the hand clasp.

Muhammad Baqir dressed like the scholar-jurists of Islam, but had a special hat which he would put on when angry. Once he put this on in order to kill seventy people who were drinking wine and gambling. He explained that God displayed himself to him three times a day in his attribute of power (*qudrat*) and once a day in his attribute of anger (*qahr*). In general God displayed himself to the Uwaysi elders in either one or the other of these attributes, but Muhammad Baqir, since he was instructed by all the prophets, appeared under the influence of both.

One day Muhammad Baqir gave his disciples Adam's advice about being low like earth, etc. He explained that he was giving this advice now because he was about to lose his ability to do so, on being made Pole. For the spirits of the prophets and the 'men of the unseen' had brought the vestments of Polehood. He sighed seven times, was silent for a while, and then said that he had been made Pole. He remained in this post for five years and twelve days. During this period he would poke his head out of his room every day, and everyone whom he saw would become a great friend of God. He died at the age of 65, after appointing one person in his own 'degree' (*martaba*) and making fifteen others qualify for it, so that in time they might be appointed to it in turn. He had also appointed a hundred deputies to instruct the dervishes. Muhammad Baqir himself was instructed by the spirits of forty of God's messengers, the first being Adam and the last Muhammad. He announced that he would die on the same day of the week as Muhammad, and entrusted the dervishes to the care of his disciple Qutb al-Din [whose biography follows]. He explained to the latter that after his death an elder called Nur al-Din would be Pole for one month and five days, and then it would be Qutb al-Din's turn. Then he died and was buried, on a Monday, in 560 AH/1164–5 CE, in Multan. Afterwards one of the dervishes saw Muhammad Baqir in a dream, and was told that God had given him a limitless share of his benevolence (*rahmat*).

Commentary

'Muhammad Baqir' is the name of Shiism's fifth Leader, who died about 735 CE. At the end of the following section we are told that God dealt with Muhammad Baqir of Syria and his disciple Qutb al-Din as he did with Hasan and Husayn, the second and third Leaders of the Shiites.

An obvious point of resemblance between Muhammad Baqir and Adam is that both are deprived of a wonderful garden. Muhammad Baqir imitates another of his instructors, the Prophet Muhammad, by dying on a Monday. He dies an exile, and thus obtains the rank of martyrdom, which is represented above all by Husayn. One need not expect to find further similarities, since one major theme of this chapter (alongside the obvious one of solitude, associated with forty-day retreats in Sufism), is that Muhammad Baqir, being under the influence of forty prophets, manifests different attributes. (Thus, unlike other even-numbered chapters, this one does not really form a pair with the preceding.) It is still not clear why the name of a rather unimportant Shiite leader has been chosen to designate a Sufi master who receives such remarkable privileges. One explanation might be that this leader is venerated as very learned: hence his surname 'the Splitter', i.e. 'the investigator who delves deeply'.[68]

Section 5 Qutb al-Din of Multan

One night Qutb al-Din was feeling distressed at being separated from Muhammad Baqir. The latter appeared to him in the world of inner meaning and told him that he was satisfied with him as his successor, and that in three days' time he would become Pole. He would hold this post for twelve years and eight months. Then Muhammad Baqir vanished, and his pupil concentrated on the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad. A group of people with white beards and clothes came and saluted him as Pole. In all seventy groups arrived and gave him their blessing. After becoming Pole he took his elder's precepts as the basis for his work. One of his fellow-disciples asked what was meant by the expression 'twisting like ivy', which Muhammad Baqir had learned from Adam. Qutb al-Din explained that ivy is a plant the root of which is not known, but the existence of which is evident. It aspires to rise as far as its freedom permits, and does so. The dervish must 'twist' in devotion to God, aspire to rise as far as he can, and reach his goal.

Qutb al-Din lived to the age of 80, and as Pole instructed sixty

people in the world of inner meaning. Each one of these people was in a different country. He himself had obtained instruction from Lot in the world of inner meaning and was on the back of Noah. When he died he was buried at the feet of his elder. Afterwards one of the dervishes saw both of them in a dream, walking together in paradise. They told him that God had dealt with them as he had with Hasan and Husayn (the grandsons of Muhammad).

Commentary

Qutb al-Din is obviously a 'doublet' of his teacher: they share the reward of the brothers Hasan and Husayn, and the eighty years of Qutb al-Din's life correspond to his master's eighty years of solitude.[69] As for his being instructed by Lot, it is to be noted that in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi and his followers Lot symbolizes 'the spiritual force that subdues the passions of the concupiscent soul'.[70] The statement that Qutb al-Din was on the back of Noah leads one to recall the similarities between the legendary depictions of Noah and Muhammad (who is imitated by Qutb al-Din's teacher).

Chapter 13 Sa'd al-Din Damdar of Bastam

Sa'd al-Din Damdar was born in north-eastern Iran, at Bastam. He was a farmer, and the son of a farmer. He had a fine knowledge of agriculture and was an assiduous worshipper. Sa'd al-Din tended to cut himself off from people and would not talk to them except when necessary. Thus he was called 'Silent' (Samit) and 'Breath-holder' (Damdar). One day he heard a worm asking God to prevent the feet of sinners from trampling on it and other helpless creatures. Sa'd al-Din, since he was in a state of ritual impurity, took this as a warning not to leave his house without cause and in an impure state. For twenty years after that he would spend the day farming and fasting, while keeping vigils at night. He used the 'remembrance' formula, 'There is no god but God.' Elements of the 'unseen' began to shine like stars in his heart, and he became aware of everything on the earth's surface: all the minerals and plants would tell him about themselves. He was afraid that, as an illiterate man, he was being deceived by Satan and the genies. God reassured him, but he thought that this reassurance might be coming from the genies as well. Muhammad appeared to Sa'd al-Din in a dream and told him to concentrate on him. After Sa'd

al-Din woke up he decided to go to Medina. He went outside his house and found a white camel there. He mounted it, closed his eyes, and one hour later found himself in Medina. He visited the Prophet's tomb and heard his voice tell him to come like this every day. Then he was miraculously transported back to his home.

For three years Sa'd al-Din would go to the Hijaz every day at daybreak, visting Mecca one day and Medina the next. People wondered why he was such a prosperous farmer, and suspected that he was one of God's friends. Somebody decided to spy on him, and followed him one day at dawn. He found himself in a strange place, and met an elder, who told him that they were in the Yemen and that one should not test God's friends. Fortunately Sa'd al-Din reappeared and the man was able to follow him again: in a moment he found himself at his own house. By keeping company with Sa'd al-Din in this way he became one of the great 'friends'.

Sa'd al-Din never revealed his secrets. For this reason the 'friends' also called him 'Breath-holder'. One day a voice told him to summon his neighbours to God. He did so, sometimes by preaching, sometimes by his own miraculous powers. He had seventy neighbours, and in ten days all of them became his followers. In the space of 160 days they all became numbered among the 'friends'. One day he was sitting with the harvested crops with these dervishes when a flock of birds alighted and transformed themselves into elders with white beards. He gave them a meal and they turned into birds again and flew away. One of the dervishes spoke enviously of the carefree existence of these visitors, but Sa'd al-Din said that the real man is he who gives hospitality, not he who receives it. The visitors needed the grain on the ground. He himself had been one of them for years, but enjoyed his present life more. For agriculture had an inner meaning: performing one's duties towards God, so as to reap the reward in the next world.

As regards giving instruction, Sa'd al-Din did not teach any more than these seventy people, but they all became friends of God. He himself had been instructed by the spirit of Muhammad, but was on the back of Seth. One day he went on a journey to the 'world of sovereignty' and to heaven and hell. He started to conspire with the latter: he would draw in his beath in such a way that all the flames would die down and the damned would all escape. God intervened to stop this, and Sa'd al-Din begged to be forgiven. When he returned to his friends he announced his imminent death. He was

now aged seventy. Some sweat appeared on his brow. He explained that whoever tasted a drop would have a friend of God begotten from his loins. They all drank, some one or two drops, some as many as twenty. Then he died. That night they all saw him on a jewelled throne, with 300 people sitting round. Sa'd al-Din explained that these were the children born from the sweat, now revealed in the world of spirituality. God had dealt with him as he had with Abraham.

Commentary

Sa'd al-Din, being on the back of Seth, resembles him by having plenty of spiritual descendants. The reason why he obtains the same reward as Abraham is presumably his hospitality, a notable feature of the patriarch in Genesis 18: 1ff. and in Islam.[71] One notes that just as the previous chapter had one leading Sufi theme (solitude), so this chapter also has one: silence (alongside the 'external' theme of agriculture). Other important motifs are: the figure of Muhammad, Mecca, Medina and testing God's friends.

Chapter 14 Muhammad Sadiq of Alma-Ata

Muhammad Sadiq of Alma-Ata (the capital of Kazakhstan) was an outstanding commentator of the Qur'an. When he was born the sun stopped and the moon glowed red. His father was a ruler, and consulted wise men, astrologers and mystics. A Sufi explained that the child would be both a friend of God and a scholar. The sun symbolized external knowledge, the moon esoteric science. He himself had seen Muhammad in a dream, prophesying the child's greatness and naming him 'Muhammad Sadiq'. The child grew up, reciting verses of the Qur'an from the cradle and using the remembrance formula 'There is no god but God.' He would go into ecstasy, reciting mysterious expressions to himself, which nobody had ever heard. When he reached the age of five he went to a Qur'an-school, and astonished the teacher with his command of exegesis. He explained that he had come just to learn how to recite the Qur'an. After twelve months and five days he had a complete command of the holy book, and went to a college, which he attended for another year. Then, during one of the nights of Ramadan, as he slept, a cup of sherbet was brought to him from the world of the unseen. The next day he found his teacher to be far inferior to himself. Muhammad Sadiq was now aged seven, and

had mastered all the formal sciences. He taught exegesis, Tradition and jurisprudence, and lived an extremely pious life until thirty years had passed. During this time he kept company with Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi (a leading member of the Uwaysi hierarchy, who reappears later in the *History of the Uwaysis*) and Khidr every night, and travelled with the 'men of the unseen' in the world of inner meaning. By the time he reached puberty he had made scholars of 100 people.

God now ordered Muhammad Sadiq to take disciples in Sufism. He felt unworthy, but Khidr told him to obey. At that time two elders were dispensing guidance in that city. They were immediately deprived of their position and forgot their daily litany. Guessing what had happened, they came to Muhammad Sadiq and became his disciples. He taught them the text of the 'sermon of discipleship' (*khutba-yi iradat*) which he had learnt from Khidr. Then he wondered if he had abandoned the Uwaysis by taking disciples. Khidr told him that on the Day of Resurrection the Uwaysis and the other Sufis would all claim him as their own, and that God would declare him to be one of the hidden friends. After a week 40,000 people had become disciples of Muhammad Sadiq, and he busied himself with instructing an ever-increasing number of dervishes. Eventually a register was made, with 125,000 names. The first was that of 'Uthman of Maturid (a district of Samarqand), the last that of Sa'd al-Din Qattal. These activities occupied him for twenty-five years.

Muhammad Sadiq built one lodge, which contained 200 hospices and in the middle had a hermitage for the elder himself. Sometimes a thousand animals would be brought every day as offerings, but he would never keep them. One day one of the dervishes who worked as a servant in the lodge suggested that some of these offerings might be kept in reserve. Muhammad Sadiq lost his temper and expelled him. After some days that dervish came to the elder's deputy ('Uthman) and begged to be forgiven. They went together to Muhammad Sadiq, who lost his temper again. He heaved a sigh, and fire leapt from his mouth, burning both dervishes up. Then he announced that this had lost him thirty years of his life, and he was about to die. He told all his disciples that if God gave them the power to kill with their breath they should not follow his example. For now he had sawn off the roots of his own tree and would leave the world with no fruit. He went into ecstasy for a long time, chanting 'God is my Lord' to himself.

These were his last words. After that he prostrated himself and died. He was instructed by the spirit of 'Ali and was on the back of George, a messenger of God. He died on a Friday, in the last ten days of Ramadan, in Alma-Ata. Afterwards someone saw him in a dream, riding a white horse and wearing a turban and fine clothes, with a number of companions. Muhammad Sadiq said that he was 100,000 times better off than when alive, and that God had given him 5,000 blessed people to instruct in the world of spirituality, who had not been favoured with his teaching in the phenomenal world.

Commentary

George, upon whose back Muhammad Sadiq was, is the St George of Christianity, a well-known fertility figure of great interest for the history of religions. He is a reincarnation of a Greek mythological hero, Bellerophon, who symbolizes the sun, scattering night (cf. the phenomena accompanying Muhammad Sadiq's birth). In Islamic legend when George is martyred the sun vanishes, only to reappear when he is resurrected. In Islam he is also connected, and sometimes identified, with Khidr and Elijah.[72]

It is fitting that Muhammad Sadiq should be instructed by 'Ali, the first Leader of the Shiites, who represents inner illumination and is famous for his mastery of Qur'anic exegesis. Thus Muhammad Sadiq, as a great commentator on the Qur'an, is given a cup during one of the nights of Ramadan and dies in the last ten days of the same month: this reflects uncertainty about the exact date of the night in which the Qur'an was sent down; pious Muslims believe that it could be any one of the odd-numbered nights in the last third of Ramadan.[73]

One notes again the portrayal of Sufi organization: as before, the lodge (*khanaqah*) contains a number of hospices (*zawiyas*) and a hermitage (*sawma'a*) in the middle for the elder alone. The insistence on redistributing all offerings within twenty-four hours and not keeping reserves of wealth is a classic Sufi theme.[74]

This chapter forms a pair with the preceding: Chapter 13 has Muhammad as the instructor, and in it Sa'd al-Din restrains his breath and has valuable descendants, while Muhammad Sadiq has 'Ali, the interpreter of Muhammad's revelation, as his instructor in Qur'anic exegesis, and fails to restrain his breath, so that he leaves the world 'without fruit'.

Chapter 15 Naji of Bukhara

Naji of Bukhara was a poor man with four sons and six daughters. He worked as a hired labourer and spent his nights in worship. One day a voice told him to put stones in a pot and cook them opposite the bazaar: perhaps, with the help of God's power, they would be transformed into sheep's heads. This happened, and his new trade of selling cooked food kept him busy for six years, as he accumulated a vast amount of wealth. His daughters married. He and his wife went into their store-house and saw that they had acquired goods of all kinds. Naji was upset to find himself so rich, and built a mosque, a bridge and a soup-kitchen (*langar*). His wealth still kept increasing.

Now Naji's wife encouraged him to become an elder and take disciples. He built a lodge and invited people to come for a meal. There assembled 10,000 people. Among them two Uwaysi elders were present, and 200 'men of the unseen', along with 1,000 angels. Naji gave fine clothes to all of the 10,000. They all recited Chapter 1 of the Qur'an for him, and he felt that he was undergoing a transformation. After the guests had left he found several dervishes in one of the hospices of the lodge. One of them recited something and breathed on him. Naji fell unconscious. The dervishes slit his chest and removed, washed and replaced the organs within. They they recited something else and breathed on him again. He came to, and they told him to exercise the functions of an elder and look after disciples. He explained that he was illiterate. They replied that from among the 'men of the unseen' the 'pegs' (*awtad*) had been delegated to assist him. Moreover, Khidr and Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi would also help. Then they taught him how to travel the Sufi Path and reach the 'stage of reality'. After this they told him to look at the sky. He saw everything in the sky and on the face of the earth. Then his visitors, now identified as angels, vanished. Naji now looked into his wife's interior, and instantly brought her to perfection. After a few days a voice told him to sit on his prayer-rug and direct his spiritual concentration towards the local king. He did so, appearing to him in a dream and urging him to repent. The king came to him, became his disciple, and proclaimed to his subjects that they should come as well. That day Naji acquired 7,000 disciples. He busied himself with instructing them and distributing sheep's heads to them. Fifty years passed. He did not accept any more disciples.

One day a dervish came from Khwarazm to test him. Naji realized what his visitor was trying to do before he even came in, and knotted the cord of his robe. The dervish's ability to test Naji and make progress on the Way was suspended for seven years. Another dervish came in the hope of becoming Naji's disciple. Naji deliberately performed his ablutions in a ritually incorrect manner, creating doubt in the dervish's mind. Then Naji flicked a drop of water on to his visitor's face. The dervish fell unconscious, and had a vision of the Resurrection, with Naji bringing people into paradise. When he came to he became one of Naji's disciples [this contradicts the statement above that he did not accept any more].

Naji lived to the age of eighty and a half years, and received instruction from the interior of Khidr, while being on the back of Idris, a messenger of God. One day he and his wife looked in the store-house again. They found that their wealth was almost exhausted. Naji concluded that he was about to die, but his wife rightly deduced that he was about to become Pole. The other Poles brought the vestments, and Naji was duly appointed. Then he saluted his wife as his elder, whose endeavours had brought him to this rank. She told him that he would live for thirty-two more days, the number of dirhams now left in the store-house. In these thirty-two days he brought eleven people to the degree of 'friend of God'. On the day of his death he told the king that he wanted to be in his wife's arms in the next world as he had in this. Then he and his wife died in each other's arms and were buried side by side. Afterwards someone saw them in a dream, on a bed, resting and embracing. Naji said that God had granted him peace on the marriage-bed. His death took place on a Thursday, in 480 AH/1087–8 CE, at Bukhara.

Commentary

Naji, as a working man, is aptly put on the back of Idris, a legendary prophet in Islam, who is associated with various useful arts and thus a patron of artisans' guilds. Idris is sometimes identified with the St George of the preceding chapter or Khidr and Elijah, but most often with Enoch.[75] As in the case of St George, various aspects of his legend show him to be a solar figure: he lives for 365 years on earth, before moving to heaven (at sunset), and is linked with the angel of the sun. Like St George, he is immortal.[76] This chapter is also linked with the preceding by the presence of Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi alongside Khidr, whose 'interior'

instructs Muhammad Sadiq. An additional link is provided by the motif of the redistribution of wealth. Here the subject of fertility is appropriately connected with that of marriage. Yet another link is the contrast between the educated Muhammad Sadiq and the uneducated Naji. Chapter 15 also seems to correspond to Chapter 5: an illiterate is given knowledge and is close to a king. Parallels of this kind, between chapters which occupy the same position in a series of ten, often recur in the *History of the Uwaysis*.

Chapter 16 'Abd al-Rahim of Sistan

'Abd al-Rahim of Sistan (an area in eastern Iran and western Afghanistan) was an enraptured man, cut off from people, even his parents, who were upset by this. As a child he was always crying. His father took him to see a doctor, who explained that this was caused by 'Abd al-Rahim's love for God. Then 'Abd al-Rahim ran off into the desert, pursued by his father. They reached a mountain, and 'Abd al-Rahim flew up like a falcon, alighted on its summit and vanished. At the time he was aged nine. Now he lived naked and alone except for wild animals and birds, in a cave on the mountainside, for twenty-five years. One day a hunter discovered him. 'Abd al-Rahim advised him that if attacked by wild animals he should say that he was a friend of his. Then the hunter was attacked by a lion and a leopard, but escaped by giving 'Abd al-Rahim's name. After returning home he suggested to his friends that they should go and see 'Abd al-Rahim. They set off to visit him, and were attacked by a dragon on the way. They gave 'Abd al-Rahim's name, and it let them pass. However, they could not find his cave and went home disappointed.

God rebuked 'Abd al-Rahim for not letting people see him. He replied that he wanted to experience the vision of God and did not want to see anybody else first. Three months passed, and then 'Abd al-Rahim experienced *tajalli-yi suri*, God's displaying himself in outward form. Ten days later came *tajalli-yi nurani*, God's displaying himself in light. Another day passed, and then came the theophanies of *dhawq* ('taste', immediate experience) and *ma'na* (inner meaning). After this God told 'Abd al-Rahim to go to people and guide them. He objected that he was naked. Two handsome people appeared and dressed him in the clothes worn in paradise. An army of lions and leopards escorted him, mounted on a lion, to the neighbourhood of Sistan's capital, Zaranj (in what is now

western Afghanistan). He dismissed his army but kept his mount as he entered the city. When he reached the main mosque he sent the lion back. It was a Friday. After the service he ascended the pulpit and declared that he had extraordinary powers, notably that of intercession for others on the Day of Judgement. Immediately, 50,000 people became his disciples. He gave instruction to 20,000 of these and they reached the goal. He refused to take on any more disciples until he had brought all 50,000 to perfection. One day he explained that he had reached his position by keeping vigils on the Night of Things Desired (*Layla al-Ragha'ib*, the eve of the first Friday in the month of Rajab, believed to be propitious for specially prescribed prayers).[77] This gives one the privilege of intercession at the Last Judgement, which otherwise belongs to Muhammad alone.

'Abd al-Rahim had the habit of saying, in Arabic, 'I am other than I' (*ana ghayri*). Once one of the dervishes asked what this meant. 'Abd al-Rahim replied that whoever was 'substituted' (*budala'*) and enraptured understood. The questioner was not satisfied. 'Abd al-Rahim then changed his appearance seventy times, making *tabdil* (substitution) of his outward form (both of his clothes and his body). Then he explained that this was the outward meaning of 'I am other than I', but the inner meaning would be revealed another day. On another occasion he happened to be fasting, and ten dervishes invited him to their houses for the breaking of the fast. He appeared in all ten houses at the same time, and subsequently explained that he was everywhere: that was why he was called 'substituted'.

After forty more years had passed 'Abd al-Rahim went for a walk outside the city and stopped to worship for a long time. Some dervishes had followed him, and one of them heard him ask God to grant him the same humiliation as that which he had given to Khidr. Then 'Abd al-Rahim explained to the disciple that Khidr had been humiliated by being deprived of death, which was part of Muhammad's exemplary practice. He also explained that he was praying on that spot because ten of God's messengers had been told of their missions there and they had had all their prayers answered. Three days later, however, he was told to go back to his cave and die there. In the cave he found the lion which had carried him and they spent a year together. In this period he put on the clothing of 'being substituted' (*budala'i*: here presumably is meant the clothing typical of the enraptured mystic who lives in a state of

near-nakedness). At the end of it God told him that now, after seventy-five years of life, he was about to join him. 'Abd al-Rahim said he had already found 'conjunction' (*wisal*). God replied that the obstacle of the body had to be removed. 'Abd al-Rahim sent the lion to the city to summon the dervishes for his funeral. When they came he told them to visit his shrine every year, in order to have their problems solved. Then he died and was buried there. That night one of the dervishes saw him in a dream, riding on a lion. 'Abd al-Rahim said that God had dealt with him as he had with Ishmael, the Sacrificial Victim (Dhabih) of God, upon whose heart he was. This happened in 580 AH/1184–5 CE. The dervishes, and other people as well, would come and present their problems facing the cave, and would hear the answers from it. The sick would also come to be cured, and a hand would come out from the cave to rub and heal the afflicted part of the body. This continued for 200 years.

Commentary

'Abd al-Rahim, being on the heart of Ishmael, resembles him symbolically, not externally. In Islam it is Ishmael, not Isaac, whom Abraham tries to sacrifice: thus he is called God's 'Sacrificial Victim'. So 'Abd al-Rahim's father loses his son to God. Just as in Islamic tradition Ishmael is abandoned to the desert, 'Abd al-Rahim finds himself in the wilderness.[78]

This chapter echoes a theme of two previous ones: immortality, which has been given to Khidr, George and Idris. 'Abd al-Rahim, in spite of his physical death, obtains immortality before it, by joining God, and after it, by his posthumous activities, which resemble those attributed to a dead holy man in sixteenth-century East Turkistan, who supposedly gave replies to requests for advice through a hole in his tomb.[79]

'Abd al-Rahim's biography also repeats another theme encountered above: the enraptured mystic who lives in destitution and nakedness or near-nakedness, and is called 'substituted' (*budala'*), a term which gives rise to word-play and Sufi exegesis.[80] The motifs of familiarity with animals, who are subjected to the mystic, and riding on lions are classic in Christian and Islamic religious biography.[81]

Section vi The dervish who lost his falcon

Once a dervish lost a falcon which he had trained to hunt extremely well. Then he was surrounded by wild beasts, which he fought off. Depressed, he thought of giving up falcon-rearing and going back to his previous calling, agriculture. God encouraged him to try to get his falcon back, and after a month he succeeded. In doing so, however, he wore out his Arab horse. The point of the story, explains the author, is that one must treat one's horse properly, so that one's falcon will catch its prey. One must use this world in such a way as to be successful in finding the next world, and thus the ultimate goal: the vision of God.

Commentary

This section considers a common problem in Christianity and Islam. From one standpoint both religions preach that this world and the body are good, since they have been created and well-ordered by God. On the other hand both religions have inherited the Manichaean legacy, according to which the world and the flesh are essentially evil. The problem is surmounted by teaching that both the body and the world are to be used as a mount, enabling the spirit or higher soul (here represented by the falcon) to reach its goal. This section is connected with the preceding chapter (to which it is an appendix) by the theme of the vision of God, as well as by the figure of the hunter.

Chapter 17 Shams al-Din the Killer (Qattal) of Uzgen

Shams al-Din ('Sun of the Religion') was a Turk and an excellent farmer and archer, who used to spend his nights in secret devotion. He would adopt orphans, and had gathered together 150 of these. In order to feed them he would hunt and kill many wild animals, giving the surplus to the poor. Thus he was called 'the Killer' (Qattal). Some people criticized him for this, saying that all animals praised God, but he insisted on going on another hunting-trip. Then a deer reproached him and urged him to repent. Shams al-Din was very upset, and retired to the mountainside, where he lived as a solitary hermit for ten years.

One day Shams al-Din was overcome by sleep, and a white-bearded elder appeared to him and identified himself as Khidr. He told Shams al-Din that he had indeed sinned grievously,

but would fare well in the end. Shams al-Din continued his ascetic life for another fifteen years, and then Khidr reappeared. He explained to Shams al-Din that someone with his name ('Sun of the Religion') must endure much austerity, so that he may grant light to others. Shams al-Din objected that he could not produce light in his own heart, let alone illuminate other people. Khidr said that this was not a problem: everything which existed was God, giving out light, and Shams al-Din did not exist as an obstacle. Shams al-Din said that he needed an instructor. Khidr replied that he already had one: Joseph, who was already engaged in instructing him. Shams al-Din wondered what he had in common with Joseph. Surely there had to be some correspondence between instructor and disciple? Khidr said that this was indeed necessary: it lay in the afflictions which he and Joseph endured. He should wait four months longer, after which he would receive permission to give guidance. Then he would have to go to a city.

After four months God displayed himself to Shams al-Din in his attribute of anger (*qahr*). A moment later Khidr explained that this had to happen in the wilderness. If it had happened in a city many people would have been killed. Then they went together to the city of Uzgen. Shams al-Din found the people there to be disinclined to piety. He was joined by a couple of relatives and four of the orphans whom he had adopted. By looking at them he produced strange changes in them. However, after a month they and Shams al-Din had persuaded only twelve people to repent. Shams al-Din now became angry, and his opponents were immediately killed. After this people gave him the title 'Elder' (Shaykh), while continuing to call him 'the Killer'. He acquired many disciples, and would appear to them in different forms. After two years all the people of Uzgen had become pious Muslims. Then indeed he deserved his name 'Sun of the Religion', since he brought splendour to Islam. But although he found disciples, he was not able to instruct them, because he would lose his temper at the slightest error, and elders have to be patient. He said that he was very pained by this. Someone told him that the people with whom he lost his temper must also be in pain. He agreed, but said that since dervishes are identical with one another their pains are also shared.

Commentary

The commentary on this chapter has been combined with that

following the next section, which constitutes an appendix to it.

Section vii The unbelievers' attacks on Uzgen

One day somebody told Shams al-Din that an army of unbelievers had come to attack the city. He set off, angered, and killed many of them. Now all the people of Uzgen became his disciples. After some time he announced that twelve days later another army would come. He would be martyred and the city would be destroyed. Afterwards, however, it would prosper. This duly happened, but not before he had killed 100,000 unbelievers. Subsequently someone saw him in a dream, seated at the head of the martyrs. Shams al-Din explained that he had been granted precedence among them because he had reached many 'degrees' other than that of martyrdom. Moreover, in the outer world nobody had given him a bad name. God had dealt with him as he had with the martyrs of Kerbela and with the prophet upon whose back he was: the twelfth child of Adam. In addition God had bestowed upon him the degree of 'the friends of paradise' (*yaran-i bihishti*).

Commentary

It is not clear who is intended as the 'twelfth child of Adam', on whose back Shams al-Din was. This might be Japheth, as the third son of Noah, who represented the ninth generation after Adam. Japheth is the ancestor of the Turks, and usually favourably mentioned in Islam.[82] Shams al-Din, as a Turk, is typically violent: this is how the Turks are generally characterized by Muslims. But perhaps the author is following some different genealogical schema. Noah, in the Qur'an, begins a series of prophets who bring punishment to wicked people. He is followed by the Arabian prophets Hud and Salih in this respect. One notes the solar element already discerned in the preceding group of biographies, as well as the contrast between this chapter and the one before it; they are linked by the figure of the hunter. This chapter, numbered 17 (and seventh in a series of ten), evidently corresponds to Chapter 7, the biography of Satuq Bughra Khan: both subjects are Turks, hunters and warriors on the frontier of Islam, and are instructed by an animal.

Appropriately, the following section is number vii! It is doubtful whether the narrative reflects a real attack on Uzgen (as this

passage's peculiar position as a separate section might suggest). Although no date is given, the chapter and the section come after the biography of a mystic presented as dying in 1184–5, and before that of one who is shown as disappearing in 1194. In 1141 the area fell to the non-Muslim Karakhitay conquerors, and in the next century to the Mongols. However, Uzgen does not seem to have been destroyed in this period. Some twelfth-century buildings have been preserved.[83]

Chapter 18 Shihab al-Din of Herat

Shihab al-Din of Herat was a descendant of Muhammad. His father, who was called Sharif Barakat, had come to Herat for trade and married a woman who was also descended from Muhammad. He died three months before Shihab al-Din's birth. Some people wanted to give the child his father's name, but found 'Shihab al-Din' written on his right shoulder. The mother's father was a friend of God, and insisted on 'Shihab al-Din'. He told his daughter that the child would work many wonders. On hearing this the child frowned. His grandfather said that his name meant 'Flame of the Religion', and that a flame brought grace and light: he should not be annoyed. That day the child did not d.ink any milk until the evening and kept looking at the sky. After a year he explained that he had frowned because it was wrong to reveal secrets. He had kept looking at the sky because angels were appearing there, telling him to make his anger subside, and he was contemplating everything in the heavens. His mother repeated all this to her father, who told someone else. The child became famous throughout the city, and a number of notables set out to visit him. Shihab al-Din realized that they were on their way and told his mother to make some dough. Then he made the oven cook bread for their guests without any visible fire. Afterwards he wanted to go into exile, but his mother pointed out that he could not hide his friendship with God: it would illuminate the whole world.

When Shihab al-Din reached the age of 7 he started to frequent the 'men of the unseen'. He persuaded his mother to remarry, and set off for Mecca, saying he would be back in twelve years. He reached Syria, and joined the pilgrims' caravan. In it he met a friend of God called 'Umar, who insisted on serving him. They embarked on a ship, which after ten days was attacked by a water-dragon. 'Umar begged Shihab al-Din to intervene, and he

did so, identifying himself and ordering the water-dragon not to cause trouble. It apologized and went away. The next day a sea-serpent appeared, ten times as large. It explained that it had been commanded to kill the water-dragon as a punishment for its impoliteness, and asked Shihab al-Din for permission to proceed. He replied that he could not interfere with God's commands, but if his permission was needed he wanted nothing done. Eventually the water-dragon's life was spared. Some days later the pilgrims landed and continued their journey. Then they lost their way and found themselves without water or provisions. 'Umar reproached Shihab al-Din for not doing anything about this, but he replied that the area had prayed for years that one of God's friends should step into it. Then they found their way again. 'Umar wanted to become Shihab al-Din's disciple, but Shihab al-Din told him to wait until he himself had reached the age of puberty. They arrived in Mecca and performed the pilgrimage. Thanks to Shihab al-Din's prayers the pilgrimages of 70,000 people were accepted by God. He himself was honoured with the rare privilege of circling the Ka'ba when nobody else was present. Then he went to Medina, where Muhammad greeted him from the tomb. He stayed there for ten years, teaching exegesis and Tradition. Then he was told to go to his father's home in Syria and teach there for ten years before returning to his mother in Herat.

When Shihab al-Din finally reached his mother she had gone blind. He prayed and rubbed her eyes, and her sight was restored. 'Umar now joined him and became his disciple. After twelve days Shihab al-Din looked into 'Umar's interior, and 'Umar's 'work' rose above all seven of the heavens. Some people, hearing that 'Umar had become Shihab al-Din's disciple, were perplexed. One of them suggested that they should test Shihab al-Din, but another warned that his anger would wreck the whole world. The rest agreed, but decided to visit Shihab al-Din nonetheless. By his house there was a white poplar planted by his father, which had withered but was now green again. The visitors realized that Shihab al-Din must be one of God's friends. One of them suggested returning, in order to avoid his anger. However, they went in to see him. He recited:

> I am not I; no, I am I; I am you; no, you I am.
> I'm the rosebed of his mystery: I flower in every meadow.

They were terrified, but he said, 'Children, the prophets were

slandered; why should one of their followers not be?'

> We are the light of God made manifest through man;
> If you see us with your eyes then see God!

They all became his disciples.

One day he was talking to his dervishes about paradise, and one of them asked, 'How can hearing be like seeing?' Shihab al-Din took them to the Friday mosque. They found themselves in paradise, and enjoyed its pleasures. Then he 'removed the look of friendship with God from them'. They found themselves in the Friday mosque. He intervened again, and they found themselves in his 'dervish-house' (*darwish-khana*).

Shihab al-Din was fond of reciting these verses:

> I am the special slave of the Glorious One;
> The sphere of the heavens is beneath my foot.
> I tread on the heads of the people of the world,
> For the reason that I am the undying sun.

Once someone came from Gujerat to see Shihab al-Din, and found him performing his ablutions incorrectly. A doubt formed in his mind. Shihab al-Din flicked a drop of water on to his face. He lost consciousness and saw that the Resurrection had come. Shihab al-Din was rescuing him from hell. Then he came to and became his disciple.

Shihab al-Din lived to the age of 65, brought fifty disciples to the degree of Polehood, and himself was Pole for three years and ten days. His other disciples were innumerable. He obtained instruction from the spirit of Muhammad, and was on the heart of Seth. In 590 AH/1194 CE he disappeared from the kingdom of Herat. After a year people heard that he was performing the pilgrimage on the Feast of the Sacrifice. After the pilgrimage he died and was buried in the cemetery of al-Ma'la.

Commentary

It is not clear what is meant by the statement that Shihab al-Din was on Seth's heart. This might refer to Seth's function of teacher: Shihab al-Din teaches both exoteric and esoteric subjects. His link with Muhammad, his instructor, is far more evident: Shihab al-Din resembles the 'prophets of punishment', such as Noah (who in turn resembles Muhammad) and his successors. Here the motif of anger

connects Chapters 17 and 18 (as does the solar imagery). Like Muhammad, Shihab al-Din has an important disciple called 'Umar. Their journey on land and sea resembles that of Moses and his unnamed instructor (traditionally identified with Khidr) in the Qur'an (18: 59–81): the instructor acts oddly, and apparently wrongly, and receives ill-judged objections from his companion. The story of the visitor's being tested by improperly performed ablutions and then confronted with the mystic's role at the Resurrection has already been told above.[84]

The famous cemetery of al-Ma'la at Mecca has suffered much damage as a result of the Wahhabi movement's hostility to tombs and the veneration of the dead.[85]

Chapter 19 Diya' al-Din the Financial Expert (Sarraf) of Balkh

Diya' al-Din of Balkh was a pious and rigorous censor of morals (*muhtasib*). To begin with, however, he was the chief minister of the king of Balkh, and a fine connoisseur of jewels. One day he confounded the other financial experts by declaring that a ruby which they had been asked to value had a worm inside it: the ruby was broken, and he was found to be right. The king decided that it was regrettable that so able a man should be wasted on worldly things when he had repeatedly asked for leave to devote himself to God, and now gave him permission to go. Diya' al-Din insisted on not accepting any money from him, and set off for Mecca. He joined some travellers on a ship, which was then attacked by a water-dragon. Diya' al-Din was thrown off the ship to satisfy it. The water-dragon swallowed him, but was told by God that he should not be harmed. God explained to Diya' al-Din that the aim of all this was to purify his body of the effects of the food which he had eaten as the king's minister. He stayed inside the water-dragon for six months, before it brought him to dry land. It told him that the ship was unable to go anywhere because of the way in which those on board had behaved. Diya' al-Din appealed to God to release the ship from the whirlpool in which it was stuck, since those on board had acted as part of a divine plan concerning him. They were duly saved, and he continued his journey in their company. The party reached a spot without water or provisions. God told Diya' al-Din to strike the ground with his staff, and a spring gushed forth. When the travellers reached Mecca Diya' al-Din was immediately told to go home, since he could help the people there during his

period of 'sobriety' (*sahw*), which was limited. His companions now repented of their behaviour towards him, and at his intercession God, who had previously refused to accept their pilgrimage, now did so. Diya' al-Din returned home in just two days, and was given a glorious welcome.

That year the Oxus overflowed. Diya' al-Din had his head shaved and sent a dervish to throw his hair into the river and transmit his command that it should subside. It obeyed. On another occasion there was a drought. Diya' al-Din climbed to a high spot and prayed. The drought ended at once. Then he started to take disciples, acquiring 700 on the first day, and eventually about 30,000. Of these he instructed 1,000, while the rest continued to earn their livelihood. After this Diya' al-Din was taken away to the world of the unseen, where he joined the 'men of the unseen'. Once a week, however, he would appear to his companions. A period of twenty years passed. Then he disappeared for good. He had obtained instruction from the Pole of Poles, and was on the back of Simon.

Commentary

The Simon whom Diya' al-Din should resemble, being on his back, is Simon Peter, who is favourably regarded by Islam (and even seen as a prophet), as opposed to St Paul, whom it rejects. Presumably Diya' al-Din corresponds to Simon Peter in his proselytizing activity and the large number of his disciples. There are, of course, aspects reminiscent of the biblical story of Jonah and the whale. The theme of immortality is repeated, as in the preceding chapters. Diya' al-Din's name means 'Radiance of the Religion': thus the symbolism of light also continues. The office of Pole of Poles will be explained later.[86]

Section viii Taj al-Din Muhammad of Delhi

Diya' al-Din had appointed four deputies, and each one of them had qualified to become Pole. The most senior of them was Taj al-Din of Delhi. Before his elder disappeared for good he would direct all Sufi affairs for him, instructing suitable pupils, and was just one degree lower than Diya' al-Din. After the latter's final disappearance he took his place and followed his example, with some increases in litanies and ascetic exercises. When he succeeded his predecessor he vowed that in order to obtain the office of Pole

he would perform a great number of supererogatory acts of worship. Seven years passed, and he traversed all the mystical 'stages', acquiring knowledge of everything in the universe. One day Diya' al-Din's voice told him that he was about to become Pole. Diya' al-Din himself would be present at his deputy's investiture, but the latter would not see him, being entirely engrossed in God, the vision of whom is conditional upon obtaining the degree of Polehood. The Uwaysi elders brought the vestments of Polehood to Taj al-Din and told him to occupy the post for fifteen years. After the investiture he went to look for Diya' al-Din and searched both this world and the 'world of sovereignty'. Finally he found him among the 'men of the unseen', and asked why he had disappeared. Diya' al-Din explained that he had been present to his disciples' hearts and would stay with them in the world of inner meaning, but would not appear to them in the phenomenal world. Then he told Taj al-Din to keep coming to him at night while instructing the dervishes by day. In those fifteen years Taj al-Din instructed 300 people and looked after 15,000 disciples. He himself had obtained instruction from the spirit of 'Uthman (Muhammad's third successor), and was on the back of Isaac. After his death somebody asked him in a dream what God had done with him. He replied that there was no need to ask: what the questioner had seen and heard was enough. His death took place in Balkh, in 600 AH/1203–4 CE.[87]

Commentary

It is not clear why Taj al-Din is on the back of Isaac, a figure who is not given much attention in Islam, except to deny him the status of Abraham's intended sacrificial victim and transfer this to Ishmael.[88] Perhaps it is precisely because Isaac is such a secondary figure, following Abraham, that he is put in correspondence with Diya' al-Din's deputy. Certainly, 'Uthman, as one of the four deputies or caliphs who come after Muhammad, is an appropriate instructor for Taj al-Din, as one of Diya' al-Din's four deputies. 'Uthman, like Isaac and Taj al-Din, is a man of straightforward piety. The four deputies who qualify to become Pole have an elder who is instructed by the Pole of Poles: this reflects the hierarchy of Poles described and connected with Muhammad's successors at the end of the book.[89] One notes that the themes of immortality and the vision of God continue to be repeated.

Chapter 20 Shaqiq of Shiraz

Shaqiq of Shiraz (in southern Iran) was an expert in the 'strange' sciences: alchemy, natural magic, *jafr* (divination from the letters of the alphabet, a Shiite discipline), etc. He was orphaned when young, and worked as an attendant in a bath-house. One day somebody came to the bath-house and explained that the name 'Shaqiq' meant 'cutter', and whoever held it would cut the veil of the unseen, mastering all the formal sciences with his inner power. Then he offered to teach Shaqiq the 'strange sciences'. Shaqiq accepted, abandoned his job, and studied with his teacher for six years, until the latter died. Then he spent his time on the science of *jafr*. One day he went for a walk, depressed. He happened to pass by his teacher's grave, and stopped to recite the Qur'an. Then it occurred to him that his present studies were pointless, and he should prepare for the next world. A voice told him that he was right. He went to a college and quickly mastered the religious sciences of Islam, which he then taught for ten years. After that he again went for a walk. After visiting his teacher's tomb he was going home when a voice came from the ground, asking for his prayers. A man in an unmarked grave appeared to Shaqiq in the world of inner meaning and explained that he was a scholar, called Muhammad Habib, who had died 150 years earlier. He exhorted Shaqiq to avoid following his own example: he had failed to combine his knowledge with pious activity, and one had to have both. Shaqiq took his advice, living the life of an ascetic and continuing to teach. After six months he found that his studies were suffering, and complained to God. An elder came to him and explained that now God would grant him knowledge by way of 'unveiling'. He gave Shaqiq two glassfuls of water to drink, and Shaqiq found a brightness in his heart. Then the elder told him that the first glassful was formal scholarship and the second esoteric knowledge. Shaqiq now immediately obtained the 'unveiling of inner meanings' (*kashf-i ma'ani*). After this he could teach without studying. However, he devoted his efforts to mastering the 'sciences of the unseen' (*'ulum-i ghaybiyya*), and quickly reached such a degree that the whole universe was revealed to him.

Fifty years passed, but Shaqiq kept all this secret. Then, one Friday when he was walking past the bazaar to the communal worship, every stone, clod of earth and piece of wood there started

paying homage to him. The people of Shiraz were angered, and realized that he must be a friend of God. He entered the Friday mosque, and the pulpit advanced twelve paces to welcome him. All present became his disciples. Twelve days later a voice told him that he had brought 12,000 people to salvation.

His method in dealing with people who came to him to become his disciples was to order them to engage in a period of formal study first, before the hand clasp of initiation. One day a dervish asked why. Shaqiq explained that ignorant Sufis were dangerous, and told a story to illustrate his point. Once an ignorant dervish reached the degree of the 'unveiling of the genies' (*kashf-i jinn*) and was deceived by it. He did not realize that the genies had got a hold on him, and thought that he was enjoying the pleasures of paradise. So he decided that he no longer needed his elder, and would set up as an elder himself. The disciples whom he acquired were in fact genies in human form. His elder sent a dervish to summon him, but he refused to come. Another dervish was sent with the message that the would-be elder had indeed qualified for independence, but should come to receive formal permission. This ruse succeeded. Then the real elder told the impostor to say, 'Glory be to God!' and utter his elder's name when he and his disciples were enjoying the pleasures of paradise: after that he would see some extraordinary things. The impostor followed this advice, and his disciples fled, while the gardens of paradise were transformed into ruins. He came out into the middle of a desert. Now he repented, and concentrated on his elder's 'interior'. He fell asleep, and his elder appeared to him in a dream. The elder traced a path for his disciple, and when the latter woke up he was able to find his way to him and obtain forgiveness. Shaqiq pointed out that if this dervish had not been ignorant he would not have been deceived. He himself would write his disciples' names down and inspect their mystical progress, following them on the Way with the help of the light of 'friendship with God'. If he saw something amiss he would give an angry warning.

Thirty-two years passed, and then Khidr, Elijah and Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi came to see Shaqiq. They told him that he was to be promoted to Pole, and that until God's friends reached this degree their friendship with God was not confirmed. Elders and 'friends' without number came and invested Shaqiq, who became enraptured. He went outside his cell, and his glance fell on a child called Nizam al-Din, who had just become his disciple. The child

immediately reached the goal. Shaqiq explained to his most senior disciples that they would have to obey Nizam al-Din and recognize him as his successor and deputy, since he himself was about to die. One dervish objected that Nizam al-Din was too young. Shaqiq told this man to help Nizam al-Din, and then took both of them under his wing, giving them instruction during the ten days of his Polehood. At the end of the ten days he summoned his disciples and appointed Nizam al-Din as his successor and deputy. He gave him his own turban, patched frock and staff and told him to wear these clothes when instructing the dervishes and have recourse to the staff when faced with a problem. Then he died, in Rajab 605 AH/January–February 1209 CE, aged 99.[90] He had acquired 15,000 disciples, some of whom he had brought to the degree of friendship with God, while to the others he had also given some instruction. He appointed ten deputies and had one Pole to take his place. Shaqiq himself had obtained instruction from the interior of Khidr, but was on the heart of Lot. After his death he told someone in a dream that God had granted him the vision of himself, the most glorious of gifts.

Commentary

One suspects that the name 'Shaqiq' has been suggested by the famous mystic Shaqiq of Balkh (d. 810), the location of the last two biographies. Shaqiq is on the heart of Lot, and so one would not expect external resemblances. As we have seen above, Lot symbolizes spiritual energy, subduing the flesh.[91]

This chapter, as an even-numbered one, forms a pair with Chapter 19: they both have the theme of immortality, and particularly Uwaysi instructors. Chapter 20 (together with the section which is its appendix) also ends a series of twenty chapters and a sub-series of ten, and recapitulates much of what has gone before, notably: immortality, transforming with a glance and (as a fitting conclusion) the vision of God.

Section ix Nizam al-Din the Deputy of Shiraz

Nizam al-Din of Shiraz, Shaqiq's chief deputy, had already reached the degree of Polehood and begun to instruct dervishes in his master's lifetime. After Shaqiq's death he succeeded him as elder and took over the instruction of all his dervishes. He made 1,000 of these his disciples, and demonstrated impressive miraculous

powers, such as the ability to pick fruit from a withered tree and to hear words spoken by minerals. One day a voice told him to go to the Ka'ba in the external world, in spite of the fact that in the world of inner meaning he circled it every day. He set off with 100 dervishes, not taking any mounts or provisions, and telling his companions to abandon their doubts and put their trust in God. Every night a table-cloth came down, opened up and revealed a variety of dishes, and every day lions and leopards would come for the dervishes to ride. After three days those animals were dismissed, in order to obtain the reward for performing the pilgrimage on foot. When they reached Mecca Nizam al-Din died, after performing six of the prescribed seven circuits of the Ka'ba. His body was taken to Medina and buried in the Baqi' cemetery.[92]

Commentary

This section, as an appendix to Chapter 20, is in parallel to Section viii, the appendix to Chapter 19: thus the principal characteristic of Nizam al-Din is that he is a deputy and successor. The section also closes the second quarter of the book's coverage of male mystics: accordingly it corresponds to Section iv, which closes the first quarter, and, like that section, ends in Medina.

The story about the table-cloth coming down from heaven is obviously inspired by the story about this happening to Jesus in the Qur'an (5: 112ff). Scholars have seen the Qur'anic narrative as reflecting the Gospels' account of the Last Supper.[93]

'Point' 2

Muhammad is the reason for the universe's creation. This is shown by the Tradition in which God speaks in the first person to the Prophet, saying, 'If it were not for you I should not have created the universe.'[94] The Sufis call Muhammad 'the limited existence' (*wujud-i muqayyad*), which is included within 'absolute existence' (*wujud-i mutlaq*, i.e. God) and is also termed 'the greater world' (*'alam-i kubra*). This greater world is the destination (*maqsid*, 'point' of arrival) of all the mystics, but only one in a thousand reaches it. Every part of our visible world is connected with that greater one. Some say that that 'limited existence' is neither identical with nor other than absolute existence, because absolute existence has its effect in every form of existence, but most especially that of Muhammad. If someone says that this 'limited existence' is neither

identical with God nor other than God, that is perfectly reasonable.

Commentary

This 'point' is placed just before the biography of Uways, which inaugurates the second series of twenty chapters. Its position here is justified not only by Muhammad's instruction of Uways but also by the rise in devotion to the Prophet and exaltation of him in Islam from around 1200 CE: after Uways's biography the book continues with the chronological progression from about this date. The doctrine of the Muhammadan Logos as the reason for creation and the principal means of God's self-manifestation is particularly important in Ibn 'Arabi's work, where the metaphysical and ontological development could well be summarized by what is said by Uzgani here.

Chapter 21 Uways Qarani

Uways Qarani, who was instructed by Muhammad himself, was born on Monday 27 Rajab. That night his parents' house was miraculously lit up by his beauty. As soon as he was born he said, 'There is no god but God; Muhammad is God's Messenger.' His parents were astonished, since Muhammad's prophetic mission had not yet begun. Some say that Uways was born before Muhammad, some at the same time, and some five years later. This last version is right. For three years he said nothing else. One day his father asked him to explain how he knew that what he said was true. Uways replied that 600 years before, in the world of spirituality, he had heard the angels say this. They had explained Muhammad's pre-eminent position to him. Moreover, Uways had been aware of God's telling Gabriel to take the Muhammadan Light (*Nur-i Muhammadi*) round the world at night and put it in the loins of whoever was awake. Gabriel found only 'Abd Allah, Muhammad's father. At that time Uways's spirit was travelling together with Muhammad's, and loved it. Uways's father (whose name was Suhayl) was very upset, and told his wife (called Na'ima) that the boy should be killed. She persuaded her husband to desist, and after this he died. Na'ima was extremely beautiful and now had lots of suitors, but refused to remarry, and accepted Islam even before Muhammad's mission became public. Thus Uways could not leave her, even to go and see Muhammad, and turned to camel-herding in order to support her and avoid people.

Fifty years passed, during which Uways worked and engaged in devotion. Some have said that Uways did not see Muhammad for the reason just mentioned, but there were other, more apparent reasons. Uways was satisfied with the real familiarity of their spirits in the world of spirituality. Moreover, he considered himself too unworthy to visit Muhammad in person. In his own mystical progress he could rely upon the power of Muhammad's prophethood, in such a way that distance meant nothing. Thus Muhammad would say, 'I perceive the breath of the Beneficent from the direction of the Yemen.' Also, God had hidden Uways from people, so that he was not even seen by his own instructor in this world. At the Resurrection God will hide Uways among 70,000 angels, all of whom will resemble him.

After fifty-two years, during which Uways was absorbed in contemplation of God's beauty, Muhammad died. According to most of the Uwaysi elders Uways's mother died on the same day. Uways learnt of Muhammad's death from the world of the unseen, and left his camels, since his mother had also died. He now spent thirty years in devotion on the Hill of the Poles (Till-i Qutbiyya). Then he went to Baghdad and spent five years in its environs. [This is anachronistic: Baghdad was not founded until the next century.] Sometimes he would show himself to a few fortunate people there. One day he went to the bank of the Euphrates with another dervish, bathed, worshipped and disappeared for good. After that nobody knew where he was, and for this reason people built tombs for him in various places, believing that he was buried there. The Uwaysi elders maintain that when he disappeared he went to Mount Lebanon, where the Poles are buried.

At that time 'Abd Allah Yamani had brought his 'work' near to perfection. A voice told him to join Uways, who was soon to die, on Mount Lebanon. 'Abd Allah duly found Uways and said that he wanted to be his disciple. Uways replied that there was no discipleship in the Uwaysi brotherhood, but they could have 'companionship' (*musahabat*), which was the same thing. So 'Abd Allah was instructed by Uways and reached the goal. He spent twenty-five years in attendance upon Uways. One day Uways took him to the Hill of the Poles and worshipped on its summit. Then he came down, and they both circled the hill seven times. After this Uways took 'Abd Allah to Maskan ('Dwelling-place'), another hill 4 parasangs away [a quarter of a parasang above].[95] Uways explained that many prophets had engaged in devotion there, and that now Khidr

did so. He himself had been assigned to this spot. The various tombs built for him were built in error, but not without reason, since God had created him in such a way that he would not have one specific identity, and his tomb should be likewise. Now they were to build his *maskan* (i.e. his real tomb). They had no tools, but a stag came and dropped its antlers in front of them. After Uways and 'Abd Allah had used these to build the tomb Uways put them back on the stag's head and it went away. Uways told 'Abd Allah that when he wanted to start bathing his body he should take Uways's staff in his hand and say, 'By the interior of Uways Qarani, and at the command of 'Abd Allah Yamani, strike the ground!' Then he commended his soul to God and died. 'Abd Allah followed his instructions, and a spring gushed forth. Two angels wrapped Uways in heavenly raiment, and 70,000 more came for the funeral service, which was led by 'Abd Allah. Then they buried him. This was sixty years after Muhammad's death [traditionally put in 632 CE].[96] 'Abd Allah stayed by the grave for three days, and then Uways told him to go home. He did so, and died fifty years later. [This does not agree with the chronology of 'Abd Allah's life given in Chapter 1.]

Commentary

With this biography the author begins his second series of twenty chapters, and a sub-group of ten within it. Fittingly, Uways, as the eponymous founder of the Uwaysi brotherhood, precedes chapters placed in the early thirteenth century, the period when the Sufi brotherhoods really began (or when some of the first famous Sufis who had brotherhoods named after them lived). Thus Uways's biography is in parallel to the first chapter, which describes the life of 'Abd Allah Yamani. It corresponds well enough to the legend of Uways analysed above.[97]

The 27 Rajab, when Uways is presented as being born, is an important date in the Muslim calendar: that of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension. Thus the night before the 27th is celebrated with readings of the relevant stories.[98]

Chapter 22 Yasir of Istanbul

Yasir was born at Istanbul, into one of the leading families of the region. His father, who was called Murtada, was the Qadi (chief judge) of Istanbul. One day Murtada's brother came before him as

a litigant, and Murtada, not realizing why he had come, greeted him as an honoured guest. When he understood the purpose of his brother's visit he apologized profusely to the other party in the case, explaining that he had acted in ignorance. Yasir lost his temper, and pointed out that it was obvious that his uncle had come as a litigant, since otherwise he would have visited them at home. Shortly afterwards the judge was paralysed in one leg and lost the sight of an eye. Yasir was alarmed at the danger inherent in his father's profession, and decided to cut himself off from people. He told his father that he wanted to go to Mecca. It was understood that he would come back, subject to God's will. He took a loaf of bread with him, but gave it to a blind man at the city gate.

After a couple of days' journey Yasir was joined by a fox. They travelled together for five days, and then Yasir lost his way. He wandered for two more days and came to the top of a mountain. There he found six dervishes in a cave. They returned his greeting, but said nothing until it was time for them to break their fast. A table-cloth came down from the world of the unseen. They and Yasir ate, and it disappeared. Then they asked what sort of journey he was making, and observed that they had acted correctly in feeding him before the conversation. Yasir said that he thought that he had been made to lose his way in order to meet some of God's friends. They, however, explained that the real reason was that the mountain, 400 years before, had asked God to send one of his friends to tread on it. Yasir now lost consciousness and received a command to stay with them for a while. After a short time his 'work' surpassed theirs, and they would turn to him for advice, eventually calling him their elder.

One day Yasir invited the dervishes to join him in travelling to Mecca, and pointed out that travel brings the possibility of meeting leading mystics and learning from the wonders of God's creation. But they did not agree to join him, and he set off on his own. A lion appeared and carried him on its back. After seven days he reached a caravan, and the lion went away. The caravan came to the sea-shore and embarked on a ship, but Yasir chose to walk on the water. In a moment he found that he had crossed the sea. Some men with white beards appeared and told him that his fellow-travellers would take at least forty days to arrive, given a favourable wind. He should continue without them and, since he must have had a guide to cross the sea, he should expect the same guide to help him now. The white-bearded men accompanied him

for a short distance, and then all but one went back. This one explained that he was Khidr, while the others belonged to the world of the unseen. That same day Khidr and Yasir reached Mecca, and Khidr vanished, after telling Yasir that he must wait for permission to leave.

Yasir stayed at Mecca, engaged in devotion, for seven years, but now the things of the unseen were no longer revealed to him. At the end of the seven years a voice told him to go to Mount Lebanon and spend two days at the Hill of the Poles, before going to the shrine of Uways at Maskan, so that his 'work' could reach completion. He followed these instructions, but found nobody there. Then a man with a white beard called out to him. This man (evidently Uways) explained that people like himself do not appear like 'external' people. They may be invisible to the eye, but present in the world of the heart. He told Yasir to open his mouth, and poured a drink into it. Yasir at once saw everything that was in the heavens and on the earth. After this Uways told him to go home and give people guidance. With Uways's permission he stayed another month before returning to Istanbul. He found that his father had died. People were very impressed by him, and the king wanted to give him his father's post, but he refused. He acquired a number of disciples, and, at Uways's command, became an elder.

One day the spirit of Qutham ibn 'Abbas (a cousin of Muhammad believed to be buried at Samarqand) exercised an attraction upon Yasir, and he decided to go on a pilgrimage to his tomb. He set off with 170 fellow-dervishes, and after a short distance told them to take hold of his robe. Some held on to it while the rest held on to them. They were all rapidly transported to the bank of the Oxus. Yasir invoked God, Muhammad and Uways, and threw his staff on to the surface of the water. It was transformed into a bridge, and they all passed over. Then the bridge turned into a staff again. They spent three days at Qutham's tomb. The people of Istanbul and the other dervishes there knew only that Yasir and a number of disciples had disappeared. The latter returned in the space of one day. Yasir's aim in this journey was to show his disciples a marvel, encourage them in their work and display to them the degree of 'rolling up the earth'.

Yasir lived to the age of 72, and instructed and perfected thirty disciples. He himself had obtained instruction from the spirit of Uways, and was on the back of Ishmael. One night Uways appeared to him in the world of inner meaning and told him to join

him. Yasir took leave of his fellow-dervishes and the people of Istanbul. The dervishes wanted to accompany him, but he explained that it was not that sort of journey. When they were faced with difficulties they should appeal to his spirit. Then he vanished, and reached Maskan the same day. At Uways's command he prepared for his death. After he died 5,000 angels came down from heaven and buried him. This happened on a Friday in 605 AH/1208–9 CE. That night one of the dervishes saw Yasir in a dream, riding in a meadow with a number of white-bearded men. Yasir said that his disappearance from the sight of the dervishes was the same as death, because the death of dervishes is no more than being transported from one place to another.

Commentary

Yasir's being on the back of Ishmael is presumably due to the father–son relationship in his biography. (Uzgani has linked this motif to Ishmael before.)[99] He is instructed by Uways, who occupies an important place in this chapter and makes it form a pair with the preceding. The main themes are those of etiquette and being miraculously transported from one place to another. Another theme is the distastefulness of the office of judge, traditionally seen as invidious in Islam.

There is a manifest and gross anachronism: Istanbul was not conquered for Islam until 1453. It seems that the story about the cave may have been inspired by the Christian legend of the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus'. In this legend seven youths, running away from persecution, take refuge in a cave near Ephesus in western Turkey and sleep there for centuries. The legend was absorbed into the Qur'an (18: 9–26) and has been very popular in Islam (notably in East Turkistan).[100]

The shrine of Qutham ibn 'Abbas at Samarqand is an extremely important one, and ranks among the most famous holy places in the whole of Central Asia.[101]

Chapter 23 'Abd al-Rahman of Nishapur

'Abd al-Rahman of Nishapur (in north-eastern Iran) was very mild and generous. To begin with he was an extremely skilled physician, and taught medicine until the age of 30. He became very rich. One night a fire destroyed most of his property. Afterwards he fell asleep and Muhammad appeared to him in a dream. He told 'Abd

al-Rahman that this world was an accursed enemy and that he was one of his descendants. 'Abd al-Rahman should abandon his profession. When 'Abd al-Rahman woke up he repented and distributed his remaining wealth to the poor. He put on a black patched frock and a felt cap and set off for Mecca. Then it occurred to him that first he should visit the Pole of his time, one Qiyam al-Din, who also lived in Nishapur. The latter suggested that he should wait a few days, so that they could travel together. 'Abd al-Rahman stayed for two years, and made much progress, going beyond the degree of the 'journey towards God' (*sayr ila Allah*), and travelling on the 'journey in God' (*sayr fi Allah*). Then Qiyam al-Din gave him leave to depart, explaining that his purpose in stopping him from going had not been to come with him, but rather that 'Abd al-Rahman should become 'road-knowing' (*rah-shinas*) before going on the road.

After 'Abd al-Rahman left for Mecca he spent seven years and two months on the way, for various reasons. One was that he spent one year and nine months in the sea, clinging to a plank, when his ship sank because it had a sinner on board. Next he fell into a well, in which he spent two years and four months before God rescued him. Finally, he spent a year in prison, accused of theft. He considered that these tribulations were meant to purify his body of the forbidden food which he had eaten before his repentance. When he reached Mecca and had performed five circuits of the Ka'ba he was told to stay there for thirty years in order to make up for the thirty years which he had wasted on following idle desires. He obeyed, and at the end of the thirty years went to Medina. There he was commanded by Muhammad to stay for twenty years. In those twenty years he studied the Traditions and memorized 12,000 of them. After this Muhammad ordered him to go back to Nishapur, teach Tradition and spend the rest of his life there.

'Abd al-Rahman reached Nishapur in the company of 300 people, some of them dervishes. On the following Friday he delivered a sermon on the Resurrection, heaven and hell, quoting several Traditions and providing some Sufi interpretations as well. This had a great effect on his listeners, and 17,000 people became his disciples, while he acquired 5,000 pupils for academic study. Then he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Qiyam al-Din, whose voice proclaimed that the city belonged to 'Abd al-Rahman. When the people of the city heard this most of them became his disciples.

Seven years passed, and then Muhammad told 'Abd al-Rahman

to come to the Hijaz. He set off with seventy dervishes, and spent three months on the way although he had mastered the degree of 'rolling up the earth' so well that he could have taken them there in a moment. For 'the greater the toil, the greater the result'. They reached Mecca, and 'Abd al-Rahman was appointed Pole for one year. In this period he instructed and perfected his seventy companions, and prepared two people for the degree of Pole. After he died his coffin rose up in the air and flew to the Baqi' cemetery at Medina. The people of Medina buried him there, assisted by his two most favoured disciples, who had come at the same time. A week later the other dervishes arrived. They stayed for another seven days. Then 'Abd al-Rahman appeared to them all in a dream and told them to go home. They were to recognize his son 'Abd al-Wahhab as his deputy and obey him in all things, in spite of his lack of ability, because of his right of 'elder's-son-hood' (*pirzadagi*). They and 'Abd al-Rahman would instruct him, and he should imitate his father in all things.

'Abd al-Rahman lived for 97 years, and instructed disciples without number. He himself was instructed by the spirit of Muhammad and was on the heart of Shu'ayb. He died on a Monday, according to Muhammad's example, in 608 AH/1211–12 CE.

Commentary

Since 'Abd al-Rahman is on the heart, not the back of Shu'ayb, one should not expect much of a resemblance. Like Shu'ayb, 'Abd al-Rahman encounters difficulties. Shu'ayb resembles Muhammad, 'Abd al-Rahman's instructor, and it is with reference to Muhammad that some points have to be noted. 'Abd al-Rahman becomes a specialist in Tradition, the discipline which studies reports about Muhammad's sayings and exemplary practice. A descendant of Muhammad, he follows him in moving from Mecca to Medina. One notes with interest the controversial subject of hereditary succession to a Sufi elder's position.[102]

Section x 'Abd al-Wahhab of Nishapur

When the dervishes returned home 'Abd al-Wahhab was upset not to see his father among them. 'Abd al-Rahman's voice told him to be patient: Muhammad too was an orphan. The dervishes who had come from the Hijaz told their fellow-dervishes to accept 'Abd

al-Wahhab as their elder's deputy, 'because the son of a friend of God is half a friend'. They agreed. He was 21 at the time, and ignorant of Sufism, but there was one experienced dervish called Qutb, and another who was called Sa'd and had been prepared to be Pole, and the two of them took care of him. They gave him both formal teaching (*ta'lim*) and 'instruction' (*tarbiyat*). After five years he was able to look after disciples. One day Khidr came and told him that his father had reached the goal thanks to 'companionship' (*musahabat*) with him. Now Khidr kept repeating Chapter 1 of the Qur'an for him, breathed upon every part of his body, and rubbed his chest with his hand. Then he declared that he was giving half of his own degree to 'Abd al-Wahhab. The latter began to instruct the dervishes. Soon he brought them all to the goal. He himself obtained instruction from the interior of Khidr, and was Pole for three days. Then he died, on a Wednesday, in Rajab 665 AH/March–April 1267 CE. He was buried in the shrine of Qiyam al-Din. Afterwards someone saw him in a dream and was told that God had dealt with him as he had with the prophet Simon (Peter), upon whose back he was.

Commentary

It is apt that 'Abd al-Wahhab should be on the back of Simon Peter, the successor of Jesus, since the theme of the successor is dominant here. Another figure who is instructed by his father's disciples and effectively succeeds him is Islam's greatest mystical poet, Rumi (d. 1273).[103]

Nishapur was destroyed by an earthquake in 1280, thirteen years after 'Abd al-Wahhab's alleged death and burial. Afterwards the city was rebuilt on a different site.[104] I have found no trace of 'Abd al-Wahhab or Qiyam al-Din.

Chapter 24 Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat

Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat (in the west of East Turkistan)[105] was a rich man, and the son of a scholar. His mother was a descendant of Muhammad. She died when he was 12, and his father when he was 20. He was very handsome, and his father would keep him indoors as much as possible, so that he would not fall into bad company. When his father died he acquired evil companions, forgot everything that he had learnt, and led a sinful life. He squandered his father's wealth, and then his friends deserted him.

Weeping, he went to his father's tomb for advice. His father told him to go to Balkh, because it was full of God's friends, and find an elder called 'Abd al-Razzaq, the Pole of the time. After forty days Ghiyath al-Din reached Balkh and came to 'Abd al-Razzaq's lodge. He found 300 dervishes, all 'friends of God', sitting in meditation. 'Abd al-Razzaq told them to recite Chapter 1 of the Qur'an for him. They did so, and breathed on his face. He spent five days and nights with them, and with their help and 'Abd al-Razzaq's instruction he became one of the great friends of God. Then he spent twelve years in attendance upon 'Abd al-Razzaq, but obtained instruction from the interior of Elijah. For five of these years he was 'Abd al-Razzaq's deputy. Finally 'Abd al-Razzaq told Ghiyath al-Din to succeed him as elder after his death. He died, and Ghiyath al-Din was elder in his place for a year. One night his father appeared to him in a vision and told him to return to the family home. He did so, and found his family's finances to be in a better state than ever. God explained that this was a reward for his conversion.

From now on Ghiyath al-Din lived in Shikarmat. In a period of thirty years he acquired 30,000 disciples and instructed 300 dervishes (corresponding to the 300 encountered above). He led a very ascetic existence. His soup-kitchen was always miraculously supplied with fire and water. One day a camel-herd brought him some gold and insisted that he should find a lost camel. Ghiyath al-Din reined in the horse which he was riding and went into meditation (*muraqaba*) for an hour.[106] The horse sweated profusely, and Ghiyath al-Din announced that the camel had returned. It too was sweating profusely, and had collapsed. Ghiyath al-Din explained that he had had to bring it back from a distance of twelve days' journey.

Ghiyath al-Din always had a flower in his lap to give to anyone who came to see him. Once given it would be miraculously replaced. One day, however, the supply ran out. A voice told him that this was because he had been made one of the Poles, and was consequently cut off from worldly attachments. The Poles appeared, with all the great Sufis, and invested him. Now he became overwhelmed by the 'enrapturing force' (*jadhba*) of the degree of Polehood, and would say, both in private and in public, 'I am the First and the Last, the Exterior and the Interior.' [This is the description of God in the Qur'an (57: 3): 'He is the First, etc.'] Some people who objected to these words went to the local judge

and asked whether their utterance put Ghiyath al-Din beyond the pale of Islam. The judge referred the matter to a jurisconsult (*mufti*), who agreed with him that Ghiyath al-Din might be able to furnish a satisfactory interpretation of his words. Ghiyath al-Din's enemies went to his lodge. Without bothering to ask for an explanation, they raised their scourges to beat him. He caused the hands which held the scourges to be paralysed. The judge had to intercede for them. Ghiyath al-Din then restored movement to their paralysed hands and paralysed their good hands. He explained that the words meant that he was always engaged in remembrance of God and never neglected him. Afterwards he prayed, and God restored movement to his critics' hands. They and the judge became his disciples. Ghiyath al-Din said that his aim in uttering the contested words had been to acquire the judge as his disciple.

The duration of Ghiyath al-Din's Polehood was five years. In this time he instructed and perfected five people, the last being the judge (called 'Abd al-Majid), and appointed two deputies. One day he went to visit the various friends of God in the world, and came across 200 who were dying 'without faith' (i.e. without renewing their attestation of belief in Islam). He was very afraid that he might die in the same way. Two days later he was told that he was about to die. He rejoiced, recited a statement of his devotion to God and died. His body was taken to be buried next to his father. Afterwards someone saw him in a dream, and was told that God had made him the 'succourer' (*ghiyath*) of those who look for succour. Ghiyath al-Din also said that the dervishes should follow his example and recognize one of his deputies, called Ahmad, as his successor. This happened on 20 Ramadan 610 AH/2 February 1214 CE.

Commentary

We are not told upon whose heart or back Ghiyath al-Din was; Uzgani says only that he was instructed by the 'interior' of Elijah. Now in Islamic legend Elijah is the instructor of a man whose father has died: Elisha, who is confused with the son of the widow of Zarepath.[107] Thus Ghiyath al-Din corresponds to Elisha. Elisha is Elijah's successor. The theme of the successor is important here, as in the previous chapter (with which this chapter, being even-numbered, forms a pair). So too is the theme of the father–son relationship. As elsewhere in the *History of the Uwaysis*, the author seems particularly interested in the city of Balkh.

Section xi Ahmad of Shikarmat

Some of the dervishes refused to accept Ahmad as Ghiyath al-Din's successor. Ghiyath al-Din appeared to all of them in a dream and repeated his message. The next day one of them suggested that the dream might have been inspired by Satan. That night Ghiyath al-Din again repeated his message. After this they all pledged their loyalty to Ahmad. One dervish pointed out that this had to be made public, and so he was formally installed. Ahmad duly engaged in giving instruction. He brought to perfection 200 of his elder's dervishes, looked after 500 disciples, appointed 12 deputies, built 5 lodges, 20 ordinary mosques and 2 Friday mosques [i.e. for large-scale congregational worship], performed 12 full pilgrimages and 300 lesser pilgrimages [i.e. ones not performed at the prescribed time of year], recited the whole of the Qur'an 5,000 times, did the worship of the 'Night of Things Desired' (*Layla al-Ragha'ib*) 80 times, kept company with the 'perfect friend who makes perfect' (*wali-yi kamil-i mukammil*),[108] travelled round the world with Khidr 1,000 times, fasted for 5,000 days, performed 100,000 acts of worship over and above the recognized acts of supererogation, and married 40 times. However, he never had more than three wives at once, and would never make love less than 40 times a night. He never sat in solitude, but spent most of his time on the move. He was a hunter, and would eat game. Ahmad was Pole for thirty-five days, and then died. He was on the heart of Jacob.

Commentary

Ghiyath al-Din's successor, Ahmad, presumably corresponds to Elisha's pupil, who is called Dhu 'l-Kifl in Islam, and is supposed to be buried in various places, including Balkh.[109] On the other hand, being on Jacob's heart, he should resemble him to some extent, and does so in his installation of twelve deputies, corresponding to the twelve tribes of which Jacob is the ancestor, and in his marital activities. As an appendix to Chapter 24, this section is in parallel to Section x, the appendix to Chapter 23, which is also devoted to a successor.

Chapter 25 Burhan al-Din Qilichi ('of the Sword') of Uzgen

Burhan al-Din Qilichi was 'enraptured' from birth, and had a very

overpowering 'state of rapture' (*jadhba*), so that nobody dared to speak to him when he was engaged in meditation. If someone did, he would become angry, and could kill with a glance. When small he quarrelled with another child. He made a wooden sword and cut the child's head off. The bereaved parents complained to the king of the country, who was himself a mystic and realized what lay behind this. He persuaded Burhan al-Din to cut a cow in half with his sword, and declared that he would indeed become 'the proof of the religion' (the meaning of his name). He gave him the surname Qilichi ('of the Sword') and told him to keep wearing his weapon.

After that Burhan al-Din would kill anyone who uttered a word out of place. People tried to kill him with swords and bows and arrows, but to no effect. Ten years passed, and he reached puberty. His 'state of rapture' increased. Then he started to wear two real swords. Now people were afraid to go out of doors. One of the 'people of the exterior' (*ahl-i zahir*) managed to get to know Burhan al-Din. The latter explained that the swords had been entrusted to him by his great-great-great-grandfather, who had the same name and surname. The latter had prophesied that his descendant would be 'enraptured' like himself, but from birth. He had put the swords in a cave. His descendant learnt about this, went to the cave and was guided to the swords by a talking black stone. Burhan al-Din would kill anyone who lacked a firm belief in Islam. The whole of Uzgen (his city) turned to piety. When he reached the age of 50 his state of rapture disappeared, but was replaced by 'absorption' (*istighraq*), so that sometimes he would be 'absorbed' (*mustaghraq*) for as long as three days. This was because the 'theophany of outward form' (*tajalli-yi suri*) would be vouchsafed, and this makes one bewildered. But whatever other elders would receive by way of inspiration without being in 'absorption' would also be given to Burhan al-Din. However, he avoided talking about the 'things of the unseen'. One day his 'companion' (*musahib*), Ashraf al-Din of Farghana (the valley on the River Jaxartes in which Uzgen is situated) asked him why. He replied that to reveal such secrets was tantamount to unbelief, and they were not disclosed to him anyway. His swords made miracles unnecessary, and an 'enraptured person' (*majdhub*) was unsuitable for taking care of disciples. Ashraf al-Din replied that his 'state of rapture' (*jadhba*) had vanished, but Burhan al-Din insisted that its effect remained. His companion explained that he wanted to progress to becoming his disciple. Eventually Burhan al-Din agreed. He concentrated his attention upon him for three

days, and this, together with his interior power, brought Ashraf al-Din's 'work' to completion. However, he refused to accept other disciples when pressed to do so, and took to the mountainside for three years.

At the end of the three years the people of Uzgen persuaded him to return. He found that they had abandoned their recent piety, and spent two years on bringing them back to the fold. At the age of 55 he decided to write a comprehensive book, which would help people to be more pious. He concentrated his attention on the spirits of the past 'friends of God' and elders, and wrote his book in five years, calling it 'The Square of the Devout' (*Murabba' al-salihin*).[110] He finished it on the 20th of the month of Sha'ban and summoned a number of people from Uzgen and Andijan (in what is now Uzbekistan). Two 'people of the interior' came from Andijan in the 'inner world', and Sultan 'Ilik-i Madi' (Nasr ibn 'Ali, d. 1012–13), the conqueror of Transoxania)[111] came as well. The sultan gave him many jewels, which he distributed to those present. Burhan al-Din also showed it to the 'men of the unseen'. One of them insisted that he should include his genealogy in it. Someone else explained that this was: 'Burhan al-Din son of Jalal al-Din son of Ashraf al-Din son of Diya' al-Din son of 'Ala al-Din son of Burhan al-Din son of Qasim son of Hashim son of Tahir son of Husayn of Medina (the grandson of Muhammad)'. However, Burhan al-Din refused to include this, and Husayn of Medina, angered, caused him to go lame in one leg.

Burhan al-Din lived to the age of 70, and at the end of his life was always in 'absorption' for five years. One day he was completely overwhelmed by 'absorption', and seemed to remain so for five days, until Ashraf al-Din realized that he had been dead, standing up, all this time. Afterwards someone saw him in a dream, and Burhan al-Din told him that he had died on being given the 'theophany of inner meaning' (*tajalli-yi ma'nawi*). He was on the back of Moses, and obtained instruction from him as well.

Commentary

This biography brings us back to the fringes of history. V.V. Bartol'd (1869–1930), the great Russian historian of Turkistan, has observed that there are many buildings and tombstones in Uzgen that go back to the period dating from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. In particular, there is a pair of mausolea, one dated 1192 CE. Only legends have survived among the inhabitants about the

people supposed to be buried in them. Some say that one Burhan al-Din Qilich ('Qilich', 'Sword', is a common Turkic name) and his parents are buried here. Another explanation is that the mausolea belong to 'two brothers', one being the ruler mentioned in this biography, 'Ilik-i Madi', and the other the famous Saljuq Sultan Sanjar, who in fact lived one and a half centuries later and died in 1157.[112] Now 'Burhan al-Din Qilich' is indeed a historical personality. The historian Jamal Qarshi, writing at the start of the fourteenth century, relates how he heard about him from an informant in 1269–70. The latter had met Burhan al-Din in Uzgen when he himself was 'in the flower of his youth'. Burhan al-Din was a leading mystic who would also teach law in a mosque and had a quarrelsome disposition.[113]

The Burhan al-Din here, being on the back of Moses, resembles him in various ways. He kills a child when young himself; Moses, when young, kills an Egyptian. Burhan al-Din receives the 'theophany of the outward form'; Moses sees the burning bush. Burhan al-Din wears miraculous swords; Moses has a miraculous rod. Burhan al-Din has a comprehensive book; Moses has the Torah.

This chapter, fifth in a sequence of ten, seems to correspond to Chapter 5: Moses is again the instructor. We have already noted a correspondence between Chapters 5 and 15.

Chapter 26 Sa'adat ('Happiness') of Hormuz

Sa'adat of Hormuz (in the Persian Gulf) was an uninhibited man and a fine singer. To begin with he kept company with scholars and students. One day his uncle heard him singing, disapproved and hit him. Sa'adat, angered, put on a coarse cloak and a felt cap and ran away with two *qalandars* (libertine dervishes). As he travelled with them he would commit sins, but he spent his nights in devotion. Eventually he wondered how long he would go on living this life. He thought it would be better to acquire more companions and stop sinning. As he was thinking this two more *qalandars* appeared and said that he looked worried. He explained to them that he had lost his father (a rich man) and his uncle had squandered his inheritance and provoked him into leaving home. They joined him and his companions and acquired the four symbols of the *qalandars* (a flag, a table-cloth, a lamp and a drum). He divided these between them, and himself assumed the office of

'master of prayers' (*sahib-takbir*, somebody who recites prayers for one in return for a gift). They went from town to town and from village to village, accumulating offerings and extra companions.

One day Sa'adat heard himself called an elder, and felt unworthy of the title. Then somebody arrived from Gujerat and gave him some money. He explained that his son had died, and he had been advised to vow to give money to Sa'adat (who, we are now told, was in Konya in southern Turkey), in the hope that his son might be returned to life. His son had indeed come back from the dead, and had said that Sa'adat had appeared in the fifth heaven and rescued his spirit from the Angel of Death. Sa'adat was again overwhelmed by a feeling of unworthiness. Calling himself a wretch (*bi-sa'adat*), he declared that his salvation (*sa'adat*) lay in abandoning his sinful life. But a voice told him to stay with his companions and the four symbols of the *qalandars*, for they had a Sufi significance. The flag symbolized the function of elder: on the Day of Resurrection every elder will have a flag, so that his disciples can find him. The table-cloth symbolizes the hospitality of Abraham. The lamp signifies brightness of mind. As for the drum, some ignorant people have used it for begging, and the jurists condemn it as a 'blameworthy innovation' (*bid'a*), but the Sufis have their love for God awakened by its sound. So Sa'adat continued as he was, in the station of 'servitude' (*'ubudiyyat*).

After thirty years Sa'adat sang so well that many of the men and women of Konya became his disciples. The local judge, along with the chief jurisconsult and the censors of morals (*muhtasiban*), set off to investigate him. Sa'adat prepared to feed them, but realized that he needed time: they were going to arrive before the food was cooked, and had to be delayed. So he made a water-melon seed fly to the judge's horse and lame it. The judge, himself a mystic, realized what was going on. After the meal Sa'adat transformed himself into seventy different forms. The judge repented and became his disciple, but the others were not convinced. More food was brought, and Sa'adat, with a glance, transformed it into jewels. However, the doubters thought that he might just be a magician. The jurisconsult decided to ask Sa'adat a difficult question, but the latter made him forget what it was, and then provided the answer. Then he looked at the musical instruments present, and made them play of their own accord. His visitors all went into ecstasy and tore their clothes off. The music went on for a whole day, while Sa'adat remained in meditation. Then they all became his disciples.

Another thiry years passed. In this period Sa'adat instructed many disciples and appointed twenty deputies. He wanted to entrust all his disciples to these deputies and retire, but a voice told him that the fortunate (*sa'adatmand*) person is he who rescues others, especially when he is the Pole. After eleven days he was praying at night when God told him that this was the Night of Power (usually considered to be 27 Ramadan). At dawn all the Poles and the spirits of the prophets and elders came to invest him. He was Pole for seven years and five months. In this time he prepared seven of his deputies to be Pole in his place, one after another.

Once one of Sa'adat's disciples, who had served him for forty years, complained that he had never even looked at him. Sa'adat invited the disciple to follow him on a walk. They came to a cemetery, and someone came out of a grave and greeted Sa'adat, who paid no attention to him at all. The disciple asked Sa'adat why he had behaved in this apparently callous fashion. His elder told him that he was obviously unsuitable for instruction and should go back to carrying wood.

Sa'adat took care of 1,000 disciples, and obtained instruction from Shu'ayb, on whose heart he was. One day a *qalandar*, dressed in black, came to see him. Sa'adat realized that this was the Angel of Death. He died on 27 Ramadan 612 AH/19 January 1216, in Konya. His funeral procession was joined by the symbols of the *qalandars*, moving of their own accord and wailing. Sa'adat told them to go home, and they obeyed.

Commentary

This chapter, being even-numbered, forms a pair with number 25: both mystics are 'on' the prophets who instruct them, but, as before, there is a progression from being on the back to being on the heart. The prophet Shu'ayb (an obscure figure, mentioned a few times in the Qur'an) is rejected by the notables among his people, just as Sa'adat incurs censure in the Establishment.[114]

The text is of great interest for the information which it gives about the *qalandars*. Usually, as with Uwaysis, there are isolated and brief references to *qalandars* in Islamic literature, but a long connected narrative is rare. Elsewhere in the *History of the Uwaysis* they are again linked with Turkey, and this evidently reflects large-scale mystical libertinism practised there in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, subsidized by the Ottoman Empire.[115] The

'symbols of the *qalandars*' are mentioned later in the book.[116]

Chapter 27 'Abbas, son of 'Abd Allah Ghiyath, of Khwarazm

'Abbas of Khwarazm (in Turkmenistan) was a pharmacist, like his father, and extremely rich. His father died when 'Abbas was 16. He urged his mother to remarry, but she refused. Impressed by her resolve, he decided to abandon the pleasures of life in order to serve her. He spent three years with her, and then they decided that he should travel for a period of one year. 'Abbas was absent for two years, and then, on his way back, he was robbed by bandits. His father appeared to him in a dream and explained that this was a punishment for his disobedience in prolonging his absence. However, he had hidden some treasure on a mountain for his son, who should now collect it. He guided 'Abbas to the cave where the treasure was concealed, and his son brought it to his mother. She said that she had sent him on a commercial journey in order that he should receive a warning. It was Khidr who had appeared to him in his father's form and shown him the 'treasury of the unseen' (*khazina-yi ghayb*). 'Abbas was meant to understand that God would always look after his slave. He duly applied himself to devotion.

After two years 'Abbas was plagued by some genies, who made him see all sorts of visions. His mother assured herself that they were genies by baring her head: they did not absent themselves, as 'good spirits' would have done. She told her son to concentrate on the interior of Elijah, his instructor. This drove the genies away. Three years later 'Abbas reached the 'unveiling of the spirits'. He formed the desire to meet his instructor in the world of spirituality [here identifed with the 'world of inner meaning'], and after forty days he did so. Two more years passed, and he decided that he wanted to see Khidr. After eighty days he met him, and Khidr explained that "Abbas' was a form of the word *'abs* (frowning), which, read backwards in the Arabic script, became *sab'*, 'seven'. Anyone called "Abbas' had to make himself like the angels of the seven heavens, travel fast on the Path like the seven planets, revolve around God's Independence (*bi-niyazi*) as the seven Pleiades revolved around the pole star, and eat once in every seven days. Khidr promised to meet 'Abbas once a week and described how the angels worshipped.

'Abbas found the fasting difficult, but when he asked God to help and fell unconscious someone gave him a bunch of grapes,

and after that he had no problems. He spent twelve years in rigorous asceticism. Then a voice told him that, like the planets, he should travel and help people. Two days later his mother died. Her spirit commanded him to go to Medina. He set off from the Hijaz. In the world of inner meaning he would go to Mecca and come back every day, but outwardly he was with his travelling-companions. In Turkey there was a dervish called Abu Sa'id, who would meet 'Abbas in the world of inner meaning every day. Now, with 150 followers, he joined 'Abbas in the outer world. They wanted to become his disciples, but he told them to wait. The travellers all went on to Mecca together. After five circuits of the Ka'ba a voice told 'Abbas that his pilgrimage, and that of the other dervishes, had been accepted. He was to perform the remaining circuits at night. That night he was told to take care of other people. He accepted the dervishes as his disciples, and, after visiting Medina, set off for Central Asia by way of Turkey. Travelling round Turkey, he acquired 12,000 disciples there, and then went on to Farghana, increasing the number of his disciples to 120,000. The last of these was one Sa'd Allah, called 'Bab-i Machin' ('The Gate of Machin', Machin being a region in the south of East Turkistan, including the cities of Khotan and Kadak [the modern Keriya]). When 'Abbas came to Farghana he looked at Sa'd Allah and brought him to the degree of 'rolling up the earth', so that he could join his elder whenever faced with a problem. Then he made Sa'd Allah his deputy, granted him permission to take on new disciples, and entrusted his own disciples in Andijan (the chief city of Farghana, in Uzbekistan) and its dependencies to him. He also entrusted the 'Gate of Machin' to him, giving him responsibility for any suitable pupils coming from that direction. It was in this way that Sa'd Allah acquired his nickname.

After that 'Abbas went to Khojend (in Tajikistan), and was on his way to Samarqand when a voice told him to go to Balkh. He did so, but found that he had to speak to the people there at a very low level. The local judge invited him to his house. At first 'Abbas refused, but Abu Sa'id, who had remained with him, persuaded him to accept. When they arrived the food was transformed into snakes, scorpions and frogs. Abu Sa'id apologized to 'Abbas in the world of inner meaning, but in the outer world pointed out that, as Sufis said, God's friends were a sea, which could not be made dirty. 'Abbas replied that on the contrary the inner sea is polluted by a small amount of dirt. He moved to the Friday mosque and stayed

there, bringing most of the people of Balkh into the number of his disciples. In his lifetime this reached 125,000. He obtained instruction from the interior of Elijah, and was on the back of Job. He lived to the age of 99, and was Pole for five months and ten days. In this time he wanted God to drown him in his benevolence (*rahmat*). One day he went to bathe in the Oxus. He entered the water and announced that 'the drop of water reached the sea and became identical with the sea'. Then he vanished beneath the surface. After three days one of his disciples saw him in a dream. He announced that he had died, and that Abu Sa'id was to be his successor. The other disciples divided for and against Abu Sa'id, but 'Abbas appeared to them all in their dreams, and Abu Sa'id was duly appointed. This was in 612 AH/1215–16 CE.

Commentary

Like Job, 'Abbas is rich to begin with, but then made destitute before regaining his wealth. Job bathes in a spring, 'Abbas in the Oxus. Job is plagued by sprites (*'afarit*) under the command of the devil; 'Abbas is plagued by genies. Job is unusual as a prophet who does not encounter any rejection; the same is true for 'Abbas.[117]

The theme of immortality is again prominent here: Elijah is linked with Khidr, with whom he is often confused. In the New Testament Elijah is also believed to be mystically identical with John the Baptist: this finds an echo in Islam.[118] As we have noted above, in Islam Elijah's disciple, Elisha, is confused with the son of the widow of Zarepath. At the end of Elijah's earthly life he disappears. Elisha is sometimes also identified with Khidr, and sometimes with a prophet called Dhu 'l-Kifl, who is, however, usually seen as his successor. Elisha asks God to remove him from this world and put him near Elijah: the first half of this prayer is answered, and he dies.[119] 'Abbas's deputy Abu Sa'id is perhaps to be put in parallel with Dhu 'l-Kifl (who, as we have seen, is thought to be buried in many places, including Balkh); they will be considered in the commentary on the following section.

The statement that 'Abbas had to speak on a low level to the people of Balkh is significant: the area was well known for the continuing existence of ascetics (*zahidan*) who lacked the inspiration and intellectual character of Sufism.[120]

This chapter, seventh in a series of ten, corresponds to Chapters 7 and 17: Turkistan is prominent, and the number seven is an important theme. Like Chapters 7 and 17, it is followed by a section.

Section xii Abu Sa'id of Turkey

Forty days later, Abu Sa'id decided to prepare a meal and have a complete recitation of the Qur'an as a memorial service for his elder. He sent a dervish to find a lion on the mountainside. The lion summoned a number of edible animals and brought them to the city. They were duly killed and cooked. The people of the city came, and Abu Sa'id saw 'Abbas among them. For three days the meal went on without the food running out. In this time 'Abbas instructed Abu Sa'id and his 'work' reached completion. Then Abu Sa'id started to instruct the dervishes. He did this for thirty-five years, but did not take on any new disciples, although he had been given permission to do so. This was because most of the dervishes had not obtained instruction from 'Abbas. Now they reached perfection. Then 'Abbas appeared to him in a dream and told him to go to Mecca. He went there, and was told that he would be buried behind the principal mosque, by the Ka'ba. He died in front of the Ka'ba, and a grave was mysteriously prepared for him in the promised spot. Thereupon 200 people, of whom twenty-seven were friends of God, attended his funeral. He was on the back of the prophet Aaron and obtained instruction from the interior of Khidr.

Commentary

Abu Sa'id, as a deputy, is aptly put on the back of Aaron, the second-in-command of Moses. Aaron, in Jewish and Islamic legend, is predestined to a golden throne, on which he must die: Abu Sa'id is also fated to die at a privileged spot.[121]

Appropriately, Abu Sa'id is taught by Khidr, just as his earthly mentor corresponds to Elisha and is taught by Elijah, who is confused with Khidr. Does Abu Sa'id also correspond to Dhu 'l-Kifl, the pupil of Elisha, supposedly buried in, among other places, Balkh? Muslim commentators on the Qur'an, where he is mentioned (21: 85 and 38: 48), identify him with a number of different figures, notably Joshua, Elijah, Zachariah and Ezekiel. Sometimes he is seen as a son of Job (on whose back 'Abbas was). John Walker has argued that he is Job himself. In Islam he is also identifed with Obadiah, the steward of Ahab who feeds a large number of prophets in I Kings 18: 4.[122]

Chapter 28 Farid al-Din of Bakharz

Farid al-Din of Bakharz (an area in north-eastern Iran) lost both his parents at the age of six months, and was looked after by his aunt. Her husband was a very sinful man, and wanted to kill Farid al-Din. One day, when he was drunk, he threw him into a well, but God told an angel to protect the child. After a few days the man sobered up. He and his wife found that Farid al-Din was resting happily on a couch at the bottom of a well, with a lamp burning in front of him. Farid al-Din's aunt realized that he was a friend of God, but her husband was persuaded by Satan that he was a sorcerer. When the child was 6 years old he reminded them of his experience. The aunt's husband, who, we are now told, was called Yusuf 'Ali, concluded that he must be a sorcerer to know what had happened to him at the age of six months. He took some dog's faeces, left it in water for a day, strained the water, added some sugar and made Farid al-Din drink it. The aim was to make his heart unfit for contemplation of the world of the unseen. The reason why Yusuf 'Ali did all this was that he was a Jew, although nobody knew. After Farid al-Din reached the age of 10 Yusuf 'Ali taught him his trade, that of a potter, for seven years.

One day a man with a white beard came to Farid al-Din and gave him a drink. This brought on an attack of diarrhoea, which purged his body of impurities. Then the elder told Farid al-Din to busy himself with the 'remembrance of God', using the formula 'There is no god but God.' By day he was to recite this aloud, and by night he was to practise a 'silent' method of remembrance, the 'remembrance in four measures' (*dhikr-i chahar-darbi*).[123] In the course of a year Farid al-Din learnt to repeat the formula 500 times with one intake of breath, using this method. After a year and three months the elder returned, and said that he was the person who Farid al-Din had guessed him to be [evidently Khidr]: otherwise he would not meet him in the phenomenal world. He recited Chapter 1 of the Qur'an for Farid al-Din and breathed on his chest. Then he told him to erase Yusuf 'Ali's crime, and vanished. Farid al-Din concentrated on Yusuf 'Ali, drew him to himself, and made him repent and become a Muslim.

Some years passed, and then Farid al-Din formed the habit of losing consciousness. When unconscious he would recite: 'I belong to God and the world belongs to me.' Some people criticized him for this, but one scholar, who was also a Sufi, called Sayf Allah,

explained that the words meant: 'Everything belongs to God, and the world, like me, is "other than God".' However, the notables of the city went to investigate Farid al-Din. He made them lose consciousness. They saw the whole of creation paying homage to Farid al-Din, saying, 'We belong to you.' When they regained consciousness they wanted him to be their elder, but he told them to wait. Five years later Khidr granted him permission to take disciples of his own, and most of the people of Khwarazm were suddenly inspired to go to him and become his disciples. That day he accepted 280 of them. Three years passed. He acquired 600 disciples in all, twenty of whom he instructed and perfected. He himself obtained instruction from Khidr, and would always insist on pain (*dard*) as the main means of reaching the goal, along with sincerity and honesty. He would instruct the dervishes by looking at them every day and then doing what was appropriate. He kept a list of their names, so as to check for errors in their work.

One day a dervish came to see him, and they started to talk about love. After a bit the dervish heaved a sigh, and fire leapt out of his mouth, so that it almost burnt the lodge down. He stayed for two months, and then revealed that he was one of the 'substitutes', who had come to recruit Farid al-Din to their number. Farid al-Din replied that he would have nothing to do with 'substitution' (*tabdil*), since he was a lover of God, and burnt by the fire of love for him. Then he said, 'God!' and burnt to death. He was aged 59 when he died, and was on the heart of the prophet George. This happened in Rabi' I 620 AH/April 1223 CE. Afterwards someone saw him in a dream, wrapped up in silk, among the houris and slave-boys of paradise. Farid al-Din explained that God had granted him this silk as suitable for someone injured by burns.

Commentary

Farid al-Din, being on the heart of George, resembles him symbolically, as a sort of martyr, according to a famous saying of Muhammad, which teaches that someone who loves sincerely and dies has a martyr's death.[124] By suffering the pain of love he reproduces George's tribulations.

There are obvious parallels with the preceding chapter (with which this one forms a pair): both are partly located in Khwarazm, and here the death occurs through burning as opposed to drowning. The figures of the orphan and Khidr are common to both.

One very famous Sufi called Sayf al-Din of Bakharz moved from there to Khwarazm (like Farid al-Din) before dying at Bukhara in 1261 CE.[125]

Chapter 29 Muhammad 'Attar of Hisar

Muhammad 'Attar was originally from Hisar (in Tajikistan).[126] He was a generous distributor of food, and busy with trade. To begin with, however, he was a hired labourer. One day, in his travels, he arrived at Farkhar (in north-eastern Afghanistan) and fell in love with a beautiful girl, who had not yet reached puberty. He decided to enter the service of her father, who was very rich. The latter, whose name was Malik, wanted to treat him like an adopted son. Since Muhammad wanted to work, they agreed that he should look after Malik's calves. Seven years passed. The girl reached puberty, and realized that Muhammad was in love with her. One day one of the calves told him to turn to serving God rather than his temporal master, and this cured him of his infatuation. He immersed himself in devotion, and God taught him to make 'remembrance' with the formula 'God is my Lord'. Five years passed, and he changed a great deal. During one of the nights of Ramadan Malik found him asleep, with the words 'God is my Lord' coming out of his chest. This had a deep effect on Malik, who gave him his daughter in marriage. Muhammad was afraid that, having married the girl, he had lost the reward for his devotion, but God told him that marriage was better than celibacy. Then he heard some nightingales saying that from his loins forty friends of God, both male and female, would be born, each one of whom would be the Pole of the time. Seven years passed, and he fathered six pairs of twins.

One day Muhammad 'Attar had a vision of Abraham, who summoned him to Mecca. He set off with his eldest son. After three months' journey they joined some pilgrims, and heard of a dragon on the road ahead. Thirty-five days later they encountered it. Muhammad threw his whip in front of the dragon, and the whip turned into a much bigger dragon which annihilated its adversary before turning into a whip again. When the pilgrims reached Mecca they noticed that everything around the Ka'ba (though not the Ka'ba itself) saluted Muhammad, but he did not reply. He explained that he had to concentrate on his goal. After circling the Ka'ba he lost consciousness. He saw Abraham appear and give him

a table-cloth, with the command that he should spend the remaining fifty years of his life distributing food. On regaining consciousness he found his son (who was called Abu 'l-Qasim), and looked at him. Abu 'l-Qasim at once had the 'things of the unseen' revealed to him. From now on Muhammad would open the table-cloth [in the east it is normal to carry food in a tied-up cloth] twice a day, and its contents, miraculously replaced, would feed his travelling-companions. He came to Baghdad and acquired 400 disciples there, along with many people who enjoyed 'companionship' (*musahabat*) with him. These people found that his words brought a sweet smell to the spirit. For this reason they called him "Attar' (perfumer), although he already had this surname because he exercised the trade of an *'attar* [the word also means 'pharmacist']. After four months he decided to go home. He appointed one of his disciples in Baghdad, called Mu'izz al-Din, as his deputy, granting him permission to take new disciples, and writing a 'licence-letter' (*ijazat-nama*) for him. After a month he reached his homeland, where he spent another month in Hisar, his father's town. Then he went to Farkhar. Three months later his father-in-law died. As usual, two angels came to interrogate the dead man, but God told them to go away, since Muhammad 'Attar was sitting by his grave: his sins were forgiven.

Muhammad 'Attar lived to the age of 75, but spent only five years in asceticism. In spite of this he 'reached the goal' sooner than people who did live a very ascetic life. He had made up for his lack of austerity with his generous distribution of food. Every day he fed at least 2,000 people and gave 20,000 dinars to the poor. He instructed and brought to the goal the 400 disciples whom he had acquired in Baghdad, and his twelve children as well. He himself was instructed by the spirit of Abraham and was on his heart too. For this reason he was famous for hospitality. One day all the angels came and invested him as Pole. Now he acquired 500 more disciples and instructed them. He was Pole for one year and two months. Then he was told that he was about to die. He ordered his dervishes to regard his example as having the normative force of the Prophet Muhammad's; to recognize Abu 'l-Qasim as his deputy; to contemplate his own spirit; and to refer all problems to him. Then he made 'remembrance', using the name 'Allah'. He recited it 120 times before the Angel of Death came and he died. He was buried at the top of a hill called Funduq, 1½ parasangs from Farkhar.[127] For at his funeral the bier flew there. Afterwards

he told someone in a dream that Solomon had stayed at this spot. He died on a Monday (according to the Prophet Muhammad's example), in Rabi' I 625 AH/February–March 1228 CE.

Commentary

Although the text states that Muhammad 'Attar corresponds to Abraham, notably in his hospitality, and there is an obvious link with the tradition that Abraham founded the Ka'ba, there are also correspondences with the Prophet Muhammad himself: in name, in the month and the day of the week when death takes place, and in normative example. The automatic 'remembrance' coming out of the chest is a classic theme in Sufism.[128] One notes the usual Central Asian motif of the animal as the instructor of humans. As for the distribution of food, it puts this chapter, ninth in a series, in parallel with Chapter 9.

I have not been able to locate a tomb of Muhammad 'Attar in the area of Farkhar. Many places in the Muslim world are connected with Solomon.[129]

'Muhammad 'Attar' is the name of the famous poet of Nishapur, apparently killed by the Mongols in 1221, to whom the *Memorial of the Friends* is attributed and who was indeed a pharmacist.[130] In the sixteenth century Haydar refers to another leading Sufi with the same name, but the latter lived in a different area and period.[131]

Section xiii Abu 'l-Qasim of Farkhar

When Muhammad 'Attar died his eldest son, Abu 'l-Qasim, was aged 50. His work had reached perfection when his father looked at him in Mecca. The power of his 'friendship with God' was greater than his father's. In the year of his father's death there was a famine. Abu 'l-Qasim prayed, and an enormous amount of corn flowed out of his sleeves. All the people of Farkhar became his disciples, and called him 'Tray of Generosity' (Khwan-i Kiram). Then he decided to go on the pilgrimage to Mecca. One of the dervishes said that this was pointless, since he had done this already, and anyway a believer's heart, as identical with God's Throne, was superior to the Ka'ba. Abu 'l-Qasim, however, insisted on going, and 1,000 people went with him. When they joined the main pilgrim-caravan 1,000 deer came forward to be eaten. After the pilgrims saw this Abu 'l-Qasim acquired 70,000 more disciples, and the dervish who had objected apologized, realizing that this

had been the aim. Abu 'l-Qasim reached Mecca, circled the Ka'ba and was told to go to Mina (the place nearby where the rites of the pilgrimage are continued). There he found 10,000 great friends of God, unknown to the rest of the world. They told him that thanks to him 1,700 of the pilgrims had had their pilgrimage accepted. Now he was to be given the degree of Pole. He refused, saying that he was unworthy and did not want honours; besides, the post brought an early death, and he wanted to spend a long life worshipping God. Afterwards a voice informed him that he would live to the age of 120. He spent ten years at Mecca and another ten at Medina. Then he went to Syria, where he met the Pole of the time, who was called Kimiya-yi Kabir ('The Great Philosophers' Stone'). The latter, on seeing him, greeted him as 'Abu 'l-Qasim the Jew'. Those present were astonished, but Abu 'l-Qasim was delighted: he now realized that he was on the heart of Moses. He explained to his host that he had declined the post of Pole in deference to him. Then, after spending a long time on the way, he returned to Farkhar.

Abu 'l-Qasim spent thirty-five more years there, and had twenty-five sons and twelve daughters. Two of the sons and three of the daughters became friends of God in his lifetime. Then a voice told him that his death was near, and that he should go to Machin (the region in the south of East Turkistan mentioned above). He set off with twelve disciples and a son called Fakhr al-Din. This son was very erudite and very impressive in disputations, and so people gave him the nickname Ghugha'i ('Troublemaker'), which he took as a pen name. A 'state of rapture' (*jadhba*) had interrupted his studies. The party found itself in the mountains and reached the spot called Hasan Bughra.[132] A divine command sent Abu 'l-Qasim to visit a sick man. On his way someone appeared to him in a dream and said that he had left something for him where they were. The party dug a hole and found many jewels. The next day they reached the sick man's house, and Abu 'l-Qasim told Fakhr al-Din to recite Chapter 1 of the Qur'an. This cured the man, who was a friend of God, though nobody (himself included) knew this. He had assumed the outward appearance of a *qalandar*, and was from Iraq. Now he said to Fakhr al-Din, 'My king! Your prayer brought the cure for my pain.' So Fakhr al-Din's companions gave him a second nick-name, 'Cure-King' (Dawa-Padishah). His first nick-name was later corrupted from Ghugha'i to Ghugha in popular usage.[133] Three

days later Abu 'l-Qasim died there. Fakhr al-Din asked him to make him die too, and he did, forty days later. The dervishes stayed by their graves for forty more days. Then Abu 'l-Qasim appeared to them in their dreams and told them to go or stay there as they wished. Some went home, but others chose to remain where they were.

Commentary

Abu 'l-Qasim is on the heart of Moses: thus, like Moses, he produces food miraculously and (it would seem) dies on a mountain. 'Kimiya-yi Kabir' is an odd name for a Sufi to have in thirteenth-century Syria, and looks invented. The part about East Turkistan, however, appears to refer to real or legendary people thought to be buried there.

Chapter 30 Sam'an of Simnan

Sam'an, of Simnan in north-eastern Iran, was a leading political adviser to kings, and had very strong powers of intuition. He was also a superb reciter of the Qur'an. To begin with, however, he was a night-watchman. He performed his tasks so efficiently that the king, hearing of his qualities, took him into his service. The king was also a man of insight, and trained him as a counsellor before promoting him to the highest rank. One day a voice told Sam'an to leave this 'metaphorical' king for the real one. He gave all his possessions away. The king, seeing him transformed, also repented. Sam'an immersed himself in devotion for twenty-five years, but was not granted even the lowest of degrees, that of the 'unveiling of tombs' (*kashf-i qubur*, seeing the spirits of the dead). A voice explained that he had spent twenty-five years in bad company, filling his body with forbidden food. Now, after twenty-five years of asceticism, another quarter of a century was still needed for him to reach perfection.

When the prescribed period came to an end eleven people visited Sam'an. They informed him that they were his 'persons' (*dhawat*), whom God, from the day that he had created them, had instructed through the intermediary of Noah. The next night eleven more people would come to him. These duly came, recited Chapter 1 of the Qur'an and breathed on his face. That night Sam'an touched God's Throne eleven times. This is the furthest point of the 'journeying' (*sayr*) of God's friends. The king now

joined Sam'an and said that the Throne had come to him. After twelve days Khidr gave Sam'an permission to take disciples. The king, his ministers, and the rest of the people of Simnan, 5,000 in all, became disciples of his. He was an elder in Simnan for five years. The mystical degree of the king (who, we are now told, was called Kay Khusraw) rose very high. He would keep his kingdom in perfect order by inspecting it ten times a day. One night, at Sam'an's command, he travelled through it in the world of inner meaning and caught a bath-keeper fornicating. Angered, he burnt both the bath-keeper and his companion to death. Sam'an applauded.

Now Sam'an told the king that he wanted to go to Mecca. The king wanted to come too, but Sam'an made the Ka'ba come to him instead. Then he set off, accompanied by thirty dervishes. He spent five years on the way, because there were Uwaysi mystics in every city to which he came, and he would take them as disciples and teach them. When he reached Mecca he was told to wait for five days before circling the Ka'ba, because he had failed to meet someone who had travelled for five days in order to see him. After this delay he was granted the special favour of circling the Ka'ba when nobody else was present. He went on to Medina and spent a year there before being given permission to go home. On the way he forgot to visit the man about whom he had been informed in Mecca, and had to be reminded. He found the man, took him as a disciple, and spent three months bringing him to perfection. Then he was given leave to go. After a couple of days he and his companions got lost in the desert for two months, but God did not let them go hungry or thirsty. Eventually they found themselves on Mount Lebanon. The spirits of the Poles visited them and gave them instruction. After this the travellers went to Uways's grave, and he told them to go to Syria. They stayed in Syria for two years before returning to Simnan.

King Kay Khusraw was now dead. Sam'an spent nine more years as elder there. One day, in the world of 'friendship with God' (*walayat*), he caught a dervish sinning. When the culprit was summoned he swore that he was innocent. Sam'an lost his temper and the man was turned to stone. Ten days later Khidr came and told Sam'an that he was about to become Pole. All the Poles and friends of God came and invested him. He was Pole for seventy days. Every day he instructed one person and brought him to the goal, and every day he touched the Throne seventy times. He was

instructed by Khidr and was on the back of Noah. He lived to the age of 99, and died on a Friday, in the month of Rajab. Afterwards somebody saw him in a dream and asked what God had done with him. Sam'an just smiled in reply.

Commentary

Sam'an resembles Noah in being an instrument of God's punishment. Noah is also a 'perspicuous admonisher' in the Qur'an (11: 27 and 71: 2). Sam'an and Noah both have long lives (though Sam'an shortens his by losing his temper and revealing his power to work a miracle).

The year of Sam'an's death is not given. Simnan has usually belonged to dynasties which controlled a much wider area. It was destroyed by the Mongols in 1221, but was subsequently rebuilt. In the fifteenth century it was ruled by a minor dynasty, that of the Chelawids of Tabaristan in northern Iran.[134] 'Kay Khusraw' is the name of a legendary monarch in the Iranian national epic: there and elsewhere he is credited with mystical tendencies.[135]

The element of the 'eleven persons' who are instructed through the intermediary of Noah is absolutely extraordinary. Perhaps there is an influence from Twelver Shiism here: the twelfth figure would be the mystic himself. But one notes that the numbers ten and twelve also occur in the text of this chapter (which is the tenth in a series): a similar combination involving a group of eleven figures is found in 'Attar's poetry.[136]

With this biography the author brings to an end a sub-series of ten chapters, before moving to East Turkistan for the last ten. Thus Sam'an's enigmatic smile provides an apt conclusion. Although this is an even-numbered chapter, it has little in common with the preceding one. However, it is closely bound up with the one which follows.

Chapter 31 Jamal al-Din of Kadak

Jamal al-Din of Kadak (in the south of East Turkistan) was responsible for the discovery of 1,700 holy places in the kingdom of Kashghar. He was very learned, in both the formal and the esoteric sciences, and had considerable powers of intuition. For these reasons he was highly esteemed by the king of the time, who was always eager for his company. Jamal al-Din, however, wanted to devote all his time to God. A voice told him to go to the king and

use his talents to put an end to his tyranny. This was essential for Jamal al-Din's own mystical progress. He duly went to the king, who was called Qubays. The latter offered Jamal al-Din his throne, but the mystic said that it would be better for them to keep their respective positions, while developing their friendship in the world of inner meaning. They formed a 'compact of fraternality' (*'ahd-i ukhuwwat*). The king accepted Jamal al-Din's guidance in worldly affairs and Jamal al-Din's 'work' prospered.

Forty years passed, and then Khidr came to Jamal al-Din and instructed him for three days. Then he told Jamal al-Din to look after his 'brother' and expect to see him a week later. After this Jamal al-Din recited Chapter 1 of the Qur'an and breathed on the king's chest. The king lost consciousness and saw two people slit his chest open, remove its contents, wash them, replace them, sew his chest up again, recite the first chapter of the Qur'an, breathe on his chest and disappear. Ten years passed, and nobody knew how devoted to God the king and Jamal al-Din were. Then, one day, at the command of the king and the chief judge, somebody was executed as a result of false testimony. A voice told Jamal al-Din that it was necessary for the false witnesses to be killed and for prayers to be said, so that the executed man would be brought back to life. All this was done. Jamal al-Din's miraculous powers were now public knowledge, but the people of Kadak refused to become his disciples. He appealed to God to manifest his anger and annihilate them. A voice informed him that his prayer was answered and advised him to take care of himself. Soon a muezzin (someone who gives the call to worship) came to say that a sandstorm had started. Jamal al-Din told him to put his family on his pack-animals, tie these to the highest tree that he could find, and keep driving them round and round. Then he himself left the town. The muezzin followed his advice, and, the following morning, found that the whole town had vanished beneath the sand.

Jamal al-Din now went to Alma-Ata (the capital of Kazakhstan) and lived there for five years and ten months. Then he went to Mecca. After a year he performed the pilgrimage, and disappeared between al-Safa and al-Marwa (places at Mecca between which pilgrims have been obliged to run).[137] He joined the 'men of the unseen', but in the external world he revisited Kadak once before vanishing for good. The muezzin's children were still there, and declared, wrongly, that he had died. One night one of them saw

him in a dream and asked what 'status' (*hukm*) they should give him. He replied, 'Dead, and of the people of the tombs'. So a tomb was built for him there.

Commentary

We are not told on whose heart or back Jamal al-Din was. Perhaps it would have been a 'prophet of punishment', Noah, Moses, or one of the Arabian warners whose peoples came to a dire end. On the other hand, since he avoids dying, it might have been Elijah, and since he advises a king it could have been Joseph. The biography starts a new sub-group, placed in East Turkistan. There are, however, various elements of continuity with the previous biography: the king, Khidr, Mecca, intuition and anger.

East Turkistan is famous for its sandstorms. Entire cities have been buried by them and remained perfectly preserved for centuries. Thus holy places and tombs have often been 'rediscovered'.[138]

Jamal al-Din appears in the *Rashidi History*, in the company of a Mongol prince, Tughluq Timur Khan (reigned 1347–62). The story of the sandstorm and the muezzin is given there, but in a different form: the muezzin is saved by climbing the minaret from which he gives the call to worship. After this Jamal al-Din is presented as going to Aqsu in the north of East Turkistan. Not much later he dies.[139] Modern scholarship has shown that the story of the town's destruction at the demand of Jamal al-Din is modelled on a legend about a Buddhist holy man, already recorded in the same area.[140]

Chapter 32 Ayyub the Jurist

Ayyub the Jurist was a scholar, who also had such a strong command of Sufism that he would bring people's 'work' to completion just by looking at them. He was born into a family of farmers, and left his father as a child. After his father's death he spent his time looking after his mother and studying. He was a member of a group of students, and one day the others decided to go to another country in order to learn more. Ayyub wanted to go with them, but his mother refused to let him do so. He was reduced to spending his days carrying firewood to earn a living, while his nights were passed in devotion to God. After a month an elder came and offered to teach him. The following day he came again,

taught Ayyub and breathed on his chest. For nine years the elder gave him 'exterior' and 'interior' instruction, in the external world, so that Ayyub acquired an unsurpassed mastery of formal knowledge, and an inner awareness of everything that was happening in the world. Then his friends returned from their studies. The following day was a Friday, and in those days it was the practice for an erudite person to preach a special sermon, demonstrating his ability to interpret the Qur'an and the Traditions. His instructor (now named as Khidr) told Ayyub to ascend the pulpit and give the sermon: he would tell him what to say. Accordingly, after the communal worship Khidr sat opposite him when he ascended the pulpit, and Ayyub repeated his words after him. Everyone was amazed at Ayyub's erudition. His fellow-students now became his pupils, and he taught them for two years. Then his mother died, and he renounced the world. Every day he would keep company with Khidr.

Two more years passed, and Ayyub began to work miracles. A large caravan came from Multan, with plenty of gold and silver. It stopped for a couple of days by a river. There was a sinner in the caravan, and God made the river overflow, drowning him and causing all the wealth of his fellow-travellers to be lost, as a punishment for tolerating his sin. One of the local inhabitants told them to ask Ayyub for help. Ayyub agreed to accept one-third of their property as a reward. Then he pointed his staff downstream and said (in Uighur), 'Flow! (*Aq!*)' Water rushed downstream. He pointed his staff upstream and said, 'Stand! (*Tur!*)' Water massed upstream. After this he told the travellers to pick up their property from the dry river-bed in front of them. When they had recovered it he ordered the river to flow as normal. Ayyub kept some of the reward to build *langars* (rest-houses or soup-kitchens run by dervishes), and vowed to erect nine of these. In his lifetime he built one, and was thinking about the others when he was commanded to go to Mecca.

Ayyub set off and reached the Hijaz. There he met an elder called 'Mansur of the Hijaz', and they made a 'compact of fraternality'. Ayyub asked his new 'brother' to fulfil his vow, since he knew that he would not live to fulfil it himself. Then he spent nine months in Mecca before returning to his homeland, where he lived for one year and five months more. He told the dervishes that forty days after his death his deputy would arrive and make their pot boil. They were to obey this deputy, while looking for assistance

from Ayyub's own spirit. After his death someone saw him in a dream, and was told that God had dealt with him as with the pious believers of early Islam.

Commentary

We are not told on whose heart or back Ayyub was, but presumably it would be Moses: he uses his staff or rod to part the waters. Like Moses, he represents the law. Ayyub's instructor is Khidr: this fits in with the instruction of Moses by Khidr in Islamic tradition, and joins this chapter to the previous one. The theme of mystical 'fraternality' (*ukhuwwat*) is also repeated from Chapter 31, as is the location of Mecca. A 'compact of fraternality' is found in Chapter 12, which, like this chapter, is second in a series of ten and is followed by a section devoted to a successor.

Section xiv Mansur of the Hijaz

Forty days after Ayyub's death Mansur of the Hijaz arrived, made the dervishes' pot boil as predicted and was accepted by them. Some of them wanted to become his disciples, but he told them to wait, since he wanted to meet Ayyub first. In the next three nights Ayyub appeared to him, first in the form of a millstone, then in that of a *quchqar* (a kind of wild ram often found in this region), and finally in his own form, before indicating where his treasury was hidden. Then Mansur accepted the dervishes as his disciples, and they opened the treasury. He offered the contents to the governor of the city [presumably Yarkand, judging from what follows], who was called 'Abd Allah Beg, but the latter agreed to take only a token amount. Mansur proceeded to build the *langars* specified by Ayyub, and busied himself with instructing the dervishes.

At that time the people were much oppressed by the *maliks* (Turkic warlords, literally 'kings' – the title was very freely used in the late Middle Ages)[141] who were ruling the country, and so they flocked to Mansur for assistance. These *maliks* started to persecute the dervishes, imposing financial burdens on them. The dervishes turned to Mansur for help, and he tried to intercede with the *maliks*. They responded by insisting that he had to perform a miracle, and challenged him and his disciples to an ordeal by fire. He accepted, and fixed Qum Shahidan (Martyrs' Sands)[142] as the spot. The *maliks*, with forty camels carrying firewood for forty days,

assembled an enormous pyre. Mansur and his dervishes left their 'house of retreat' (*chilla-khana*) and set off. They passed through a village called Ghunduq,[143] in which there lived a very pious woman called 'A'isha. She spent all her time reciting the remembrance-formula 'There is no god but God'. Now she invited Mansur to her house and gave him some food. He took her with him when he went on.

The bonfire was duly lit, and Mansur and his disciples formed a ring round it. They began their 'remembrance', but no spiritual warmth was obtained. Mansur asked if any dervish had failed to come. Somebody said that in Yarkand there was a dervish called Baba Sudji, who had a son called Faqih Muhammad. Mansur called out to them, and the father (who was in his house) and the son (who was in the 'house of retreat') both heard. They turned into birds and flew to the bonfire. Then they resumed their original forms. The group began its 'remembrance', and this time spiritual warmth was obtained. Mansur was overwhelmed by ecstasy, and said to Faqih Muhammad (in Uighur), 'Recite a piece of wisdom!' Faqih Muhammad replied (also in Uighur):

> O hell! O hell!
> Know your limit, hell!
> Beware of the lovers!
> Know your limit, hell!

At once they all saw the fire appear as a mirage. Mansur threw himself into the fire and vanished for a while. Then he reappeared from all four sides, creating lanes and a crossroads in the middle, where he went and stood, calling on the dervishes to come in. They stamped on the fire so much that sweat poured from their feet, quenching it. Afterwards one of them suggested that it would be nice to have some fruit, to remove the heat produced in their hearts. Mansur told some of them to go into the surrounding sands: they found an enormous quantity of fruit there.

The *maliks* had not been present during the fire-ordeal. They sent a messenger to see what had happened, and the dervishes sent him back with an apple. This apple was taken by the *maliks*' leader, who now came to test Mansur again. The two of them met by a river, and the *malik* challenged the elder to dive in without getting wet. Mansur did so, but the *malik* still harboured feelings of enmity towards him. The Sufi leader asked God to kill the *malik*. When the

latter was on his way home one of the attendants told him about Mansur's prayer. The *malik* still had the apple in his hand. He hurled it up into the air, and it came down and hit his horse. The horse threw him and he was killed.

Mansur looked after 700 disciples, and himself obtained instruction from the spirit of Ja'far (the sixth Leader of Muhammad's family). His original name was Shaykh Mansur. Because he was from the Hijaz he became famous as 'Shaykh Hijazi'. He died at the age of 80.

Commentary

Again, we are not told on whose heart or back the subject of the biography was. His instructor, Ja'far (d. 765), the sixth Leader of the Shiites, is greatly respected by the Sunnis as a teacher of mysticism. Since Mansur's 'brother' is dealt with by God as with the pious believers of early Islam, Ja'far is an appropriate teacher for him. Ja'far has a shrine in the south of East Turkistan, where he is believed by the people of the region to have died in battle against unbelievers.[144]

The story of the fire-ordeal is mentioned later in the *History of the Uwaysis*, and there more information is given about the 'pieces of wisdom' attributed to Faqih Muhammad, as well as about the pious 'A'isha.[145] These would appear to be real or legendary local figures, as is generally the case with the part of the book devoted to East Turkistan, and not simply invented by Uzgani (although the picture given of them is still, of course, highly imaginary).

Chapter 33 Husayn Fadli of Kashghar

Husayn Fadli was the finest scholar of his time, with a particularly fine command of Qur'anic exegesis and mysticism. He had no elder, but obtained instruction from 'Umar (Muhammad's second successor) and was on the back of Job. Of Syrian origin, he was descended from Muhammad, but this was not well known. He was born at Kashghar. His father, who was called Mu'alla, had left Syria because his miraculous powers began to attract too much notice. After three years he had reached Kashghar and married there after one year's residence. After one more year a voice told him to go to the shrine of Abu Hanifa. When he went to Baghdad and performed the pilgrimage to the shrine there he died on the same day and was buried in the shrine. His son was born three

months later. After a week his mother had a dream. She saw a man with a white beard and a flag who breathed on her child's face, gave him the name 'Husayn Fadli' and told her to take care of him, as he would bring her a good reputation in this world and salvation in the next. At the age of one Husayn began to speak, quoting the Qur'an: 'Say: "I am a mortal like you: it is revealed to me that your God is a single God; so let him who longs to meet his lord act piously and, when worshipping his lord, not associate anybody with him." (18: 110)' When Husayn reached the age of two and a half he went to a Qur'an-school. After nine months he had recited the whole of the Qur'an twice and learnt to read and write. Then he went to lectures in a college for five years, before being granted knowledge by 'unveiling'. After this he would give lectures himself, acquiring many students. By night he would be joined to God.

Twelve years passed. Some people persuaded Husayn to marry, in the hope that he would have a son to succeed him as a scholar. Five years later a son was born to him. He was called Abu 'l-Futuh Alma'i, and became a fine scholar, but died young. Husayn did not cry, but put on fine clothes and sat in solitude for a week. People criticized him for this. He had a bowl brought, and filled it with blood from his mouth. Then he explained that the dead are made to drink the tears shed for them, which taste as bitter as poison. Every tear becomes a sea in which the dead person is drowned. One day Husayn happened to see some of his son's friends. He shed a tear, and went to Abu 'l-Futuh's grave. His son did not appear to him, however much Husayn concentrated, although his spirit had appeared before. He fell asleep, and saw his son drowning in a sea. Abu 'l-Futuh explained that this was the tear, and that his father had to rescue him by reciting Chapter 36 of the Qur'an (known as the heart of the Qur'an).

Two years later, unable to bear the loss of his son, Husayn left for Mecca with eighty pupils. They went via Egypt, and the Egyptian scholars came to see him. One, who viewed him with contempt, asked, 'What is the foundation of faith?' Husayn replied, 'A jar of flour.' Everyone mocked him as an ignorant fool, and he left. A famine ensued, and the Egyptians forgot their faith, eating one another's flesh. When Husayn reached Mecca he was ordered to go back to Egypt to save them. When he returned the Egyptians all begged forgiveness. He prayed for them, and the famine ended.

Husayn went back to his homeland, and abandoned teaching for seclusion. He spent four years in devotion, until his fellow-scholars

begged him to return to teaching. He agreed to teach every Thursday, and declared that, according to what he had been told in Mecca, whoever recited Chapter 36 of the Qur'an on forty-eight Thursdays at his tomb would be granted as much knowledge as he needed. After this Husayn reached his goal, and was Pole for three and a half days. In this time he obtained instruction from the spirit of Muhammad, and was on the heart of Shu'ayb. Then he died, on a Thursday, in the month of Rajab and the Year of the Hare,[146] in Kashghar.

Commentary

This biography is unusual, in that its subject is on the back of Job and is instructed by 'Umar to begin with, but later on, when he reaches the degree of Pole, he is instructed by Muhammad and is on the heart of Shu'ayb. He resembles Job in his suffering and 'Umar in his rigour. Again, as in the early biographies in the three previous sub-groups of ten, a leading theme is teaching. Another theme, that one should not weep for the dead, is found in the sayings attributed to Muhammad.[147] Husayn resembles Shu'ayb as a representative of God's punishment, which overtakes people who reject him.

Husayn Fadli is a historical figure and a distinguished author, mentioned by the historian Qarshi at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Qarshi gives the date of his death as 486 AH/1093 CE, and provides a similar version of the story of his son's death. Husayn is rebuked for not weeping at his funeral, and goes to urinate: he passes blood.[148]

Chapter 34 Abu 'l-Futuh Alma'i of Kashghar

Abu 'l-Futuh Alma'i, the son of Husayn Fadli, was nick-named 'Knowledge Bestowed' ('Ilm-i 'Ata'i), because God had given him an extraordinary aptitude for scholarship. He had a superb memory, such that every day he would memorize the contents of his own weight (according to one account a quarter of his weight) in books. Abu 'l-Futuh was also extremely pious. When he was born the sun stopped and started again, and the moon burst into flames. His father was very sad, and explained that the behaviour of the sun symbolized his child's unrivalled knowledge, which would illuminate dark hearts, but that of the moon represented his early death. At the age of two and a half, like his father, Abu 'l-Futuh

went to a Qur'an-school and spent nine months there, reciting the whole Qur'an twice. Then he busied himself with memorizing other books.

When Abu 'l-Futuh reached puberty he happened to pass by the king's harem. He saw a beautiful girl and fell in love with her. She turned out to be the king's daughter. He asked Muhammad's spirit to intercede for him and kept vigils at the shrine of Satuq Bughra Khan. After three days the princess dreamt that she saw Muhammad come and marry her to Abu 'l-Futuh, scattering dates on her head. When she woke up she found dates on her pillow and summoned her father. The king was very pleased. After some discussion about the legality of a marriage performed by Muhammad in a dream, it was agreed that a renewal of the marriage was advisable.

Three years later Abu 'l-Futuh was sitting with his father, and had memorized half his daily quota. Then a messenger came from the king, who wanted his son-in-law to come hunting with him. Husayn said that his son would finish his quota first. The king sent more messengers, and eventually Abu 'l-Futuh left without obtaining his father's permission. The latter lost his temper and said, 'You went, you went!' These words caused his son to fall from his horse and die. He was buried on the spot.

This biography, explains Uzgani, has been placed after that of Husayn for a good reason: the father or ancestor must be given greater honour than the son or descendant. Abu 'l-Futuh was instructed by Abu Hanifa and was on the back of Seth.

Commentary

Presumably Abu 'l-Futuh is on the back of Seth because, like Seth, he is a gift from God to his father, resembles him and is much loved by him.[149] One notes that, as in the preceding biographies, there is a connection with a leading figure of early Islam. This chapter is joined to the previous one not just by the father–son relationship and the subject of learning, but by the figure of Muhammad. Thus Chapters 33 and 34 correspond to Chapters 13 and 14, where the Prophet, scholarship and a premature death are already found, and to Chapters 23 and 24, where Muhammad and the father–son relationship are also prominent.

The story of Abu 'l-Futuh's death is given by Qarshi.[150]

Chapter 35 Faqih Muhammad of Yarkand

Faqih Muhammad (previously mentioned in Section xiv) was 'enraptured' (*majdhub*) from birth until the age of 12. Then he entered the Way (*suluk*). He was born on a Friday, just after the call to worship, and at once started to recite from the Qur'an: 'O you who believe! When the call to worship is given on the day of assembly, hurry to the remembrance of God, and stop buying and selling; that is better for you, if you know (62: 9).' His father, Baba Sudji, rejoiced and looked after him well. From the age of one he would always say, 'God is my Lord.' When he was 12 he was sent to a Qur'an-school, and there he quickly finished his work, in both formal and esoteric study. Faqih Muhammad would eat very little. He told his father to earn a living from basket-weaving, like Solomon, as an indubitably lawful source of income. His father obeyed, and abandoned farming. Baba Sudji became one of the 'substitutes' among the 'men of the unseen', and began to give his son instruction. Although God had created Faqih Muhammad in such a way that he was without need of instruction from 'external' people, he had to be instructed by his father because he was young. However, he also obtained some instruction from Moses.

When Faqih Muhammad reached puberty he went into seclusion. He would keep uttering 'pieces of wisdom' (*hikmats*), and would ask Khidr to correct them before making them public. Whenever he uttered these 'pieces of wisdom' he would lose consciousness. They are infallible, since they were inspired by the 'tongue of the unseen' (*lisan al-ghayb*). Each one refers to one of the degrees of the Way or 'stations' of God's friends. For example, he said (in Uighur):

> Aiming far from the earth, falling to work we came;
> Playing in love, traversing the heart we came.

This refers to the event mentioned above, when Mansur of the Hijaz asked him and his father for help.[151] Then he recited the 'piece of wisdom' quoted in Section xiv. He would not utter a 'piece of wisdom' without there being some special occasion. After this event he went home and performed forty-one retreats of forty days in succession. Then he went to a hill called Qutlugh Boynaq. On that hill his work reached completion. He said (again in Uighur):

> On Mount Qutlugh Boynaq the caravan of luck was brought in;
> The kingdom of good fortune came and the work was finished.

This refers to the fact that he obtained 'passing away of the essence' (*fana-yi dhati*) there. Afterwards he performed two more retreats of forty days at the same place, and was granted the 'theophany of outward form' (*tajalli-yi suri*).

Faqih Muhammad was now told to go to a cave called the 'Cave of the Refuge' (Ghar-i Ma'man) and live there for two years. From then on a lamp would burn, miraculously lit, in that cave, which acquired the name 'Lamp Station' (Chiraghliq Maqam). Other places where he stayed have also become holy spots. When the two years came to an end a voice told him to give people the benefit of his wise sayings. He went back into society, but did not take any disciples. For twelve years, every day, all the elders of the world came to his home, which is one of the 1,700 'stations' (*maqamat*) of the region of Kashghar. *Maqam* in Sufi usage means a place where all or most of the world's elders come to discuss contemporary events. So that village was called Jam'-i Jam' ('Gathering of Gatherings'), but this name was corrupted to Jang-i Jang.

One day a dervish asked Faqih Muhammad to show him round the world without making this too difficult for him. Faqih Muhammad drew a circle and told him to look into it. He complained that it was too large. Faqih Muhammad showed him the whole world reflected in the surface of a thumbnail. Then the dervish wanted to become his disciple, but Faqih Muhammad allowed only 'companionship'. Through this the dervish was brought to perfection. He would compare Faqih Muhammad to Gabriel, and thus other dervishes nicknamed this dervish 'Master Gabriel' (Jibra'il Khwaja). His original name was 'Abd al-Rahman. Because of his deep faith in Faqih Muhammad his work reached perfection extremely quickly.

Faqih Muhammad lived to the age of 55, brought one dervish to perfection and was Pole for two and a half hours. One minute later he died. Afterwards someone asked him in a dream what God had done with him. He replied that for each of the 1,001 'pieces of wisdom' which he had uttered God had given him the reward of one full and one lesser pilgrimage, and for each word God had rescued a Muslim from hell. People should remember them: anyone who did so would be saved.

Commentary

Although we are not told on whose heart or back Faqih Muhammad was, it would certainly have been the back of Solomon. He imitates Solomon in weaving baskets and producing 'pieces of wisdom'. Like Solomon, he is given the power to fly through the air and dies in his fifties.[152]

Faqih Muhammad is instructed by Moses: he practises the discipline of the forty days' retreat, in parallel with Moses' forty years in the wilderness. Like Moses, he goes to a high place and is granted the 'theophany of outward form' there.[153]

The literary genre of the 'pieces of wisdom' (Persian singular *hikmat*, Turkic *hikmet*) is associated with Ahmad Yasawi (d. 1166), who is seen as the founder of the Yasawi brotherhood in Turkistan. They are short, popular mystical poems in a syllabic metre, in Turkic.[154]

This chapter, numbered 35, apparently corresponds to Chapters 5 and 25: Moses is the prophetic instructor. As in Chapters 5 and 15, wisdom is divinely bestowed. The chapter is also linked to chapter 25 by the elements of rapture and the vision of God.

I have not succeeded in locating any of the places mentioned here.

Chapter 36 Shadkam of India

Shadkam ('Happy-in-desire') was born in India, and was separated from his parents as a child. He was captured and enslaved, and his master took him to Balkh, where he spent two years. Then a caravan came from the direction of Machin, and one of the people in it, called Abu Bakr, bought him for 500 dirhams. Abu Bakr found that Shadkam brought a 'blessing' (*barakat*) to his commercial affairs, and entrusted them all to him. They spent a year together in Balkh before going to Abu Bakr's homeland. Abu Bakr wanted to put Shadkam in charge of all his possessions, but Shadkam insisted on just working for him as a shepherd. By night he would occupy himself with his devotions, though he could not pronounce the Arabic formulae of Islam correctly.

One day an elder came to Shadkam and told him that he had two masters, Abu Bakr and God. He taught him to pronounce the prescribed formulae required in Muslim worship. From then on Shadkam would make 'remembrance' with the words 'And God is served' (*Wa Allah ma'bud*). After a time, however, a bird told him to

use the formula 'There is no god but God.' Twenty years passed. Then the same bird informed him that Khidr was about to visit him. Khidr appeared as a man of light with a white beard, and said, 'Shadkam, arise, since you have won your heart's desire (*kam*)!' He ordered Shadkam to open his mouth, and spat into it. Now he told Shadkam that he had become one of God's great friends. He was to leave the service of his 'metaphorical' master for that of his 'real' one. Shadkam, out of loyalty, refused, and worked even harder for Abu Bakr. The latter decided to perform the pilgrimage, leaving Shadkam in charge of his affairs.

After two years of delays on the way Abu Bakr reached Mecca. At the conclusion of the pilgrimage he saw Shadkam there. He summoned him and gave him his own share of the sacrifice, a shoulder of mutton. Shadkam took it and vanished. That same day, in Abu Bakr's house, he had asked his master's wife for permission to absent himself briefly. He had taken twenty-four steps, reached the Ka'ba, circled it, taken the joint of meat from Abu Bakr and come home. He had put the joint in front of his master's wife and they had eaten the meat, throwing the bone into a corner. When Abu Bakr returned he investigated the matter and identified the bone as being that of the joint (it had a hole in the middle). He found Shadkam among his sheep, and begged to be allowed to serve him. Shadkam replied that his own good fortune was due to his service of two masters. Abu Bakr wanted to abandon his worldly belongings to follow Shadkam, and expressed the wish that God would destroy all his sheep. They were immediately turned to stone. Shadkam commanded Abu Bakr to give the rest of his property to his family, and he went back to his house. Satan appeared to him in the form of an elder, and told him that Shadkam was an impostor and a sorcerer: he had sent a genie in his own form to Mecca. Abu Bakr was deceived by Satan, and did not give his property away. After a month Shadkam came and rebuked Abu Bakr, turning the sheep (which he had caused to reappear in their natural form) into stone again with an angry glance. (The previous transformation had also been effected by Shadkam, though in appearance it was due to Abu Bakr.)

Then Shadkam vanished, and went to the shrine of his instructor, Qanbar (a famous freed slave in the generation after Muhammad). He spent ten years there in fasting and worship. One day a dervish told him that another dervish was slandering him. Shadkam concentrated on the spirit of his elder, who told him that

anger was sometimes necessary. So Shadkam tied a knot in the cord of his robe, and his enemy's 'work' was suspended for twenty years. On another occasion Shadkam was annoyed by a farmer, and heaved a sigh. A flame leapt from his mouth and burnt up the farmer's crops. In another instance Shadkam beheaded an enemy by cutting the top off a gourd. A dervish asked why he did not follow the usual example of God's friends by showing forgiveness. Shadkam replied that God had many attributes, and displayed himself to each of his friends through one of them. In his case it was anger.

When Shadkam reached the age of 60 some people wanted to become his disciples, but he explained that an elder had to be forgiving, and so he had no disciples at all. He was instructed by the spirit of Qanbar and lived to the age of 75. One day he was sitting in his instructor's shrine when he was told to go back to Abu Bakr's house and be buried there, so that Abu Bakr could receive the reward for reciting the Qur'an for him. Shadkam went there and stayed for a year and ten days. For those last ten days he was Pole, and then he died. Afterwards somebody asked him in a dream how he was. He replied, 'Shadkam is "happy-in-desire" (*shadkam*). You go and mind your own business!'

Commentary

Again, we are not told on whose heart or back Shadkam is. This happens quite a few times in the sub-series devoted to East Turkistan. Presumably it would have been a 'prophet of punishment'. Shadkam's instructor, as is also common in this sub-series, is a famous early Muslim. The celebrated freed slave Qanbar was supposedly given his name by 'Ali, who is often called his master or patron. There are two shrines of Qanbar in Turkmenistan.[155] The use of an Indian to represent a slave here is typical in Islamic literature.

This chapter, second in a pair, is connected to the previous one by the theme of not teaching.

Chapter 37 Muhibb Kuhmar

Muhibb ('Lover') Kuhmar ('Mountain-snake') was deeply in love with God, and a pious ascetic. He was descended from Hasan (Muhammad's grandson) and had no rival in any of the sciences. Muhibb had a fine command of Arabic, and also knew Greek,

Syriac and Hebrew. In the beginning, however, he was a hunter. One day he caught a parrot, and lost his temper when it bit him. He dashed it to the ground, and it rebuked him for behaviour unworthy of his ancestry and urged him to repent. Muhibb did so, and left his homeland, setting off into the desert. A snake joined him and suggested that they should travel together. Muhibb asked how a human and a snake could be companions. The snake replied by quoting the Qur'an: 'You do not see any disparity in the creation of the Beneficent' (67: 3). Muhibb suspected that the snake was a human or a genie. They travelled together for a year, and the snake performed many wonders. Muhibb felt that the snake, not he, was the human. Eventually he suggested to the snake that the latter was one of the 'substitutes'. The snake admitted that he was indeed one of the 'men of the unseen', called 'Abd Allah, whose work consisted in journeying through this world and controlling it. Muhibb had wrongly imagined that when the snake was writhing along the ground it was engaged in a form of devotion, but in fact 'Abd Allah had been journeying through this world and the 'world of sovereignty' with the other 'men of the unseen', while displaying himself as a snake to his companion. Then he changed into human form, recited Chapter 1 of the Qur'an, and breathed on Muhibb's face. Muhibb lost consciousness, and 'Abd Allah slit his chest, washed what was inside, and sewed it up again. Then he recited the first chapter of the Qur'an a second time and breathed on his face. Muhibb regained consciousness and found a pureness in his heart. 'Abd Allah said that he would see him twice a year, and disappeared.

After this Muhibb stayed there for two years. He reached high 'stations', and snakes would gather round him. At the end of the two years 'Abd Allah told him to go to Turkistan. A snake guided him on his way. After two more years he reached Machin, the farthest part of Turkistan. There he made the acquaintance of a dervish called Sufyan, whose 'breath' (*dam*, i.e. his speech) travelled like an arrow, faster than anything, so that he was called 'Arrow-Breath' (Dam-i Tir). This dervish told Muhibb to shoot an arrow and settle where it landed. Muhibb did so, and they both built a *langar* and a hermitage for him to live in. Then they separated, agreeing to communicate by shooting arrows to each other. Ten years passed. Meanwhile the snake that had come with Muhibb stayed coiled in the doorway of the hermitage, to keep Satan and the genies out. Muhibb quickly reached his goal and the

degree of the 'substitutes'. From then on he would meet Khidr and Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi twice a day. Then an arrow came through the door and vanished. He realized that he was about to die, and told the local people to bury him in his hermitage and consult him for 200 years. Pilgrims with requests were to know that if the snake appeared it was a good omen. After his death he told someone in a dream that to see his snake was the same as seeing him, and that God had dealt with him as he had with his instructor, 'Abd Allah Yamani.

Commentary

The commentary on this chapter has been combined with that on the following section.

Section xv Muhibb Kumar's snake

After Muhibb's death his snake continued to act as a doorkeeper. People would come with their problems, leave some paper and ink, and return later to find written answers. This went on for 200 years. Twenty years after Muhibb's death the snake also died. A written answer instructed the local people to bury it in the *langar*. It continues to appear there to people who are fortunate enough to have their requests granted. Some of the vulgar imagine the snake's tomb to be that of Muhibb.

Commentary

Yet again, there is no mention of a prophet on whose heart or back Muhibb would be. He is instructed by 'Abd Allah Yamani, the subject of the first chapter, and thus naturally comes into an Uwaysi arrangement: communication with another dervish who is physically distant. Here the theme of the animal as man's instructor is particularly significant. The shrine of Muhibb Kuhmar and his snake is well known and well documented. Apparently it represents an older, Buddhist holy place with its own snake-legend.[156] The famous Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna, who has the word for 'snake' as a component of his name, has had similar legends attached to him as a result.[157] As for the motif of posthumous advice to people who bring written questions, this is one which we have encountered before, in both the *History of the Uwaysis* and sixteenth-century East Turkistan.[158]

This chapter, numbered 37, corresponds to Chapters 7, 17 and

27: all four are set wholly or partly in Turkistan, include the figure of Khidr and have sections attached to them. Chapters 7, 17 and 37 have the motifs of hunting and the animal as guide.

Chapter 38 Taj al-'Ata'i of Najaf

Taj al-'Ata'i was a scholar, and one of the notables of Najaf (in Iraq). Before reaching puberty he made two pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina. During the second God granted him 'useful knowledge' (*'ilm-i naf'i*): his mastery of the sciences was 'divinely bestowed' (*ilahi*), not 'acquired' (*kasbi*). After reaching puberty he performed seven more pilgrimages to Mecca, and in the course of the last was commanded to settle and teach in Medina. Then Muhammad told him that he was not to spend more than two years in Medina, because he had to go to Turkistan, where there was a greater need for scholars. As in the case of Uways, Muhammad would remain with him. Taj al-'Ata'i decided to leave at once. He spent three years on the way before reaching Khotan. There he was ordered to find a suitable spot near the city in which to settle. He found a pleasant area, and took a nap. In a dream he saw a man with a white beard, who rebuked him for not visiting the 'master of the place' (*sahib-manzil*), i.e. himself. When Taj al-'Ata'i woke up he came to the man's house and they ate a meal. His host said that he was called Bughra and was the elder of the region. Taj al-'Ata'i replied that the name was inappropriate. In Uighur it meant a rutting camel, but his host did not have a rutting camel's qualities: being able to bear burdens, content oneself with a small amount of food, control other camels and eat anything. For the man had not been able to bear Taj al-'Ata'i's behaviour in taking a nap before visiting him, had eaten much delicious food and could not control even himself. Bughra answered that he was so called after the name of the dish which he served to people. His guest said that he still did not deserve the name, and needed to be cooked by a powerful cook. He made Bughra his pupil (*shagird*) and taught him for ten years. Then he told him that he needed an elder, and took him as a disciple. When people heard about this Taj al-'Ata'i acquired many more disciples. He would perform a vast amount of worship and eat very little.

One day a widow came and said that she wanted to marry him. He, most unwillingly, agreed, but they did not have intercourse. Eventually, however, Muhammad's spirit told him to become a

father. He would have two sons, who would be respectively 'the guide of the path of God' (*hadi sabil Allah*) and 'the rightly guided one of the road of the Law' (*mahdi-yi rah-i shari'at*). Taj al-'Ata'i had intercourse with his wife seventy times in one night, but not thereafter. They had a pair of twins, whom they named Hasan and Husayn, and to whom they gave 'instruction'. At the age of seven the twins began to contemplate the 'things of the unseen'. Then their father died. He appeared to Hasan (the elder of the twins) in a dream and ordered him to look after his mother until she died, and then to set off with his brother and go to Mecca.

Commentary

The commentary on this chapter has been combined with that on the following section.

Section xvi Hasan and Husayn, the sons of Taj al-'Ata'i

The twins looked after their mother for seventeen years, and then she died. They set off for Mecca with seventy dervishes whom their father had instructed. After a month some bandits confronted them. Hasan and Husayn prayed, and the bandits were overwhelmed. Some days later a vast number of wild beasts attacked the dervishes. Hasan gave his name, and the animals kissed the ground and went away. One of the dervishes asked him how he had acquired this power of 'friendship with God' without enduring austerities. He replied that Muhammad had called him the 'guide of God's path'. The party reached Mecca, and when circling the Ka'ba was told by Muhammad to go to Kerbela, as the place of his grandson Husayn's martyrdom. They were immediately transported to Kerbela, and the next day Husayn died there. His companions buried him, but did not build a tomb, and returned to Mecca. Hasan stayed in Mecca, giving the dervishes leave to depart, and remained there for ten years, until his death.

Commentary

Chapter 38 and the section attached to it are of the greatest importance for the history of religions. There is no statement about the father's being on the heart or back of a prophet. We do, however, see Muhammad staying with him. His children correspond to Muhammad's grandsons, Hasan being the elder of these. What is fascinating is that here the corresponding Sufis are

called twins. In the Islamic historical tradition Hasan and Husayn are not twins, but in popular Islamic religiosity they function as a pair. The veneration given to their mother, Fatima, recalls that accorded to mothers of twins (as being especially fertile) in various mythologies. Moreover, the fertility rituals which surround the commemoration of Husayn's martyrdom strongly suggest that we have here an Indo-European survival: the famous Indo-European twins, best known in their Roman form of Castor and Pollux, would appear to have entered Islam through the Iranian intermediary of Haurvatat (Health) and Ameretat (Immortality). There is an obvious parallel with the Christian continuations of the Indo-European twins in various pairings (Jesus and Thomas, Cosmas and Damian, Florus and Laurus, etc.).[159] Taj al-'Ata'i, then, corresponds to 'Ali, the father of Hasan and Husayn, cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad and first Leader of the Shiites. In his closeness to Muhammad and receipt of knowledge directly from God he resembles the 'Ali of Shiism.

One notes that Chapter 38 is linked to Chapter 37 by the figure of Hasan.

Chapter 39 'Abd al-Rahman of Aleppo

'Abd al-Rahman was born in Syria, at Aleppo, and was descended on his mother's side from Abu Bakr. In the beginning he was a seller of dates, and extremely greedy for money. Although he had inherited the palm-grove which furnished him with his dates, his greed had made it a completely unlawful source of income. Eventually God's anger was provoked, and the palm-grove was burnt to the ground. 'Abd al-Rahman, upset, left for the east, and settled in Herat. There he bought a vineyard, and would make wine, which he drank with his friends. Forty years passed happily. One day he was going to fetch some wine when a voice told him to live up to his name ('Slave of the Beneficent'). He repented, and was retracing his steps when the voice told him to carry on and take the wine to his friends, who were waiting for it to come. He obeyed. They told him to drink, and the voice urged him to do so: the wine had become sherbet. When his friends realized this they repented too, and told him to become their elder. 'Abd al-Rahman agreed, but was worried, since he felt unworthy of the title. He lost consciousness, and somebody came and invited him to come for a swim. Then he ducked 'Abd al-Rahman in a large river several

times and promised to meet him the following night. 'Abd al-Rahman regained consciousness and found that his heart had become like a bright mirror. A voice reminded him that his name was 'Abd al-Rahman: he would bring grace to God's creatures. When his visitor returned he informed 'Abd al-Rahman that he had become one of God's great friends in his essence (*dhat*), but had to make his life agree with that essence. So he had to undergo austerities. He did so, until one day a voice told him that he and his friends should go to the 'cave of Bu 'l-'Ala'.' A guide would appear to show them the way.

The friends set off, and found themselves in a desert, with no provisions. A table-cloth filled with food came from the 'world of the unseen', and they ate. Then they felt thirsty. A voice told 'Abd al-Rahman to ask for help from God, Muhammad and the 'interior' of his instructor and guide, Uways, and strike the ground with his staff. Water was duly produced, and the dervishes, forty-one in number, drank. For twelve days they went on. Then someone came to 'Abd al-Rahman and told him that they had reached the right place, where the prophet Idris had worshipped for twenty days, at the foot of a tree. 'Abd al-Rahman was to tell the tree to move aside. He followed these instructions and a door became visible. Behind it he and the dervishes found a hermitage, with a black rope inside. 'Abd al-Rahman put the black rope round his neck and stayed there for ten years. Food and water were provided as on the first day of their journey. The forty-one dervishes attained to perfection, and 'Abd al-Rahman reached his goal.

One day they were sitting together when a dervish called Ghiyath al-Din told 'Abd al-Rahman that the Pole of the earth's surface had just died, and 'Abd al-Rahman had been appointed as his replacement. He replied that he had been given the post five years earlier, and the man who had just died had been appointed only on a provisional basis. He himself had wanted to concentrate on God, and not to have to worry about this world and the 'world of sovereignty', as the post of Pole demanded. Then Khidr, Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi and seventy-five Uwaysi elders came, along with some great Uwaysis in the world of inner meaning. Only 'Abd al-Rahman and Ghiyath al-Din realized this. 'Abd al-Rahman was invested as Pole. That day he instructed the forty-one dervishes and brought them to perfection. Now he was told to rejoin society.

'Abd al-Rahman went back to Herat, and spent five years there, looking after 300 disciples while he was Pole. In this time he made

Ghiyath al-Din his deputy and put him in charge of teaching the dervishes. One day the spirit of his instructor, Uways, came and told him that he had lived for eighty years, twenty of which had been spent in austerity. Now he was to die. Uways disappeared, and Khidr and Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi arrived. They told 'Abd al-Rahman to go to Machin and be buried there that same day. The three of them, and the forty-one dervishes, who had obtained the degree of 'rolling up the earth', immediately transported themselves into a desert. 'Abd al-Rahman rejoiced at the idea of having no visible trace of himself left, as was appropriate for a dervish, especially in the Uwaysi brotherhood, following Uways's example. Then he died, leaving the problem of where to find water with which to wash his body. Ghiyath al-Din concentrated on his elder's spirit, and 'Abd al-Rahman told him to ask Khidr and Abu 'l-Fayd. They ordered him to invoke 'Abd al-Rahman and hit the ground with his staff. He did so, and a spring was produced, which has continued to exist. That spot is called Yolchi Köli. After forty days the dervishes dispersed. Ghiyath al-Din saw 'Abd al-Rahman in a dream, and was told that God had dealt with him as with Uways.

Commentary

Here there is again no mention of a prophet's heart or back. However, there is a connection with Idris, and the motif of a baptism. One recalls the mystical identification of John the Baptist with Elijah.[160] This fits in well with the strongly Uwaysi character of the chapter, which is emphasized by the presence of Uways himself. The forty-one dervishes (a deputy plus forty) correspond to the Sufi hierarchical arrangement of a Pole and forty 'substitutes'. They also correspond to the forty-one figures in the legend of Satuq Bughra Khan.[161]

The story about the repentance of 'Abd al-Rahman's drinking-companions greatly resembles an anecdote concerning the Sufi leader Ahmad of Jam (in north-eastern Iran), who died in 1141, related by the famous North African traveller Ibn Battuta (d. *c.* 1375).[162]

This chapter, the penultimate of the forty, is similar in some ways to Chapter 1, the biography of 'Abd Allah Yamani: both chapters contain subjects with names formed in the same way, the figure of Uways as instructor, an ancient hermitage used by a prophet, miraculous production of water and an anonymous grave.

Section xvii Ghiyath al-Din of Herat

Ghiyath al-Din stayed for one more week at 'Abd al-Rahman's grave after the other dervishes had gone. Then his elder gave him leave to go, but told him first to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of 'the sacrificed Leader' (*Imam-i dhabiha*).[163] On his way back he was to take a different route, because many people were prevented from performing the pilgrimage to this shrine by lack of an adequate water supply, and so it was Ghiyath al-Din's duty to make a spring flow and build a *langar*. Ghiyath al-Din went to the shrine and had visions there. On his way back he was joined by a wolf. This, he assumed, was his guide. He found the route which 'Abd al-Rahman had specified, and the latter appeared to him in a dream to say that he was at the right spot. A group of genies came and built the *langar*. After one day's journey he was overcome by thirst, and used his staff to make water gush out of the ground. Then a man came and complained that the water had drowned his child. Ghiyath al-Din gave him 100 silver tankas as blood-money (*arsh*), and so the *langar* which he had just had built was called Arsha.[164] It is flourishing to this day. After another day's journey Ghiyath al-Din founded another *langar*. Somebody came out of the desert, and Ghiyath al-Din asked, 'Where were you last night?' The man said (in Uighur), 'At the halting-place (*otraqi*) spring.' So that *langar* was named Otraqi.[165] Then Ghiyath al-Din asked, 'Where will you be this evening?' The man pronounced *sh* as *s* and *b* as *p*, and consequently replied, 'This evening (*pu sam*) I shall be at the spring.' So the village nearby was named Pusam.[166] Ghiyath al-Din remained and died in that *langar*.

Commentary

Ghiyath al-Din seems to be a doublet of his elder. Like him, he makes water gush out of the ground. He is guided by a wolf, the Arabic for which is *uways*, just as his teacher is guided by Uways Qarani.

Chapter 40 Habib of Kashghar

Habib was the son of a friend of God, and himself a 'friend' from birth. As a young man he was a student, but did not make progress in his studies. In Sufism, however, he was granted a comprehensive share of knowledge, and obtained instruction from the spirit of

'Ali. One day he had a dream, and found himself entering a town. He went through a door, which opened on to a street, and then, going through another door, found himself in a room, where a man was sitting. The man held a loaf of bread out to him. Then Habib woke up. Now at that time the Pole was one Sayyid Kardgar ('Knife-maker'). He wanted to see Habib, and, together with three fellow-Sufis, called Nizam al-Din Khalid, Mahmud Khafafi and Haji Bayati, decided to make him come by causing absolute chaos in the region of Kashghar. They did this, with their spiritual concentration (*tawajjuh*). Habib and his family were obliged to set off in the direction of Andijan.

On the way 'Ali appeared to Habib in a dream and said that time was coming to an end. Few of God's friends were to be found on the face of the earth, and consequently it was especially necessary to find an 'external' elder. When Habib reached Andijan, he recognized the doors which he had seen in his dream and came to the man who had proffered the loaf: Sayyid Kardgar. He ate the latter's bread, and was granted the gift of spiritual vision (*nazar*, 'look'), because Kardgar had given it the 'look' of 'friendship with God'. Kardgar summoned his friends, and after a seance of ecstatic listening to poetry entrusted Habib to them. Nizam al-Din Khalid invested him with a patched frock and taught him a formula of 'remembrance'; Mahmud Khafafi taught him the method of the Way; Haji Bayati gave him advice. After six months of instruction they brought him to perfection, and then he spent another year with his elders. Then they sent him back to Kashghar to take disciples.

Habib returned in the company of forty dervishes. Each of the elders had given him a 'symbol' (*'alamat*). He went to his home in Artush (near Kashghar) and decided to build a *langar*. The site which he chose was covered with brambles, and this worried the dervishes. He told them to go and take a nap, and then ordered a mattock to cut the brambles. When it had cleared the ground a child woke the dervishes up and asked why they had been asleep while their elder had been working. Ashamed, they got on with building the *langar*, while people brought animals as offerings. The roof-beam was found to be too short, but Habib miraculously extended it. When news of this miracle spread he acquired many followers.

The notables of Kashghar decided to investigate Habib. They found a leading logician, who also had a command of the other

sciences, and he, accompanied by some pupils, set off to see the Sufi master. He thought up some difficult questions on the way, and decided not to dismount until reaching the *langar*'s door, as a deliberate insult. However, he found himself getting off his horse well before, involuntarily. Habib exercised 'control' (*tasarruf*) upon the scholar, and the latter ran towards him. The mystic embraced him, lifting him up and shaking him: all his knowledge poured out. The scholar could not remember his questions, and ended up asking about the purpose of a long drain, which, he was informed, was for a lavatory. On leaving he confessed his helplessness, and Habib had pity on him: his knowledge returned as he went home.

A year passed, and the support which Habib enjoyed spread to the entire population. The chief of the 'censors' (*muhtasiban*, the officers charged with the maintenance of Islamic order), who was himself not without 'friendship with God', sent some of the subordinates to chastise Habib. They arrived when he was engaged in ecstatic listening to poetry, and he looked at them, exercising 'control' and 'enrapturing power' (*jadhba*). The censors all tore their clothes and joined in. Then they became disciples of Habib. Eventually their chief set off to see what had happened. On the way he heard of Habib's piety and decided to go home, but a hand grabbed his collar and brought him to the mystic, whose forgiveness he obtained.

One day a dervish visited Habib and said, 'God has commanded: "Make remembrance of your lord in your soul, humbly and privately, without raising your voice" ' (Qur'an 7: 205). Habib replied that in private devotion there is the danger that Satan will overcome the dervish, whereas he will run away from a group. To sit alone is womanish. A man's ideal should be 'solitude in the assembly'. As for the 'symbols' given him by the elders of Andijan, and which his visitor could see before him, they incurred 'blame', and this was a cause of salvation. According to the letter of the Law they constituted a 'blameworthy innovation' (*bid'a*), but they did not prevent the people of the Path from reaching their goal, God.

On another occasion one of Habib's disciples told him that a dervish had appeared in Kashghar called Shaykh Paranda ('Elder Flier'), who could fly through the air, and had acquired a popular following. Habib knew that this man was controlled by the genies. He arranged to meet him in public, and hit him with his staff. A dove flew out of the impostor's back, and he lost the power to fly.

Once Habib was at a meeting of notables when he suddenly got

up, went to a high place, stretched a hand out three times, kneeling the third time, and then got up again, sweating. After a few days the son of Sayyid Kardgar arrived from Andijan with six dervishes. He explained that he had fallen into a pit on the way, and had concentrated on Habib's 'interior'. Habib had come and pulled him out. His name was Mu'alla. He now spent two years in attendance on Habib, and his 'work' reached completion.

Habib looked after 1,200 disciples, of whom he instructed twelve, while appointing ten deputies. He himself was on the heart of Idris. One Thursday some of the Uwaysi elders came and invested him as Pole. During his period of office he instructed and perfected his eldest child, Khwaja Muhammad Shaykh. Habib was Pole for six months and ten days, and was granted the 'theophany of inner meaning' (*tajalli-yi ma'nawi*). Then all the spirits of the elders came and told him that he was about to die. He summoned the dervishes, and engaged in ecstatic listening to poetry. After this he sat quietly for a while and died. This was in Rabi' I 750 AH/May–June 1349 CE. He was aged 83. Afterwards he told somebody in a dream that God had given him the most glorious of gifts, the vision of himself. Habib also said that the dervishes should abandon the 'symbols', which were the symbols of the *qalandars*.

Commentary

This chapter is full of interesting elements. Habib is on the heart of Idris, and so does not resemble him much externally. Idris represents mystical knowledge, as does 'Ali, Habib's instructor. This is contrasted with formal scholarship. The 12,000 disciples, twelve pupils and ten deputies are presumably to be linked to the Twelve Leaders of Shiism, of whom ten follow 'Ali before the messianic and hidden Mahdi. One notes the details of Sufi teaching arrangements and division of labour therein; the symbols of the libertine *qalandars*, linked to the practice of deliberately incurring 'blame'; the Naqshbandi motif of 'solitude in the assembly'; and the characteristically Central Asian shamanistic element of flying (the title of 'Elder Flier' is found earlier, in medieval Sufi stories).[167] So the last of the forty chapters appropriately brings together a number of the *History*'s most important themes. 'Ali is certainly a fitting instructor for a final chapter: there is a hint of higher, hidden teachings of a Shiite character.

The chapter also forms a pair with Chapter 39: there the

ancestor is the more 'exoteric' successor of Muhammad, Abu Bakr, the first of the four 'rightly guided' caliphs, whereas here we have the more mystical fourth one, 'Ali. The two chapters are linked by the figure of Idris. Chapters 30 and 40 seem to be connected by their use of the numbers ten and twelve. Chapter 40 certainly corresponds to Chapter 20: both deal with Sufi knowledge and the vision of God. Here the 'theophany of inner meaning' provides an apt conclusion.

Haydar attests to the veneration of Habib at Artush in the early sixteenth century, and tells us that the ruler Sa'id performed a 'circling' of this eminent elder's shrine. He also gives us the story about the beam's being miraculously extended and mentions Kardgar as Habib's elder.[168]

Section xviii Khadima of Egypt

When Khadima ('Servant') was conceived her mother, a wise woman who knew the Qur'an by heart, was descended from Muhammad and was called Maryam (Mary), realized that a divine light had settled inside her. She had long waited and prayed for a child. Now she avoided unsuitable food. When the spirit entered the baby Maryam heard the 'remembrance' formula 'There is no god but God.' The child was born covered in milk, musk and ambergris, and immediately made the profession of faith. She continued her 'remembrance' in the cradle. At night angels would take her to heaven and bring her back near dawn. This continued until she was aged 13. Then she decided to go outside her house and take a look round it. She saw a handsome youth, who in inner meaning was a fairy. He made a declaration of love for her, but she angrily told him to go away, since she was a *na-mahram* (someone who could not be alone with one). Khadima reproached God for allowing this invasion of her privacy. A voice explained that now she had reached the age of being tested by carnal desire. She repented, and never went out again. A few nights later Khidr and 'Abd Allah Yamani visited her. She, frightened, asked who they were, entering the house of a *na-mahram*. Khidr explained that they were not *na-mahram* to anyone. 'Abd Allah was the chief (*ra'is*) of the elders of the Uwaysi brotherhood, while he himself was its instructor. Up to this time the spirit of Jesus had been instructing her 'essence' (*dhat*) in heaven. Now they had been commanded to instruct her. They did so, and vanished near dawn.

This went on for five years. Then Khidr and 'Abd Allah told her that her 'work' had reached perfection. From now on being alone and being in company were the same for her. She was to come to their elders and learn from them. Khidr and two companions came at night and set off with her. In a moment she found herself in a beautiful garden with well-decorated buildings. A number of white-bearded men were sitting there. One gave her a draught from the cup of 'Am I not your Lord?' (Qur'an 7: 172, referring to the primordial covenant concluded by God with human souls). Another advised that she should be given less, not having the strength for it. At this she drank as much as she could and became drunk and 'absorbed in ecstasy' (*mustaghraq*). Near dawn she went home. Five more years passed. Some people found out about Khadima's keeping company with men at night and accused her of fornication. They spoke to her father, but he said that one must not make accusations against God's friends, since the latter are two-edged swords. Khadima retaliated by making the accusers' tongues stick to their palates for the rest of their lives. Then her father decided to follow her when she next went out at night. He saw the garden and apologized when they got home.

Forty years went by, and Khadima reached her menopause. Now she built a *langar* and kept it going for ten years. In those days there were many elders, and most of the time they would come to see her, eat and drink. As for performing miracles and obtaining 'stations', she had no rival in her time. She was an instructor of the Uwaysi brotherhood, and was given the titles 'Crown of the Friends' (Taj al-awliya') and 'Chief of the Elders' (Ra'is al-masha'ikh). One day a non-Uwaysi elder arrived with forty disciples to see her. She made them sit down and told them to wait while she cooked some food. After a time the elder grew tired of waiting and sent a dervish to see what she was doing. He saw her sitting with a foot in the fire, cooking *halwa* (a well-known sweet). He reported this to his elder, who told him that to reveal such secrets shortens life. Khadima realized what had happened. She told the elder that his behaviour had shortened her life by fifteen years, and he had done this to himself and all the dervishes present as well. After three days they would have to come to her funeral service. Then she went into her room, put a rope round her neck, and thanked God for putting her among his friends, although she was a woman and he had said, 'They [women] are deficient in reason.' [This is neither in the Qur'an, as is claimed here, nor a

canonical Tradition, but is a well-known statement, which comes in a famous sermon attributed, unconvincingly, to 'Ali.][169] Now she wanted to leave the world without anyone touching or seeing her. After this she summoned the notables of Egypt to her service. When they arrived she went into her room and died. God sent four angels to bathe her corpse. They shrouded her and put her on a bier. This went out of its own accord. The funeral service was performed, and the bier returned to Khadima's room. Then the body vanished. Afterwards someone saw her in a dream, in heaven with the houris. She said that God had dealt with her as he had with Mary.

Commentary

This biography is a simple repetition of Section iv, the life of 'Abd al-Rahim of Medina, with a woman instead of a man. It is obviously modelled on the legend of Mary the mother of Jesus as found in Islam. According to Islamic tradition, Mary was dedicated to the service of God.[170] Indeed, the very name Maryam/Mary is translated as 'Servant' in Rabghuzi's Central Asian Turkic *Stories of the Prophets*. Not surprisingly, Khadima is instructed by the spirit of Jesus. As has been noted above, the account of the meeting with a mysterious individual outside the house resembles the Muslim story about how Gabriel, disguised as a man, upset the 14-year-old Mary.[171] Khadima, like Mary, is accused of fornication, and her accusers are struck dumb. Rabghuzi has a fire fall into the mouth of one of Mary's slanderers.[172] Khadima acts as a servant by serving food in the *langar*, and her disappearance parallels Mary's Assumption. It is entirely apt, therefore, that God should deal with Mary and Khadima in the same way.

Section xix Saliha of Baghdad

Saliha ('Pious') was a descendant of Abu Hanifa, and extremely pious and ascetic. From puberty to menopause she never looked at or spoke to a *na-mahram*. She was engaged in 'remembrance' and lamentation. Saliha was born and died at Baghdad. At the age of five she was sent to a Qur'an-school. After a few days, when she reached the verse 'So enter among my slaves and come into my paradise!' (89: 29–30), she was profoundly affected, since the inner meaning of the verse was revealed to her. Then she refused to go to school again. Her parents tried beating her with a stick, but to no

effect. She explained that someone who knows God does not need an 'external' school. Ten years went by. Saliha became famous for her piety, and many men wanted to marry her. She would not agree. Eventually her father (whose name was Najm al-Din) insisted, and she agreed to marry, but seven years passed before this actually happened. On her wedding-night she asked God to let her die. God replied that her husband would die now instead, and he did.

From now on Saliha secluded herself in her father's house. People found that her prayers were always answered, and called her 'Answered-of-prayer' (Mustajab al-da'wa). One day her father asked her to revive a withered pear-tree. At God's command and Saliha's prayer it at once turned green and produced fruit. On another occasion her father asked her to help with a horse which had fallen into a well. She replied that this sort of chore brings shortening of life. He insisted, and she stretched her hands out, sweating. The horse instantly appeared.

Saliha performed other miracles of this kind. One spring day her parents suggested that she should go for a walk in the garden. She agreed, but said that it would have to be at night. When the three of them went into the garden all the trees prostrated themselves before her. She laid herself down beneath a willow, which had invited her to do so. At midnight the other trees busied themselves with different 'remembrance' formulae. Saliha got up, washed and worshipped. Then the willow began its 'remembrance', explaining that hitherto it had been looking after her.

Ten years after this Saliha reached her menopause. Now she joined the 'men of the unseen' at night and would travel across this world and the 'world of sovereignty'. One day a number of 'friends' and great elders appeared to announce her death. She was aged 80. Saliha lamented that earlier mystics had died with their 'work' completed. After she died someone saw her in a dream, and was told that God had dealt with her as he dealt with 'pious ones' (*salihan*). She had been instructed by the spirit of Zahir al-Din Suhrawardi, who lived 170 years before Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi.

Commentary

This woman resembles the previous one in various ways: the father is convinced of his daughter's blessedness; both women are asexual; both have their lives shortened by manifest miracles; both turn to male company after the menopause; Saliha imitates the Mary of

Islam by making a withered tree turn green and bear fruit.[173] The main theme of her biography is of course piety, in a conventional sense. Saliha evidently reaches the degree of 'rolling up the earth', since she flies across this world and the 'world of sovereignty', but we are not told that she obtains anything higher. Mere piety will not bring Sufism's greatest rewards.

By 'Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi' is meant not the famous philosopher with the same title and surname, called Yahya (d. 1192), but the well-known Sufi organizer of Baghdad, called 'Umar (d. 1234). As for a supposed predecessor called Zahir al-Din 170 years earlier, it must be said that for a man of religion to have a title of this kind is somewhat anachronistic.[174] There was an important scholar with the surname Suhrawardi and the name Faris, who lived in Baghdad and died in 1016. His son Shuja' was also a scholar. 'Umar Suhrawardi had a famous Sufi uncle in Baghdad called Abu 'l-Najib, and the latter's own uncle was yet another scholar in the capital, bearing the same surname and also called 'Umar: he died in 1137.[175] The best-known Sufi Suhrawardis represent sober and conventional piety.

Section xx Safiyya of Ethiopia

Safiyya, an Ethiopian, was descended from Bilal (Muhammad's Ethiopian slave), and obtained instruction from his spirit. She was born on a Wednesday, in the last ten days of Rabi' II. Her mother died giving birth to her, and she refused to take milk from a number of women. Then her father offered her his own breasts, and God caused milk to flow from them for forty days. After that she refused to be fed, but God nourished her with his own divine 'favour' (*'inayat*). She would recite: 'You we worship and you we ask for help' (Qur'an 1: 5). For five years she said nothing else. One day her father asked what these words were. She replied that a hundred years earlier she had heard them from an angel. Her father observed that, although she was a woman, she could not be 'deficient in reason' if she could repeat what was said to her a hundred years earlier. She said that on the contrary, it was because she was deficient in reason that she was unable to give information about pre-eternity. A voice told her not to reveal secrets, and to make 'remembrance' with the formula 'There is no god but God' in seclusion, as private devotion was particularly appropriate for a woman.

Twenty years went by. One day Safiyya lost consciousness, and someone appeared to her and told her to marry, since God would grant her both male and female 'friends' as offspring. She married, conceived and was pregnant for a whole year. Then she gave birth to twins, one male, one female. These she named Sayf al-Din and Salima. Afterwards she asked God to spare her further intercourse with her husband, but he replied that it was the very essence of religious devotion. She obeyed, making this the culmination of a long series of supererogatory acts of worship. Once a guest came, and she had to cook for him and omit her usual extra prayers after the worship at midday. She went into mourning. Her husband asked what would happen if one of her children died. She replied that if both died she would not mourn one-tenth as much, since they were just a temporary deposit (*amanat*).

Some years passed, and Safiyya's children became an increasing burden for her. A voice told her to take to spinning, so that her children could be clothed and fed. She obeyed, and the spinning-wheel made 'remembrance' with the formula 'God, the Friend' (Allah, Dust), while the spindle recited, 'The Kind, the Benevolent' (Ra'uf, Rahim). Safiyya earned plenty of money, and had twelve children. She reached the degree of 'survival through God' (*baqa' billah*), and lived to the age of 59. After her death she told somebody in a dream that God had put her among the houris of paradise and promised that she would have seventy 'friends', male and female, among her descendants.

Commentary

This biography is in marked contrast to those of the first two women, who abstain from sexual intercourse. Safiyya, on the other hand, produces twins. Bilal is an appropriate instructor for her: he is supposed to have called the faithful to worship, to have looked after the food-supply for Muhammad and his followers, to have been the Prophet's steward and to have died about the age of 60.[176]

Chapter xxi Khadija, the descendant of Muhammad

Khadija, a descendant of Muhammad, was conceived after her mother had performed the special worship of the 'Night of Things Desired'. Her mother felt very ill as a result, and suspected that this was from the weight of the child's 'friendship with God'. When Khadija was born she said, 'When you are confused in your affairs

ask for help from the people of the tombs.'[177] From the age of three she spent all her time in cemeteries. At the age of 13 her father, worried about her reputation, brought her home and chained her up, telling her to stay in purdah. He pointed out that forty days of self-mortification usually produce the 'unveiling of the tombs', and she should have reached this degree by now, in which case there was no need to go to the cemeteries. Acting on his advice, Khadija 'concentrated' on the spirits of the dead. After a couple of days some of them came to her. She told her father that now she would not go out until she died. He furnished a private apartment (*khalwat-khana*), so that she could live and pray there in seclusion, and assigned maidservants to serve her, but she insisted on doing without them.

Five years passed, and Khadija obtained the degree of the 'unveiling of the angels'. One night her father heard voices in her apartment, and, looking through a crack in the door, saw some strange people there. Afterwards she explained to him that they were angels. Ten more years went by, and Khadija reached the 'unveiling of hell'. When she saw the torments of the damned she begged God to make her expand, so as to fill hell and leave no room for anybody else there. God explained that the damned were justly punished. A few days later she was granted the 'unveiling of heaven'. This made her even more sad for the inmates of hell, and God forgave as many of them as there were hairs on her body. Day by day she was given further 'unveilings', and attained to the furthest point of dervishhood reached by other 'friends'. In addition to the other 'ranks' (*darajat*) she was vouchsafed the privilege of touching God's Throne ten times a night.

One day someone came in and asked Khadija what the words *walayat* and *wali* meant. She said that the former meant being busied with God, and the latter meant someone who has the power to work miracles. After further questions she realized that this visitor was the Angel of Death, and asked to die in a cemetery. She prepared her own grave, entered it and died. Afterwards she told someone in a dream that God had put her among the pious and the martyrs. She obtained instruction from the spirit of 'Uthman of Bazda.

Commentary

'Khadija' is the name of Muhammad's first wife, much venerated in Islam. This biography, with its emphasis on purdah and

conventional piety, forms a pair with the following one. Although Khadija's pious life brings her a long way in 'work' or 'dervishhood', it is not enough to earn the higher rewards of the theophanies of the 'journey in God'.

The identity of Khadija's instructor is not clear. There are recorded medieval scholar-jurists from Bazda (as we have seen above), but not with the name 'Uthman.[178]

Section xxii 'Ataba of Turkistan

'Ataba was a Turk, but her mother was from Kashmir. Her father, who was called Ahmad Shaykh, was born in Turkistan. One night someone appeared to him in a dream and told him that he would have a daughter, who would be a friend of God, and he had to go to Kashmir for her to be born. On arriving in Kashmir he would meet his wife and her parents. He set off and, owing to various delays, took six months to reach Kashmir. There a man greeted him by name, explaining that the person who had appeared to Ahmad in the dream had spoken to him when awake. Then he gave Ahmad his daughter in marriage. They had to wait three years for her to reach puberty. At the end of the three years she conceived, and 'Ataba was born. The child put one hand in her mouth and the other on her eyes, indicating that she would never speak to or look at anyone who was not allowed to be alone with her.

One day 'Ataba advised her father to leave Kashmir, because of the deceitfulness and trickery of the people. Thanks to her 'blessed power' (*baraka*), they reached Turkistan in just one month and nine days: this miracle was due to her skill in 'rolling up the earth'. Ten years passed, and she reached the age of 13. The king of the time heard of 'Ataba's beauty and piety, and sent a messenger to say that he wanted to marry her. She declined, and he sent a second messenger. Angered, she caused the king's head to be separated from his body. The king had a son, who led an army to 'Ataba's town. She confronted him, her face veiled, and he fired an arrow at her. The arrow turned round and killed him, and the army fled.

'Ataba, accompanied by her father, now set off for Mecca. After a year they arrived and performed the pilgrimage. A voice told her that she should stay as a servant of the *'ataba* (threshold, i.e. of the Ka'ba). She sent her father home, and stayed for five years, performing the full pilgrimage five times and the lesser pilgrimage

1,700 times. One day a voice told her to go to Mina. When she arrived there the voice offered her the possibility of dying without her body being seen by a corpse-washer. She accepted, and was told to go to Mount Hira. Then she died, and her body was eaten by animals. She was instructed by the spirit of Khadija, Muhammad's first wife.

Commentary

Since this woman is instructed by Muhammad's first wife, whose name, Khadija, is that of the woman in Section xxi, and the main theme here is purdah, a major theme of that section, it is obvious that the two biographies form a pair. A pattern is now emerging: the first two biographies of women, both asexual, form a pair; then comes a married woman with children; after that, another asexual pair. The sixth woman will stand on her own, as a penitent courtesan.

Section xxiii Funduqa of Baghdad

Funduqa ('Hazelnut') had a very fine character and an excellent voice. Consequently many intellectuals would visit her. Her father was called Qubayli and her mother Suhayli. Qubayli was one of the libertine dervishes (*qalandars*) of Turkey, and a consumer of cannabis. He lived in Baghdad and originally was poor, but then he imprisoned his daughter in a specially furnished room, and her visitors would no longer come without a present. Funduqa, against her will, was turned into a prostitute and a consumer of cannabis and wine. Her father grew rich, and twenty years passed. Funduqa reached the age of 35. Then, one day, God told her to repent. She did so, and rebuked her father, saying that they would no longer see one another. After this she went to the shrine of Abu Hanifa and asked him for advice. A voice from the tomb told her to serve God and hope for forgiveness. She installed herself in a hermitage in the precincts of the shrine and worshipped for twelve years, not sleeping, and eating extremely little. In this period she received instruction from Abu Hanifa's spirit and reached the degree of 'passing away in God' (*fana' fi Allah*). In the 'rapture' (*jadhba*) of this degree she could not control herself, and she remained so 'absorbed' (*mustaghraq*) that if the world had collapsed around her she would not have noticed.

Eventually Funduqa established herself on the top of a

mountain. For ten years she was 'absorbed' there, and every day God displayed himself to her ten times. Then he brought her to her senses. Gradually she made up the amount of worship which she had missed in those ten years. One day a scorpion passed in front of her in an agitated manner. She followed it, and they came to a river. The scorpion stopped, confused. A fish appeared, took it on its back, brought it across and went away. Funduqa crossed the river and followed the scorpion. It came to a tree which had lost its leaves. Beneath the tree a woman had fallen asleep, and a snake was about to kill her. The scorpion killed the snake and went back. Then the woman woke up and explained that her spirit had entered her body at the same time as Funduqa's. She was Funduqa's 'real companion' (*mu'nis-i haqiqi*) and had been born beneath the tree, which she had never left. Her mother had died just after giving birth to her, and her father twelve days later. Her work (*kar*) was being without work, and her activity (*'amal*) was being full of work. Then she died. Some people arrived, bringing heavenly raiment. They told Funduqa to bathe the corpse. A voice told her that she had been brought out of 'absorption' in order to bathe this 'friend of God'. Funduqa duly bathed, shrouded and buried the corpse. Both it and the voice told her to remain there. After two days her 'absorption' returned, and continued for twenty days. Meanwhile a dervish who was engaged in a retreat saw someone in a vision who told him to go and see this 'friend of God'. After he found her she returned to her senses. She told him to go his own way, since God has granted everyone a special 'path' (*tariq*). Then she died. An innumerable host of angels descended and bathed, shrouded and buried Funduqa. The dervish attributed her death to his observing her devotion to God. He went home and told his story in a gathering. Funduqa's spirit appeared and rebuked him, saying that he had harmed himself as well as her. He experienced a breathing difficulty and died.

Commentary

Funduqa's biography stands in contrast to those of the first two women, Khadima and Saliha. They are asexual, while she is a prostitute. Their fathers are good to their daughters, while Funduqa's is wicked. Her biography is also linked to theirs in other ways. All three women have their miraculous powers or conditions revealed, and this does them harm. The motif of the tree appears twice in Saliha's life: she turns a withered tree green, like Mary the

mother of Jesus (who corresponds to Khadima), and in spring she lies beneath a willow, which takes special care of her. Funduqa, however, finds her 'real companion' beneath a withered tree, which presumably, together with the snake, represents her dangerous and sinful past. Saliha is descended from Abu Hanifa, while Funduqa is instructed by his spirit. Both Saliha and Funduqa live in Baghdad.

Funduqa obviously corresponds to the legendary penitent courtesans of early eastern Christianity. The theme of parentally enforced prostitution comes in the famous story of the Christian Thais, who repents, helped by a monk, and becomes an ascetic. This element of parental enforcement is transmitted in the version of her legend which is translated into Arabic.[179] The story of Funduqa's death parallels that of another penitent woman who had led an immoral life, St Mary of Egypt: a monk witnesses her final condition, is miraculously helped to bury her, and goes on to tell the tale.[180] This is based on the story related by Cyril of Scythopolis (524–58 CE) on the authority of a monk, who witnesses the final condition of a Palestinian penitent called Mary. This Mary tells the monk that she had been a singer in a church. As she became an object of temptation to many people she ran away and became an ascetic. The monk buries her.[181] (To transmit a biography on the authority of an eyewitness supposed to be personally known to one is a standard device in Christian hagiography, not to be taken seriously.)

Section xxiv Zuhra of Egypt

Zuhra originally belonged to the Kalmuk people living to the west of Lake Baykal (in Siberia). The reason why she ended up in Egypt is as follows. The celebrated mystic Ibrahim ibn Adham (d. 777–8) decided to travel from Egypt to China. On the way he was captured by one of the Kalmuk, along with his massive personal fortune. His captor, an unbeliever, said, in his own language, that if Ibrahim entered his religion he would return his fortune to him; otherwise he would kill him. Ibrahim did not understand, but made a propitiatory gesture. Then he and his captor's daughter, called Surunj, both dreamt that he was converting her to Islam. When they woke up they secretly fulfilled the dream's message. They agreed that it was permitted to pretend to belong to the Kalmuk religion in order to save one's life. After five years the girl's father

offered her to Ibrahim in marriage, but he refused, because a marriage witnessed by unbelievers would be illegal. A few days later some *qalandars* arrived, and then the marriage took place with them as witnesses. Two more years went by, and then Surunj's father died, leaving her an enormous inheritance. Ibrahim decided that they should leave. Also, being an astrologer, and examining his wife's horoscope, he named her Zuhra (Venus).

After another year the couple reached Turkey. Ibrahim entrusted his wife to the care of his mother, who was herself a mystic. The latter would recite the first chapter of the Qur'an for her daughter-in-law, producing a beneficial effect upon her. Two years later the mother-in-law died, after prescribing a rigorous programme of devotions. In twelve years Zuhra brought her work to completion, with the result that every day she would visit the 'lote-tree of paradise' (*sidra al-muntaha*, Qur'an 53: 14). Then twenty more years passed in ascetic exercises, and she obtained the 'theophany of light' (*tajalli-yi nuri*). One day she gave her husband a tray of figs out of season, and he guessed that she had been granted the 'unveiling of paradise'. Satan tempted him to enquire further, but his wife told him not to. Another day a group of elders came to her and said that they wanted to appoint her Pole, since the previous Pole had just died. She refused, on the grounds that she was not 'perfect in reason'. The point, says Uzgani, is that she had obtained the degree of Polehood. [One can obtain the degree without being appointed.] She found instruction from the 'friendship with God' and interior of Jesus, and was also on his heart. Finally, she saw that the houris of paradise had come down to visit her, and then she died. That night her husband saw her walking with the houris, and, in response to the question 'What did God do with you?', she replied, 'He granted me this "stage"' (*manzil*).

Commentary

It is not quite clear how Zuhra is supposed to correspond to Jesus: since she is on his heart, not his back, one must not expect external resemblances, but presumably her being taught by him is linked to her access to heaven. Significantly, she obtains the degree of Polehood, but is not actually appointed Pole. The difference is stressed later in the *History of the Uwaysis*, notably with reference to women.[182]

Ibrahim ibn Adham is said to have been born in Balkh. It is

thought that he moved to Syria and fought against the Byzantine Empire in Turkey. Tradition puts his death in a variety of places: a Byzantine island, Egypt, Syria and Iraq. According to one story he fled from Balkh because of a rebellion in that region and went to live in Turkey.[183] In one version of his legend (preserved in Malay) he has a romantic meeting with a woman whom he marries and who leads a very pious life, but the circumstances are very different.[184]

This section seems to form a pair with the following: the two women are both married to pious husbands.

Section xxv 'Alima of Hormuz

'Alima ('Knowing') was extremely knowledgeable and ascetic. She ate just half a *mithqal* of food a day, and drank only one *mithqal* of water. Every day she performed 100 cycles of worship, and every night 500. At the age of 7 she lost her parents. A singer adopted her and taught her to sing in public. She had an excellent voice, and was very beautiful. The people of Hormuz were very attracted by her, but she was not interested in them. Nonetheless she was forced to sing in gatherings. Eventually she was given as a present to the king, who was very tyrannical. He raped her forty times in one night, and she prayed for deliverance. The king died, and 'Alima repented of her profession. At that time there was a mystic in Hormuz called Qutb-i 'Ali ('Exalted Pole'). She asked him to marry her. He explained that he was impotent. 'Alima replied that that was just the sort of man for whom she was looking. They married and devoted themselves to God. In a short space of time 'Alima made her 'work' surpass her husband's, being instructed by the spirit of Sa'id ibn Zayd, one of the 'ten people to whom paradise has been promised [by Muhammad]' (*'ashara-yi mubashshara*).[185] In the external world she used to meet Khidr twice a day, when he would recite the first chapter of the Qur'an for her, and she would keep company with Abu 'l-Fayd Ilahi twice a day as well, and with the Pole of Poles every other day. She would perform the obligatory part of every prescribed act of worship at Mecca.

One day 'Alima and her husband were talking about the Path. He said that a real man worships upon water. She replied that such miracles were trivial: he should drown himself in the sea of reality, so that he would not be told that anyone was there. Another day a

sparrow begged her to save its children from an enemy. The latter was duly cut in half. After a while the sparrow brought a water-melon seed, and told 'Alima to plant it. She obeyed, and there appeared an enormous plant, which produced 70,000 water-melons for every spring of her remaining years. Eventually, one spring day, she saw that the plant's leaves had withered, and correctly informed her husband that she was about to die.

Commentary

'Alima's life combines contrasting elements from those of Khadima and Saliha on the one hand and Funduqa on the other: the figure of the asexual woman is combined with that of the penitent entertainer. Again, as in those three biographies, a miracle is linked to the woman's death. While Saliha turns a withered tree green and in springtime lies beneath a willow, and Funduqa dies beneath a withered tree, 'Alima grows a miraculous plant which becomes green every spring but withers when she dies.

One is tempted to connect the name 'Alima with the use of this word in modern Egyptian Arabic to mean a courtesan and musical entertainer.[186] However, I have not found the word so used elsewhere, and this 'Alima is presented as being very 'knowing' in Sufism.

Section xxvi Sakina of Baghdad

Sakina was a great-great-granddaughter of Abu Hanifa. She was born at Baghdad and lived and died there. When she was born she was covered in milk, oil and blood. Her grandfather, an experienced ascetic, explained that she would be pure and bright like milk and soft-hearted like oil, but would die a martyr, killed by a bully. As a child Sakina used the remembrance formula 'God is the Opener of my heart and the Giver of Victory to my religion' (*Inna Allah fatih qalbi wa nasir dini*) for seven years, before switching to that of 'There is no god but God.' She told her father that she had seen ' a dear one' (*'azizi*) in a dream, who had ordered her to use all the remembrance formulae, and taught her this new one. Sakina duly proceeded to work her way through the rest.

When she reached the age of 15 her cousin wanted to marry her. He was very much given to wine-drinking and other vices. Her parents opposed the marriage, but Sakina wanted it. She maintained that what was predestined could not be avoided. In the

next two years she reached perfection in the Way and instructed several other women. She herself had been instructed by Jesus. One day Fatima and Husayn (the martyr of Kerbela) appeared to her in the world of inner meaning with a number of other martyrs. They announced that she was soon to die and, as a martyr, would have the privilege of intercession on the Day of Judgement. Shortly afterwards her cousin entered her room, sword in hand, and demanded that she have intercourse with him. She refused, and he killed her. After her funeral he confessed. Sakina's father was legally authorized to kill him in retaliation, but a voice told him not to do so, and to wait until that night for an explanation. He saw in a dream that Sakina was sitting on a golden throne, in a finely decorated house, with handmaids waiting on her. Outside the house was a yellow dog with a black face, licking up some blood. Sakina explained that this was paradise. The dog, her murderer, was innocent, because God had made him the way he was.

Commentary

After the last pair of biographies, devoted to wives of pious husbands, we again have an isolated figure, who represents martyrdom and ineluctable destiny. The circumstances of the martyrdom itself are suppressed in the censored version, which, as we have seen, has previously omitted Chapter 11 because of its sexual content. As for the conclusion, it is somewhat surprising. To be sure, in mainstream Islam (and Sufism as well) God's predetermining of all actions is absolute. However, that is not usually taken to mean that a murderer is innocent. Here he is nonetheless disgraced: that is the significance of his black face and being in the form of a dog (an unclean animal in Islam).

Section xxvii Sa'ida of Khwarazm

Sa'ida was born in the area of Khwarazm (in Turkmenistan). She was a descendant of 'Umar Nasafi (a famous lawyer and theologian who died in 1142 CE).[187] From the beginning she was 'enraptured' (*madjhuba*), and a solitary, living on the mountainside and in the wilderness. Her naked body was entirely covered by her long hair. She was born on the eve of 14 Rajab, falling on a Wednesday. [Sometimes the anniversary of Muhammad's Ascension is commemorated around this date, while his granddaughter Zaynab's birthday is also celebrated then.][188] The night was

suddenly lit up. At once she started to pray. However, as she grew up she refused to speak, though from the age of seven 'remembrance of God' would come from her chest. When she reached the age of 17 she set off for the desert. Her father followed her to the foot of a mountain, and then she flew to its summit. He abandoned all hope for her. Fifty years later a hunter found her standing in ecstasy. After a month she came to her senses and reproached God for letting a stranger see her. She said that since she was 10 years old she had felt a strong 'enrapturing force' (*jadhba*) from 'Abd Allah Yamani, but was really being drawn to God himself. Now she wanted to die. She did, at the end of her sixty-seventh year.

Commentary

Sa'ida is a classic 'enraptured' figure. Naked women mystics are not unknown in Islam, despite its prohibition of nudity.[189] This biography resembles that of the sixth woman, Funduqa: both women are 'enraptured', live on mountains and are brought to death by being seen. One notes that the section is numbered xxvii and includes the numbers seven, seventeen and sixty-seven: this echoes Chapter 27, where Khwarazm and the number seven are also found.

Section xxviii 'A'isha of Kashghar

'A'isha of Kashghar was a Turk. When very young she would work in the fields with her father, being his only child. One day, when she had reached puberty, she saw an owl sitting on a wall and speaking of its love for God: it was a bird of the night, because a lover cannot perform his task by day, and would hang itself upside down, in order to humiliate itself more; it preferred ruins and solitude. 'A'isha then saw a lark perched on a bush and also extolling self-humiliation before God. After this she occupied herself with devotion and the remembrance formula 'There is no god but God', which a mystic had taught her in a dream. Twelve years passed, during which she would suspend herself upside-down at night. At the end of the twelve years she was able to distinguish the spirits of the elders and identify the mystic who had taught her in the world of inner meaning. Then she went into isolation, but would work at her spinning-wheel. Someone appeared to her in a dream and told her that she had become one of God's friends.

After another couple of years 'A'isha was married off against her will, and then a year later Mansur of the Hijaz and his disciples came to her house, as has been mentioned above.[190] That night the dervishes engaged in *suhbat* (collective 'remembrance' along with ecstatic listening to poetry), and she worked at weaving a veil. Part of it she wove with a thread which was not the same as that of the rest. At dawn she left with Mansur, against her husband's wishes, so that she had to renounce her marriage-settlement. Her husband had objected that she was only recently married, and should not accompany strange men. They kept on until they reached Qum Shahidan. On the way Khidr met 'A'isha twelve times and recited the first chapter of the Qur'an for her each time. She entered the fire with the others. Afterwards the part of her veil which had been woven with a different thread was seen to have turned yellow in the flames. Then she went home. Khidr gave her instruction for two more years, and then she died, aged 27. She was buried at the spot where she saw the owl and the lark. Later somebody saw her in a dream, among the houris, and she told him that God had dealt with her as he had with Rabi'a of Basra (the most famous woman mystic of Islam, thought to have died in 801 CE).

Commentary

There are various themes worthy of note here: instruction by birds, the love of God, self-humiliation, worshipping upside-down (a practice taken from traditional Indian religion),[191] Uwaysi instruction, an ordeal associated with martyrdom, and death at an early age. As before, there is an echo of a saying attributed to Muhammad, according to which someone who dies as a sincere and chaste lover dies a martyr's death.[192] Rabi'a of Basra is particularly associated with the theme of the love of God.[193]

This section begins a concluding sub-series of three biographies set wholly or partly in East Turkistan, and thus corresponding to Chapters 31–40.

Section xxix Ummiyya of Uzgen

Ummiyya of Uzgen was a descendant of Sultan Ilik-i Madi.[194] To begin with she was not very pious, but one day she heard a voice from her ancestor's tomb, which called on her to repent: she should be ashamed of failing to live up to her descent from this ancestor and another, Satuq Bughra Khan. She repented, and

established herself at the tomb for a year and five months. Then Sultan Ilik-i Madi appeared to her in a dream and gave her encouragement. Two years passed, and then she was told to go to Mecca. She set off with twelve other women and their husbands. Ummiyya was then aged 35 and unmarried. On the way she spent a night in vigil at the tomb of Qutham ibn 'Abbas.[195] At dawn, in a vision, she was given a tray of *halwa*. She took it with her, and twice every day gave some to her friends, without any depletion occurring. They joined a pilgrim-caravan of 12,000 people, and she distributed *halwa* to them all. When the caravan reached Mecca Ummiya spent two years there, and a further three in Medina, still distributing *halwa*, and obtaining the surname Halwa'i for this reason. At Muhammad's tomb she asked to be buried in Medina, but was told that first she had to go home. She did so, and returned to her ancestor's tomb in Uzgen. Someone appeared to her in a vision and told her to go to Yarkand. Ummiyya spent fifty years there, distributing *halwa*.

Seventy people were instructed by Ummiyya, while she herself was instructed by the spirit of Abu Bakr. She appointed one deputy. Ummiyya acquired the nickname 'Lady Milk' (Sut Bibi), because wild animals would enter into her service and their breasts would swell with milk. At the age of 94 she died, and the notables of Yarkand took part in the funeral service and put her in her grave. Then she disappeared. Those present nonetheless built a tomb for her. Somebody saw her in a dream, and she explained that her real grave was in Medina. That night a man of Medina called Haddaf was commanded, in the world of inner meaning, to dig a grave for her in the Baqi' cemetery. In due course Ummiyya's body came down from the sky into the grave. The people of Medina witnessed her command not to have a second funeral service for her.

Commentary

In this biography the author brings together a number of motifs encountered before: the royal family of the Karakhanids; the miraculous distribution of food; the city of Muhammad, Medina, and the post of deputy (Abu Bakr was the first 'deputy' (*khalifa*) after Muhammad, and Ummiyya appoints one deputy). Muhammad and the Karakhanids have been connected before, in the biographies of Abu 'l-Nasr Samani and Satuq Bughra Khan. This section, numbered xxix and the penultimate in the series on women mystics, resembles Chapter 39 in having the figure of Abu Bakr, who appears there as an ancestor (in Chapter 6 he instructs Abu 'l-Nasr).

Section xxx Maryam (Mary) of Kashghar

Maryam of Kashghar was the daughter of the martyred Sultan 'Ali Arslan Khan (d. 998).[196] She insisted on keeping herself as secluded as possible, so that from the age of three none of her father's male servants saw her. From the age of puberty she refused to have any mature maidservants. She explained to her father that such maidservants, being corrupted by the world, would corrupt her as well, since she was 'deficient in reason'. Her father started to wait on her as a servant himself, but after two days a voice told Maryam that this was wrong, and she should have maidservants of her own. Then she agreed with her father to accept a young maid. Maryam and her father engaged in devotional exercises, and after a time a voice from the 'world of the unseen' would come to her ear to advise her in every eventuality.

One day an unseen voice told Maryam that after six months she and her father would be martyred. In due course the enemy came, battle was joined, and her father, after killing 60,000 infidels, eventually fell himself. Maryam heard what had happened and set off with a number of young maidservants. When they drew near to the unbelievers they put on male attire and armed themselves. Maryam killed twenty-five of the enemy, and each of her companions also killed several. Finally, overcome by superior odds, the women were martyred. God sent some angels in human form, and they buried the women on the spot, but did not build a tomb. Later Sultan Ghazi Yusuf Qadir Khan looked for the martyrs' bones. Maryam's spirit appeared to show the spot, and he built a tomb. This happened at Kashghar in 494 AH/1100–1 CE. [In fact Yusuf Qadir Khan ruled from 1024–5 to 1032 CE.][197]

Commentary

Three important themes are illustrated here: servanthood, as in the biography of the first woman, with a similar connection with the supposed meaning of the name Maryam/Mary ('servant'); the father–daughter relationship, as in previous sections; and, most importantly, martyrdom, which as the highest of all degrees provides a fitting conclusion to the book's long succession of biographies.

It appears that 'Ali Arslan Khan did indeed die as a martyr in the holy war.[198] The legend and shrine of Maryam of Kashghar are well known and have received the attention of modern scholars.[199]

'Point' 3

The author now explains that there are different 'ranks' (*darajat*): those of prophethood, friendship with God (*walayat*), knowledge, and others. Prophethood is the highest rank, but some have said that friendship with God is higher still. The right answer is that when the two are combined in a single individual the latter is higher, since it consists of being busied with God, while the former means busying oneself with people.

As for the relative merits of friendship with God and knowledge, the Uwaysi elders hold the former to be superior, since God's friends have exalted ranks denied to the scholars. For example, the privilege of ascension to heaven (*mi'raj*) has been granted to some mystics, but never to any of the scholars. Similarly, many of the 'friends' will have the right of intercession at the Resurrection, while none of the scholars will. Besides, the 'friends' do not lack knowledge. Many scholars allow their knowledge to ruin them. Once a scholar knew 1,001 arguments for demonstrating God's Uniqueness, but nonetheless became a disciple of a great mystic. When the scholar was about to die Satan came and disproved 1,000 of his arguments. The scholar concentrated on his elder's 'interior', and the latter came to the rescue. Moreover, many 'friends' reach the degree of Pole, the highest degree after that of prophethood. Indeed, even some female 'friends' have been given this degree, without being appointed to the post itself, because of their 'deficiency of reason' and bodily impediments.[200]

The Pole is the person who controls this world and the 'world of sovereignty'; the survival of the universe is dependent upon him. Just as a house depends on its four walls, so that if one falls down the house itself falls, so also there are in fact four Poles, and if one of the four dies, he has to be replaced. Of these four Poles the first is the 'Refuge' (*Ghawth*). The first person to hold this position lived during the caliphate of Abu Bakr (632–4 CE), and the other most famous Poles lived in the caliphates of the other three 'rightly guided' caliphs who came immediately after him. All of the 'men of the unseen' have been, and will be, followers of these four Poles. These Poles have exercised their control over this world and the 'world of sovereignty', and will continue to do so, sometimes with the agreement of Khidr and Elijah, and sometimes (but rarely) not. As for the basis of this arrangement, it is as follows. The Sufi Path

has been divided into four special 'paths'. A 'path' (*tariqa*) is also called a 'class' (*tabaqa*). The first of these four is the Uwaysi path, the divisions of which were explained at the start of the book. [Here Uzgani repeats his earlier explanation.][201] The second path is that of the Kubrawis, the third that of the Naqshbandis and the fourth that of the Hamadanis. Other 'chains', such as the 'chain of the *qalandars*', are not considered here, because they all end in the 'chains' of these four paths.

Of these paths the Uwaysi one has precedence over the others, because Uways was instructed by Muhammad in this world with the light of prophethood and friendship with God, bringing him to his goal. Besides, many Uwaysis are covered by the saying, 'My friends are beneath my tabernacles', and this path has had the greatest number of Poles. Moreover, the first and greatest of the Poles is of this brotherhood: his name is 'Abd al-Samad. He was the first person to reach the degree of Polehood, and he obtained this honour in Abu Bakr's caliphate, as has just been noted.

The post of Pole of Poles is restricted to one person at any given time. His name is always the same, though the individual holding the post is different: when one holder of the post dies and somebody else is promoted to it the latter takes the same name.

From the various Poles in the different brotherhoods authority flows down to the rest of the 'men of the unseen'. The 'men of the unseen' are 365 in total. Their leader is 'Abd al-Samad, the 'Refuge' (*Ghawth*). They are divided into seven groups: Poles, 'individuals' (*afrad*), 'pegs' (*awtad*), 'chiefs' (*nuqaba'*), 'nobles' (*nujaba'*), 'substitutes' (*abdal*) and ordinary 'men of the unseen'. Some 'people of the exterior' wrongly imagine the groups to be twenty-four or twelve in number. The number seven is correct, since the prosperity of the regions of the world depends upon them. They are divided up as follows:

Poles	4
Individuals	300
Pegs	4
Chiefs	3
Nobles	7
Substitutes	40
Ordinary men of the unseen	7
Total	365

If anyone dies there is upward promotion from the rank immediately below (in the case of the 'Refuge' from one of the other Poles), and from outside the hierarchy into the lowest rank.

Out of all the Poles who have existed in the various brotherhoods, 1,307 have belonged to the Uwaysi path. Of these, 1,200 have been men and 107 women. Of the men 200 have sat in the post of Pole of Poles, and put on the vestments of Polehood. A further 700 have occupied the seat of Polehood, but have not put on the vestments. Another 300 have qualified for the degree of Polehood. Of the women, 7 have reached the degree of Polehood and been appointed, but without the vestments. A further 100 women have qualified but not been appointed.

These 1,307 Uwaysi Poles have also been divided into (a) 200 'men of the unseen'; and (b) 1,107 Poles of everyday life (*aqtab-i 'ishrati*). The latter have lived an ordinary existence, eating, dressing, resting and travelling through the external world, though they have also travelled through the internal world. The Poles of the 'men of the unseen' have not been bound by terrestrial restrictions, and have had absolute control over everything.

The Kubrawi brotherhood has had 1,280 Poles: 110 among the 'men of the unseen', and 1,170 in everyday life. Of these Poles, 55 have been women, 18 of whom have actually been appointed to this post, while the remaining 37 have merely qualified, without being appointed.

The Naqshbandi brotherhood has had 1,000 Poles, of whom 100 have been 'men of the unseen' and the remaining 900 people of everyday life. Of these 900, 500 have donned the vestments of Polehood and sat on its throne for periods varying between a year and a moment. The remaining 400 have qualified, but have not put on the vestments. Twelve out of the 400 have been women, granted the honour of this post without actually having been appointed to it. The first person in this 'chain' to reach the degree of Pole was one Hashim, of the second generation after Muhammad's Companions. He was a Pole of ordinary life. Originally the 'chain' belonged to Hashim, but it became well-known thanks to Baha' al-Din Naqshband, and thus is called after him.

The Hamadani 'chain' has had 790 Poles. It is named after 'Ali of Hamadan in western Iran (d. 1385), the famous author.[202] Originally it was called the 'Alawi chain, because its first founder was another 'Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law. After the latter nobody made this 'path' manifest as it should be, except for 'Ali of

Hamadan, and so it was named after him instead. It is the 'seal' (*khatam*) of the chains (i.e. the one which brings the succession of chains to its conclusion), and is also called the 'chain of ardent desire' (*silsila-yi shawqiyya*). Of the 790 Poles in this chain, 360 have been Poles of everyday life; 30 others Poles of the 'men of the unseen'; 340 others have just qualified for the post; and the remaining 60 have been women. Out of these 60 women one has been honoured with the vestments of Polehood, and put them on, but then immediately died. The other women only qualified for the post. No woman in any chain obtained the good fortune given to the one woman just mentioned. This was due to the master (*sahib*) of the chain, who rapidly and with his inner power exerted his influence upon her, bringing her to this degree. Her name is Sa'ida.

Of the four original great Poles mentioned before, the first and greatest, the 'Refuge', was 'Abd al-Samad, and he was in the north, corresponding to the pole-star. The second was 'Abd al-Rahim, the Pole of the east, the third 'Abd al-Karim, the Pole of the west, and the fourth Abd al-'Aziz, the Pole of the south.

The original 'Refuge' lived for 125 years. Of these ninety-six were spent in self-mortification; for four years he was a Pole of everyday life; for twenty-five years he was Pole of Poles for the 'men of the 'unseen'. Then he died and was buried on Mount Lebanon. His replacement (*nayib*) was the first Pole of the east, who took his name, as did both of the other two original Poles, all being buried in the same place.

The first Pole of the east lived for 105 years and ten days. Of these seventy years were spent in asceticism. Afterwards, having reached the degree of Pole, he was a Pole of everyday life for two years and ten days; a Pole for the 'men of the unseen' for thirty more years; replacement for the 'Refuge' for three years; then he died. He had been born at Ta'if (near Mecca).

The original western Pole lived 97 years. Of these sixty-seven were spent in ascetic exercises; two more as a Pole of everyday life; twenty more as a Pole for the 'men of the unseen'; ten years in the place of the 'Refuge' [this makes a total of 99]; then he died. He had been born in Syria.

The first Pole of the south lived for 101 years. Of these ninety were spent in self-mortification; eight months as a Pole of everyday life; a year and two months as Pole for the 'men of the unseen'; and eight years as replacement for the 'Refuge'; then he died. He was born at Bastam.

Some later Poles have, with God's assistance, reached the burial-place of the original Poles on Mount Lebanon in their lifetime, and died and been buried there. Others have had their corpses miraculously transported to the same place.

Commentary

This 'Point' and the Conclusion are omitted in the censored version: apparently the suppression goes back to before 1769, since it predates the Turkic translation made then.[203] One suspects that this is due to the victory of the Naqshbandi brotherhood in East Turkistan and the concomitant fall of the Uwaysis. 'Point' 3 contains an unfavourable comparison of the Uwaysis with the Naqshbandis. Also, in maintaining that in certain circumstances 'friendship with God' (*walayat*) is superior to prophethood this 'Point' is setting out an extremely controversial doctrine, well known from Sufism's beginnings onwards, but generally condemned and held only by extremists on the fringe.[204] To claim the privilege of intercession at the Resurrection for God's friends is again to run counter to main-line Islam, which reserves this privilege for Muhammad alone.

The treatment of the Poles and the Sufi hierarchy here is of the greatest interest. In classical Sufism the various sketches given of this subject had never been very clear, and the detailed theory provided by Ibn 'Arabi differs considerably from Uzgani's. The place given to Khidr and Elijah, however, resembles their position in Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine: Islam sees them as continuing to live in this world, but Ibn 'Arabi was the first to give them supreme hierarchical functions.[205]

Conclusion

The reader, in order to become a dervish, should avoid pointless conversation and prefer silence. Other recommended disciplines are fasting, vigils, seclusion and perpetual 'remembrance' of God. Uzgani quotes a verse by one Sayf al-Din of Yazd, a disciple of a pupil of the very famous Sufi Sayf al-Din of Bakharz (d. 1261 CE). Sayf al-Din of Yazd lived to the age of 99. His verse runs as follows:

> Silence, fasting, vigils, seclusion and perpetual remembrance
> Make the work of the world's incomplete ones complete.

This verse is sometimes wrongly attributed to Sayf al-Din of Bakharz himself. The Uwaysi elders have desired that Uzgani should provide a commentary on it as the 'Conclusion' to his book.

Silence is the attribute of the *'arif* (mystic, gnostic). An *'arif* is literally someone who is 'acquainted', and can be of two types: acquainted with reality (*haqiqa*) and acquainted with what is metaphorical (*majazi*). The former recognizes his own inner reality, and knows from what and why it has been created; also, from where and how it has come and to where and how it will go. You must know your self. God has created you out of four opposing elements, water, fire, earth and air. Although they oppose one another, in you they are perfectly combined. From this you must proceed to reflect upon your Maker. The person who is acquainted with what is metaphorical is he who knows his enemy. There are enemies waiting to lure you away from your religion, and silence is the best means of frustrating them.

Fasting has been a characteristic of the prophets, especially Muhammad, who emphasized the importance of contentment in the midst of plenty. Only one person in a thousand is granted this gift of contentment, though many of God's friends have had it. It is related of some great elders that in a period of twenty-four hours they would not eat more than seven *mithqals* of food; in the case of some five, and in the case of others, two and a half.[206] You should practise contentment while being rich. If once a year, once a month, or once a week you wonder how to spend your money you will damage your spiritual progress.

Wakefulness is an attribute of God: others cannot have a perfect command of it. Most of God's friends have possessed the ability to keep vigils, and have reached him thanks to this. Many of the 'people of the exterior' have also obtained blessings in their affairs through wakefulness. Again, this gift is granted to only one in a thousand people. It was owing to wakefulness that Muhammad's father was given the honour of having his son's light implanted in his loins. If you cannot keep awake for the whole of the night, do so for half or one-third. Pain is essential for reaching the goal. In the same way, if one endures much pain for the sake of a beautiful person one will eventually be united with that person. Wakefulness produces pain.

Seclusion is also good for the aspiring dervish, because keeping company with people produces slander and hypocrisy. Slander is worse than fornication, and hypocrisy means being like a Muslim

externally but like an unbeliever internally. Some people have said that 'solitude in the assembly' is for the perfect, since to them being alone and being with others are the same; seclusion is necessary for the imperfect, so that they can concentrate, but they should have a protective 'medium' (*wasita*, i.e. the mental image of one's elder),[207] because in seclusion Satan and the genies interfere more.

Perpetual remembrance, for the mystics, means making mention of God with one of his names. Some of the four brotherhoods' elders concentrate on the formula 'There is no god but God', others on the name 'Allah', others on the name 'Alive' (Hayy), and so on. Whatever name they use, they reach their goal. Perpetual remembrance brings love, then nearness to God, and then 'junction' (*wasl*). Even when you go to the lavatory you should make remembrance, but with your heart.

The remembrance of 'There is no god but God' should be performed as follows. You should isolate yourself in a small hermitage (or cell, *sawma'a*), so small that if you sit cross-legged both knees will touch the wall. Sit facing Mecca and breathe in. Put your tongue against the roof of the mouth. Then start the remembrance: make the *la* ('There is no') come from the navel; when pronouncing the middle vowel of *ilaha* ('god') make it incline to the right; begin the *illa* ('but') from the right; drive the name 'Allah' on to the pineal heart, which is the place where the things of the unseen are contemplated, but not so that all your breath has to go out; then let your breath out. The number of remembrances must be odd. Here the point is that the veil of cotton upon the heart must be annihilated in the fire of love for God.

As for the remembrance of the name 'Allah' on its own, if one is alone one should squat on one's heels facing Mecca. One should breathe in and put one's tongue against the roof of the mouth as indicated above. Then one should start the A from the right side of the chest and bring it to the heart. The number of 'remembrances' should again be odd. If one is with a group of people in the same brotherhood the remembrance should be performed in unison, aloud. If there are other people present who are not of the same brotherhood one should perform the remembrance with the movements of the tongue, but silently, in such a way that the uninitiated do not realize.

Commentary

It has already been noted that the Conclusion is omitted in the

censored version. Again, this is presumably due to the Naqshbandi victory over the Uwaysis: a rival tradition, with what is supposed to be its own technique for 'remembrance', is being presented. However, the contents of the Conclusion are not at all unusual. The element of the 'medium' (*wasita*), consisting of the disciple's mental image of his elder, is common in the practices of the eastern Sufi brotherhoods. As for the descriptions of breath-control in 'remembrance', they are extremely similar to what is found among the Naqshbandis and the Kubrawis. The distinction between a public or loud 'remembrance' and a private or silent one is also well known in Muslim mystical fraternities, especially among the Naqshbandis.[208]

PART THREE
THE BOOK'S TEACHINGS AND SUBSEQUENT FATE

So far we have considered only the structure of the *History of The Uwaysis* and the main outlines of its narratives. However, much important didactic material is dispersed throughout the work in an unstructured manner, and this will now be discussed under thematic headings: women (here we have already had to analyse the structural correspondences), death and Sufi doctrine. Then we shall examine the unusual vicissitudes which have befallen the book over the centuries.

WOMEN IN THE *HISTORY OF THE UWAYSIS*

In approaching the presentation of women in the book as a whole it is advisable to bear in mind two extreme positions for which publicity has been sought over a period of many years. One is that Islam teaches absolute contempt for women; the other is that Islamic societies, as they have developed, have not discriminated against women at all. As we have seen, some women are accorded very great veneration in Islam. This is especially the case in Central Asia, as is evidenced by many shrines. The same can be said for Morocco, and doubtless in both areas it reflects pre-Islamic traditions. A woman can rise very high in the mystical scale and put men to shame. On the other hand, the position of women in Islamic societies is (at least in theory) rigidly fixed in many ways, so that they are usually discriminated against to an extent unacceptable in modern Western eyes.

One basic presupposition is that of the celebrated statement, wrongly claimed by Uzgani to be in the Qur'an, that women are

'deficient in reason'. Thus in the *History of the Uwaysis* they cannot exercise the functions of Pole.[1] Sometimes, very rarely, they are actually appointed to the position of Pole, as opposed to merely qualifying for it. When, however, a woman is granted the unique honour of being invested with the vestments of Polehood she immediately dies.[2] Safiyya of Ethiopia, in a classic example of the witty reply, says that she must be deficient in reason: that is why she cannot remember pre-eternity.[3] Consequently women are inferior as a class: Uzgani observes that a man who boasts of enduring pain for God and does not show as much courage as a woman is cowardly indeed.[4] Nonetheless, the *History of the Uwaysis* does give examples of the 'wise mother'. That of Shihab al-Din of Herat cleverly points out to him that he cannot hide his 'friendship with God' by going into exile.[5] The mother of 'Abbas of Khwarazm declares that she cannot follow her carnal soul, and becomes an excellent teacher.[6] This is after her son maintains that though men may be saved from lust by some impediment women will be unable to escape from it as long as they live.[7] Here we encounter a typical aspect of the doctrines concerning women which have been developed in Islam, often in contradiction to the earliest texts.[8] It follows that private devotion is particularly suitable for a woman.[9]

Marriage is better than celibacy, God says to Muhammad 'Attar, after he has been cured of his infatuation for a girl, which is evidently not a good thing.[10] A romantic marriage, however, is vouchsafed to Abu 'l-Futuh Alma'i, who falls in love with a princess. The husband, we might feel inappropriately, receives a high celestial reward if he has a beautiful wife of noble birth.[11] Naji of Bukhara and his wife constitute an unusual example of conjugal tenderness. He brings her to perfection, but salutes her as his elder, whose endeavours have brought him to his present rank.[12] Naji dies in his wife's arms, and they are buried side by side. Once married, a woman must not refuse to have intercourse with her husband if he insists. The wife of Taj al-Din Muhammad apologizes for having abstained from intercourse in order to improve her child: no sin, she admits, is worse than this.[13] Ahmad of Shikarmat marries forty times, but never has more than three wives at once. Every night he has intercourse not less than forty times. Baha of Balkh has intercourse with his bride eighty times on their wedding-night, but apologizes the next morning. Safiyya of Ethiopia is told that intercourse with her husband is the very essence of religious devotion, while obeying him is an obligation imposed by Islam.[14]

It is to be observed that in East Turkistan a married woman is designated by the Arabic passive participle *mazlum*, 'an object of oppression', while an unmarried daughter or a widow is called an *'ajiza*, 'a helpless one'. The duties and sufferings of women are divinely ordained. Nevertheless, it has been noted that in practice the position of women in the region has been remarkably free. Nineteenth-century French visitors were struck by the ease with which the Muslim women of East Turkistan could (and did) discard their husbands and acquire new ones.[15] Thus the presentation of women in the *History of the Uwaysis* largely represents wishful thinking on Uzgani's part: the ideal of the subjection of women which evolved in Islam (frequently rejecting early Islamic practice) was never to prevail against the region's indigenous traditions.

DEATH IN THE *HISTORY OF THE UWAYSIS*

The deaths in the *History of the Uwaysis* usually follow a set pattern, which corresponds to handbooks of ideal Islamic practice: the Muslim is supposed to know that he is about to die, and to prepare for dying correctly, while those around him are also bound by rigid instructions.[16] An exemplary model is well sketched out in the first biography, that of 'Abd Allah Yamani. The Angel of Death comes in the form of an ordinary human messenger, and asks for permission to come in. 'Abd Allah readies himself for death, summons his friends and asks God not to humiliate him by making him die without making the profession of faith. Then he asks his friends to forgive him and engages in ecstatic 'listening' (*sama'*). He makes the profession of faith and dies without people noticing: his body does not fall down after the moment of death. This happens on a Monday, as with Muhammad. Arrangements are made for the funeral. The grave salutes 'Abd Allah, and he returns its greeting. Once in the grave he gets up and says, 'Everything returns to its origin.'[17] He is buried, and afterwards appears to someone in a dream.

The announcement of imminent death can be made by someone other than the Angel of Death, whose presence at the moment of dying is not required in the case of a mystic. Uzgani quotes the verse

> In your street lovers render up their souls in such a way

That there the Angel of Death can never find room.[18]

Thus the news that one is to die can be given by God, or Uways, or one's spiritual instructor, or the spirits of the Uwaysi elders (perhaps accompanied by the angels).[19] There can be a misunderstanding of the statement that the Sufi will be made to join God: thus he will say that he has done that already.[20] Usually, however, the message is brought by 'Azra'il, the special angel who is entrusted with the task of taking the spirit from the body. He comes in an appropriate disguise, sometimes that of a dervish: in the case of Sa'adat, who has lived a *qalandar*'s life, he arrives as a *qalandar*. Sometimes a member of the Sufi elder's entourage announces that a visitor is asking for permission to come in. The elder immediately understands.[21] Alternatively 'Azra'il himself may ask for leave to enter. In one instance a Sufi asks his elder for permission to die, and is told that this is not needed.[22] On hearing that one is about to die the mystic naturally rejoices: the 'friend' is about to join the divine Friend. He may whirl round three times as an expression of joy.[23] The Sufi sometimes observes that his spirit has been given to him only as a temporary deposit, which must be surrendered to its owner.[24] An elder may also ask the Angel of Death for a respite, so that he can speak to his disciples.[25]

Now one has to bathe and perform two cycles of worship. After this the other dervishes nearby need to be summoned. Perhaps the other local inhabitants and even the ruler of the region will be invited to come as well. Khadima invites people to her funeral, and they, finding her in good health, think that she is playing a joke on them.[26] The Sufi elder must make his 'testament' (*wasiyyat*). Such 'testaments' are a familiar part of Sufi literature from the tenth century CE. They give instructions to the dervishes about future ethical and liturgical conduct. In the *History of the Uwaysis* orders are also sometimes given for the funeral, for the use of the dying elder's insignia and for the transmission of authority to his successor.[27] Thus Shaqiq of Shiraz appoints a child, Nizam al-Din, as his deputy and hands him his own turban, patched frock and staff. This initiatory transmission of insignia is well-established Sufi practice from the brotherhoods' beginnings in the thirteenth century.[28] 'Abd al-Rahim of Sistan, after his disciples have joined him, recites Chapter 1 of the Qur'an for them and says that he does not want enemies to claim that he died without a proper bathing of his corpse and a proper funeral service. Then he makes the 'testament'

proper: he is to be buried in his cave, and the dervishes are to go away quickly and return once a year to have their problems solved. After the burial the dervishes wonder why they have to go away quickly, and delay their departure. When a vast number of wild beasts arrive the reason is clear.[29]

The elder may now choose to engage in some ecstatic 'listening'. Perhaps he will listen to his own voice, repeating a phrase such as 'God is my Lord' to himself and becoming excited. Sometimes he will do this while his disciples, at his command, perform a collective 'remembrance'.[30] But it is important that his 'listening' should come to an end, and that he should calm down and sit quietly before dying. This return to quiet normality after 'listening' is also essential in other circumstances.[31] The Uwaysi has to make a calm profession of faith, so as not to be disgraced. When Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat visits the various 'friends of God' in the world he comes across 200 who are dying 'without faith', and is most upset, weighed down by the fear that this might happen to him. The act of dying itself has to be performed facing Mecca. One can make a prostration as in worship.[32] Sometimes one places one's head in 'Azra'il's lap. Often other people will not notice that the mystic has died. When they do, they realize that death occurred some time earlier, when he went into some condition, such as 'absorption'.[33]

At this point the problem of selecting people to wash and shroud the corpse arises, if instructions have not already been given. Usually three people are thought obligatory: one to bring the water, another to pour it and a third to do the actual washing.[34] It may be necessary for someone to engage in 'concentration' (*tawajjuh*), and ask the dead person's spirit to designate individuals: Satuq Bughra Khan does this in the case of his earthly teacher Abu 'l-Nasr and receives the answer from the latter's chest.[35] Nizam al-Din of Bazda's corpse tells his disciples to wait. Then one of their colleagues returns. 'Externally' he has gone to Egypt, but in 'inner meaning' he has gone to Mecca in order to dip the shroud in the well of Zamzam (a common practice).[36] Water is usually heated for the washing, but a voice from the chest of 'Abd al-Ghaffar of Multan says that in his case cold water will do. It then proves impossible to unclothe his genitals or stretch out his legs, because he is aware that Khidr, a prophet, is present and thus no breach of etiquette is possible. Khidr goes out and the washing can then be done: the water becomes warm when poured.[37] Sometimes the dead person realizes that a tiny spot has been left unwashed, and

keeps insisting that more water be poured.[38] 'Remembrance' may continue to be heard from the chest throughout the washing and after the subsequent shrouding.[39] Khadija prepares for death by bathing and shrouding herself and getting into the grave. After she dies the scholar-jurists insist that washing must follow death, and so they take her out of the grave and bathe her again before burying her.[40] 'Ataba of Turkistan prefers to die without her body being seen in the process of washing: thus she dies on Mount Hira, and her body is eaten by animals.[41] Zuhra's husband brings maidservants to bathe her body, and they find that she has fallen on to a golden table. Water has poured down from the roof of the house.[42]

After the shrouding the funeral service takes place. For the funeral service and burial of 'Imran of Yazd, 120,000 angels appear in human form, joining a company of 'men of the unseen' and 'substitutes' on Mount Lebanon.[43] Often the local population will have been summoned to take part. Where is the corpse to be buried? Sometimes instructions have been given beforehand: the grave may be in the elder's room, hermitage, or cave. In the case of Nizam al-Din of Bazda a voice says that he is to be buried where he died.[44] Often, however, there is a funeral procession to the cemetery. In some instances this is pre-empted: a veiled camel-rider snatches the corpse at the funeral of Baha' al-Din of Ghazna and takes it to Mount Lebanon (the rider is the dead person himself, as in the legend of 'Ali). The body may simply disappear, as happens with 'Abd al-Rahim of Medina and Khadima. Taj al-Din of Delhi gets up and down forty-one times on the way to the cemetery. When asked why he is so restless he replies that God is saying, 'Come, since we are yours!'[45] Nizam al-Din of Shiraz dies at Mecca but indicates that he is to be buried at Medina. 'Abd al-Rahman of Nishapur also dies at Mecca: his bier rises up and flies to Medina's famous Baqi' cemetery. Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat says, 'Upon you be peace!' 300 times during his own funeral procession. One of his deputies asks to whose salutation he is replying. He explains that the angels and the houris of paradise are greeting him.[46] The insignia of Sa'adat's career as a *qalandar* set off after his bier but obey his command to go back. In the case of Sakina 160 spots on the route cry out that they would like to be the dust beneath her.[47]

Once the grave has been reached it may greet the dead Sufi, in which case he will answer the greeting. Ghiyath al-Din of

Shikarmat salutes the dead in the neighbouring graves, and they salute him too. One of his disciples, the judge 'Abd al-Majid, embraces his corpse and complains that Ghiyath al-Din has deprived him of the good fortune of seeing him just before his death and has not brought his 'work' to completion.[48] Sometimes the grave has been prepared by a miraculous intervention. Baha' al-Din of Ghazna is helped by angels to dig his own grave. 'Imran of Yazd, however, does this unaided.[49] Yasir of Istanbul wants his body to be out in the open and to be devoured by wild beasts, instead of polluting the earth. He observes that if the aim of burial is to give the dead the 'torment of the tomb' all places are the same, since it cannot be escaped. [In Islamic belief the corpse is partly sentient in the grave and undergoes physical punishment there.][50] But God sends 5,000 angels to bury him.[51]

Placed in the grave, the Sufi may get up and say something. Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat observes that the grave is the last stage of this world and the first stage of the next.[52] Both Satuq Bughra Khan and his 'doublet' say, 'Lord, harbour me in a blessed harbour, for you are the best of harbourers' (Qur'an 23: 29).[53]

Sometimes a tomb is built, but in other instances the Uwaysi declares that he wants to be 'without name or trace' in the world, as is fitting for one of God's hidden friends. 'Abd Allah Yamani's tomb later disappears. 'Abd al-Ghaffar of Multan, just before he dies, says that there is to be no tomb.[54] 'Abd al-Rahman of Aleppo rejoices at the prospect of dying in the desert, where he will be anonymous.[55]

It has generally been believed by Muslims that after the burial two angels come down and interrogate the dead person about his religious allegiance. A pious individual will make a correct and fluent statement, but a wicked one will stammer and be hopelessly confused.[56] Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat is asked an extra question, and loses his temper and hits both of the angels, telling them that they have no right to ask more than what has been fixed by law.[57] When the father-in-law of Muhammad 'Attar of Farkhar is buried the angels arrive, but are told by a divine voice not to conduct the interrogation: since the dead man's great son-in-law is sitting by the grave his sins are forgiven. Taj al-Din of Delhi, after replying to the interrogation (and stating that he belongs to the Hanafi school of Islamic law), asks why he has been questioned, when God and the angels already know the answers. The angels explain that the only reason was that listening to him speaking was a pleasant experience, and apologize.[58]

There are alternative ways of dying. The Uwaysi may be martyred. Shams al-Din Qattal of Uzgen says that he wants this: martyrdom is the highest of degrees. After a time he announces that soon an army will come and kill him. In due course he puts on white clothes and sets off to meet his fate.[59] Farid al-Din of Bakharz states that he is a lover of God, draws his head down into his patched frock, and says, 'God!' Smoke comes out of his collar and fades away. Then it is evident that he has burnt to death and become a pile of ashes.[60] 'Abbas of Khwarazm wants to be drowned in God's benevolence (*rahmat*) and has his wish fulfilled: he drowns swimming in the Oxus and disappears completely. Other Uwaysis also disappear, and sometimes we are told that they die afterwards: Shihab al-Din of Herat vanishes from his city and dies at Mecca after performing the pilgrimage. But sometimes one can disappear on becoming one of the 'men of the unseen': this happens with 'Allama Huqqabaz, for whom a tomb is built at Medina. Jamal al-Din of Kadak also does this, but tells someone in a dream that he should be classified among the dead. Again, a tomb is built.

The period of mourning by the grave varies. After 'Imran of Yazd has been buried the company of 'substitutes' stays for three days and then disperses.[61] When Burhan al-Din Qilichi dies the sultan sits mourning in his house for seven days.[62] In the case of 'Abd al-Rahman of Aleppo a period of forty days' mourning is observed, in conformity with what is common Islamic practice.

The presentation of death in the *History of the Uwaysis* mirrors the Muslims' intense preoccupation with this subject, a preoccupation which resembles that of Spanish culture and nineteenth-century Europe. It reflects Islam's insistence on correct behaviour in every detail, and also the Muslims' contradictory beliefs (often held simultaneously, as in Christianity) about where the spirit of the dead person is. Here the Uwaysi tradition comes into its own: the Sufi elder in the grave exists in more worlds than one, as a source of instruction often superior to those who survive him.

THE SUFI DOCTRINE OF THE *HISTORY OF THE UWAYSIS*

A fair amount of Sufi doctrine is found scattered in bits and pieces throughout the *History of the Uwaysis*. Uzgani himself, in his Introduction and third 'Point', sets out the main modalities of Uwaysi instruction and the hierarchy of God's friends in a

systematic manner, thus relieving us of the necessity of doing this ourselves. As regards the Sufi Path itself, however, he is far from clear, and appears to contradict himself. Thus one has to rearrange his material in a reasonably ordered sequence, while pointing out inconsistencies. There are some correspondences with the teachings of early, classical Sufism, and some with Ibn 'Arabi's theories, but usually Uzgani's Sufi doctrine is of a late and unfamiliar kind, and often quite daring.

In general, one can discern a progression of 'degrees', a degree being in Arabic a *martaba*. Uzgani uses this term in a rather confusing way. The entire 'journey towards God' (*sayr ila Allah*) is called a 'degree', though it seems to have various degrees included within it. This is a lower journey, as opposed to the higher 'journey in God' (*sayr fi Allah*). The lowest possible degree would appear to be that of the 'unveiling of the genies' (*kashf-i jinn*). This means having visions of bad genies and being deceived by them.[63] Above this comes the 'unveiling of the spirits' (*kashf-i arwah*), seeing good spirits, presumably for the most part those of the dead.[64] Elsewhere we are told that the lowest degree is the 'unveiling of the tombs' (*kashf-i qubur*): doubtless this also means seeing the spirits of the dead and is identical with the degree just mentioned. Khadija is told that it is usually granted after forty days of self-mortification. It takes her thirteen years. (After twelve years 'A'isha is able to distinguish 'the spirits of the elders' – one imagines that this is the same thing.)[65] Five years later Khadija is given the 'unveiling of angels', ten years after that the 'unveiling of hell', and a few days later the 'unveiling of heaven'. More 'unveilings' follow day by day, until she reaches God's Throne every night.[66]

The 'journey towards God', then, is a low degree which apparently includes a number of other low degrees. One such degree is considered easy to acquire by Ahmad Sabuni, though previous 'friends' have taken a lifetime to obtain it: the degree of 'rolling up the earth' (*tayy-i ard*), flying over the world.[67] Certainly it seems to belong to the 'journey towards God', since we are told that Ahmad brought all of the people of Damascus to perfection (not itself a very high degree, as we shall see), except for fifty individuals, who thanks to their lack of aptitude remained in this one. However, one can master it more or less well, perhaps now or later: 'Abd al-Rahman of Nishapur proceeds into the 'journey in God', and then the reader is informed that he has won so fine a command of 'rolling up the earth' that he can take seventy

dervishes from north-eastern Iran to Mecca if he so desires.[68] It is evident that some dervishes just remain on the journey towards God. Others reach its conclusion, but do not progress beyond 'passing away in God' (*fana' fi Allah*).[69] Evidently this is where the 'journey in God' begins. Safiyya is given the degree of 'survival through God' (*baqa' billah*), which presumably, as in classical Sufi theory, comes just above 'passing away'.[70] Now some will be detained in the 'most noble station' (*maqam-i ashraf*), which, confusingly, comes beneath the 'greatest station' (*maqam-i a'zam*). The latter, we have been told in the Introduction, is five degrees lower than the highest degree.[71] After the stations, and above them, are the 'stages', a stage being called a *manzil*. We are still on the Path. The stages will lead to the goal (*maqsud*). Apparently the last stage before the goal will be the 'stage of reality' (*manzil-i haqiqat*). Of Muhammad Baqir's 100,000 dervishes, 1,000 reach this.[72]

The goal is the vision of God.[73] It seems that in a way this goal is God himself.[74] Khadima says, 'My goal is Oneness (*yaki*).' The goal is also well beyond 'reaching perfection': 'Abd al-Rahman's forty-one dervishes arrive at perfection, while he himself finds the goal and becomes Pole.[75] ('Being brought to perfection' is evidently the same as having one's 'work' reach perfection.)[76] Beneath the vision of God comes the 'unveiling of the things of the unseen' (*kashf-i umur-i ghayb*), which is vouchsafed to Nizam al-Din of Bazda: he sees everything from God's throne to hell, but not God himself.[77] It is apparently related to the 'stage of reality': Taj al-Din traverses all the 'stages' and becomes familiar with the Throne and everything beneath it. Then he is told that he is to become a Pole: the vision of God is conditional upon obtaining the degree of Polehood.[78] However, in what seems to be an example of inconsistency, we are informed that Muhibb Kuhmar quickly reaches the goal and is honoured with the degree of becoming a 'substitute' – beneath that of Pole. Until one reaches the degree of Pole a 'friend' does not have his 'friendship with God' confirmed.[79]

The vision of God is granted in theophanies (Arabic singular: *tajalli*). Funduqa, after reaching the degree of 'passing away in God' [and presumably after further progress], receives theophanies ten times a day. The theophanies have various forms, the lowest being that of outward form (*tajalli-yi suri*). This makes the contemplator bewildered, and perhaps immersed in ecstasy for three days.[80] God may reveal himself in one of his attributes,

notably that of anger.[81] It is not clear how this is related to the hierarchy of theophanies. After that of outward form comes the theophany of light (*tajalli-yi nurani*). This is vouchsafed to 'Abd al-Rahim of Sistan ten days after the former. A day later he obtains the 'theophany of taste' (*tajalli-yi dhawq*). We are told that 'Imran of Yazd was granted this theophany, without any mention of others. It is given to Zuhra twenty years after she has completed her 'work' and succeeded in making daily visits to paradise. After this she obtains the degree of Pole, but refuses to be appointed to it. Following the 'theophany of taste', 'Abd al-Rahim is granted the 'theophany of inner meaning' (*tajalli-yi ma'nawi*). This is obviously in contrast to the 'theophany of outward form', the lowest, and is thus presumably the highest of all. After it 'Abd al-Rahim is ordered to go and give people guidance. Habib of Kashghar, in the last biography of a male mystic, becomes Pole and is given the 'theophany of inner meaning'; again, no other theophanies are mentioned. However, we have seen in the Introduction that one can be granted different types of theophany, and so obtain the degree of 'accumulation' (*ijma'*).[82]

One might imagine that after the goal is reached the mystic could rise no higher. But Uzgani talks of different degrees as being 'the highest degree'. One is the 'unveiling of inner meanings' (*kashf-i ma'ani*). This is given to Jalil of Damghan, as the first degree which he acquired. It is the highest of all the degrees of the 'friends', granted to one 'friend' in a thousand. Afterwards Jalil is also given the 'unveiling of angels'. So the highest degree does not include lower ones. Jalil is instructed by the spirit of Moses and is on the back of Jacob: this, says Uzgani, is seen by the 'friends' as the highest of degrees, to be instructed by two people, especially when both are prophets – it is rarely granted to the Uwaysis. So the author has apparently contradicted himself in one and the same chapter. Now the 'unveiling of inner meanings' is vouchsafed to Shaqiq of Shiraz, immediately after he is made to drink two glassfuls of water. Later he is told that he is to be granted the degree of Pole and, as has just been noted, that this is needed to confirm one's 'friendship with God'. Elsewhere Uzgani says that to be a fighter for Islam on its frontier (a *ghazi*) brings one to a degree ten times the equivalent of that of an ordinary 'friend'.[83] Higher still, of course, is that obtained by the warrior who is killed for Islam: indeed, martyrdom is the highest of degrees. Shams al-Din Qattal of Uzgen explains after his death that he is at the head of the

martyrs, having precedence because he has reached many other degrees. So, we now perceive, if one reaches one of the mystical degrees called 'the highest' by Uzgani one can still continue to obtain lower ones, and acquire what he also calls 'the highest' (martyrdom), rank in which will be determined by the number of other degrees already won. To be sure, the mystic cannot hope to become a prophet, but the prophet Khidr says that he has given half of his own degree to 'Abd al-Wahhab of Nishapur.

The *History of the Uwaysis* contains a number of ecstatic utterances which come very close to monism, the belief that there is only one entity in the whole of existence. However, this position is not actually reached and expounded as such: Uzgani can be called monistic, but not a monist. Here he resembles Ibn 'Arabi. In the wildness of his statements Uzgani connects himself with Abu Yazid. When he makes Baha' al-Din of Ghazna recite 'I saw my Lord with the eye of my Lord' Uzgani is quoting a famous verse by Hallaj in a later version which gives it an evidently monistic twist. In presenting Baha' al-Din as having an ascension (*mi'raj*), like Muhammad and Abu Yazid, Uzgani is again putting himself in the camp of the latter. 'Imran of Yazd declares that dervishhood consists of abandoning the world and considering everything except God as non-existent. But this is still not a clear and unequivocal statement of monism, but rather an evocation of an ethical ideal. 'Abd al-Rahim of Sistan keeps saying, 'I am other than I.' However, this is probably to be taken as an expression of God's self-manifestation in the world, not as a claim by the mystic that he is identical with God. Later 'Abd al-Rahim states that he has found 'conjunction' (*wisal*) with God. This is to be compared with the 'conjunction' afforded by death, which is compared to the return of a drop of water to the sea. It is not clear how 'conjunction' is related to the schema of 'degrees'. Uzgani asserts that everything which exists is God.[84] But this is not the same as saying that God is everything: we are not presented with a clear statement of pantheism, the doctrine that God is all and all is God.

Some striking expressions come in the biography of Shihab al-Din of Herat, who recites:

> I am not I; no, I am I; I am you; no, you I am.

'I am I' is a phrase of Abu Yazid's, which evidently reflects the 'I am He' of the Upanishads.[85] However, the rest of the line is very like much of Ibn 'Arabi's verses. The mystic in a way is God, since God

makes himself manifest through him. But this does not mean that God is the mystic in the sense of being identical with him alone. Shihab al-Din then recites:

> We are the light of God made manifest through man;
> If you see us with your eyes then see God!

Here it is clear enough that the mystic is just identifying himself with an entity beneath God, his light, not with the deity himself. This is normal enough in Sufi poetry from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Later Shihab al-Din says:

> I am the special slave of the Glorious One;
> The sphere of the heavens is beneath my foot.

Here it is even clearer that the Sufi claims to be a privileged underling of God rather than absolutely identical with him.

In another example Ghiyath al-Din of Shikarmat declares: 'I am the First and the Last, the Exterior and the Interior.' However, it is made evident that he is saying this because he is overwhelmed by the degree of Polehood. Later he explains that his words mean that he is always engaged in 'remembrance' of God and never neglects him. We may observe that it is normal for mystics to say outrageous things when under the grip of ecstasy, and then to disown them or offer an innocent explanation. There is no attempt to maintain that Ghiyath al-Din is co-extensive with God. Farid al-Din of Bakharz recites: 'I belong to God and the world belongs to me.' Later the people who object to this see the whole of creation paying homage to him. Again, this is common Sufi doctrine: the leading Sufi is just beneath God himself. The teaching scandalizes jurists, as one would expect: the atmosphere of hostility between mystics and lawyers which pervades the *History of the Uwaysis* also pervades the whole of the seventeenth-century Muslim world.

THE BOOK'S SUBSEQUENT FATE

Censorship and translation

At some point between the composition of the *History of the Uwaysis*, about 1600, and 1769, when it was translated into Uighur Turkic, a censored version was made. (Since the translation was done from

the censored version, we can be sure about the latter date.) The censorship took the form of omitting passages of a sexual character (Chapter 11 and the attempted seduction of Sakina), 'Point' 3 (which contains rather wild and 'secret' Sufi teachings and exalts the Uwaysi 'chain' above all others), and the Conclusion (which prescribes a specifically Uwaysi form of 'remembrance'). Presumably this censorship is to be attributed to Naqshbandi domination, which was effective from 1591 and took the form of temporal sovereignty from 1680. Given the prudishness and mystical conservatism of the Naqshbandi brotherhood, this is not surprising.

The first (and only complete) translation of the *History of the Uwaysis* into Uighur Turkic was made at Tokuzkent, near Yarkand, by one Muhammad Gada.[86] One is naturally tempted to link this translation to the Chinese conquest of East Turkistan a decade earlier. Doubtless, the ending of Naqshbandi temporal rule favoured an extension of independent Uwaysi sentiments, while the book's strong regional and Turkic elements made a translation into the vernacular a timely response to the new rulers. Another translation, this time of only four chapters, was done by a certain Niyazi of Kashghar at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It contains the biographies of Baha' al-Din of Ghazna, 'Allama Huqqabaz, Abu 'l-Nasr Samani and Satuq Bughra Khan. Each biography is followed by a poem in praise of its subject, composed by the translator.[87] Muhammad Gada's translation is often found in abbreviated form. Some manuscripts end with the chapter on Satuq and the section on his 'doublet'.[88] This is hardly surprising, since much of what follows is not directly relevant to East Turkistan. Often individual biographies are found in isolation. This is notably the case with Abu 'l-Nasr and Satuq.[89] In 1829–30 an anonymous poetical version of the chapter on the latter was composed.[90]

Survival, criticism and popularity

During the nineteenth century the *History of the Uwaysis* continued to be copied in East Turkistan, along with the biography of Muhammad Sharif. (The Uwaysi tradition itself produced a poetess at the start of the century, with the pen name Uwaysa, whose work has not yet been published or studied.)[91] European visitors bought copies of Uzgani's book, and some scholars tried to

salvage bits of narrative history from it. One robust view of this and other examples of Sufi literature from East Turkistan was provided by a Frenchman, Fernand Grenard, who was not the only person to express contempt for the supposed 'mediocrity' of the region's population.[92] He declared that the only important works of literature produced in the area were the *Rashidi History* and the local 'Mirror for Princes' (called the *Kudatku Bilik*):

> That gives a fair idea of the poverty-stricken nature of intellectual activity, even in the periods of the greatest brilliance. Apart from that one finds only legends of saints and martyrs, which are more or less authentic. They were botched up by some passing clerks, who put the ancient traditions into Muslim dress, falsifying, so to speak, the race's letters patent of nobility, whereas their duty was to teach it dignity and truth.[93]

Similar sentiments were expressed by Ney Elias, writing about the *Memorial of the Masters* (*Tadhkira-yi khwajagan*, an account of the Naqshbandi masters of East Turkistan): 'Visions, prophecies, tombs and shrines pervade the pages to a depressing extent ... The pervading tone is one of gloomy superstition and fanaticism.'[94]

The appeal of the *History of the Uwaysis* in late nineteenth-century East Turkistan has been evoked by Sven Hedin, speaking of the mullah who was his guide there: 'With the boatmen he was exceedingly popular, for he entertained them many a long hour with reading, having brought with him two books which described the travels of the earliest Mohammedan missionaries in East Turkestan.'[95] Doubtless one of the two books was the *History of the Uwaysis* or part thereof.

Unfortunately, by the twentieth century political factors had intervened to limit the book's diffusion. The German Islamicist Martin Hartmann, writing in 1904, observed that the Chinese authorities were only very rarely inclined to help the indigenous population to come into contact with literature. In particular, anything concerning the people's religious or national traditions was seen as especially dangerous. Thus the book trade in the region existed only to an extremely limited degree.[96]

The book's influence: legend and reality

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries oral legends sometimes

correspond in part to the contents of the *History of the Uwaysis*, but it is difficult to tell which has influenced the other. Hedin, describing his journeys in the 1890s, and in particular the mountain of Muztagh Ata, relates as follows of the latter:

> Whenever the Kirghiz pass it, or first catch sight of it in the course of a journey, they fall upon their knees and say their prayers. They declare that it is the abode of three score and ten saints. Nay, they assert that it is one gigantic masar or burial-mound of saints. Within its interior dwell amongst others the souls of Moses and Ali ... When Ali lay at the point of death, he prophesied to those about him, that as soon as the breath was gone out of his body, a white camel would come down from heaven and carry him away. As he said, so it came to pass. When he was dead, the white camel appeared, took the holy man on its back, and hastened with him to Mus-tagh-ata. The Kirghiz are firmly convinced that Moses' soul also abides in that mountain, and for that reason they sometimes call it Hazrett-i Musa or the Holy Moses.
>
> The Kirghiz of Su-bashi told me this story about the holy mountain. Many hundred years ago an aged ishan (holy man) went up the mountain by himself. And when he came a certain way up it, he found a lake and a little stream, with a white camel grazing on the shore. There was also a large garden planted with plum-trees, and under the plum-trees there walked to and fro a number of venerable old men dressed in white garments. The holy man plucked some of the fruit and ate it. Then came one of the venerable inhabitants of the garden, and said to him, that it was well he had done so; for if he had despised the fruit, as all those aged men had done, he would have been condemned like them to stay on the mountain, walking up and down the garden, to the end of time. Then came a rider on a white horse, and caught up the holy man, and galloped with him down the steep mountain-side. And when the ishan came to himself, he found that he was down in the valley, and could only remember dimly all the marvellous things he had seen.[97]

According to Sir Aurel Stein the Kirghiz have another legend about the mountain: '... a hoary "pir [elder]" resides on the glacier-crowned and wholly inaccessible summit. Long, long ago, the eyes of adventurous hunters beheld him.'[98] Stein points out that a pre-Islamic Buddhist legend speaks of a holy man sitting in the middle of the mountain.[99] It would appear that Uzgani may to

some extent have transposed legends about a local mountain to the Lebanon and elsewhere, and the Kirghiz may have done the reverse.

But it is not only oral legend which corresponds to the *History of the Uwaysis*, but reality itself. The scholar Albert von Le Coq relates that in Khotan in 1906 he asked people, mainly Afghan traders, if there were *abdal* ('substitutes') there. He was duly visited by a number of entirely white-clad bearded men, whose spokesman presented himself and his companions as *abdal*.[100] However, it would be wrong to imagine that this phenomenon was confined to East Turkistan: Le Coq compares these *abdal* with others encountered in what was then called northern Syria and is now part of Turkey.[101]

CONCLUSIONS

Up to this point we have had to concern ourselves with very difficult technical problems presented by the source-materials. It now seems advisable to ask more general questions. Do these imaginary lives form part of a special kind of literature, which can tell us something particularly important? Is Sufi biography like Christian hagiography? How does the Uwaysi tradition help us to understand Islam itself? These questions naturally lead one to ask others. What is meant by the word 'imaginary'? And what is hagiography?

The imaginary

The *History of the Uwaysis* is above all a product of the imagination: the characters are for the most part imaginary. A few are historical figures, and some evidently represent legends which predate Uzgani. Some are hopelessly anachronistic (for example, those about rulers who could not possibly have reigned in the places and periods in question), while others show every sign of having been invented for didactic purposes. I have combed the sources in which they would have appeared: guides to the shrines of cities, collections of biographies of local men of religion, indices of catalogues of manuscripts, etc. Apart from the subjects of the biographies set in East Turkistan and Uzgen itself, the mystics do not seem to have existed. Perhaps some will surface in sources that I have failed to consult. In any case the contents of all the biographies are highly imaginary, indeed doubly so, since their subjects are perpetually presented as having visions and conversations outside the realm of everyday life. Now the topic of the imagination has greatly intrigued some Muslim thinkers, but has received little attention in the West, with the exception of

French intellectuals, who for over half a century have devoted much effort to studying the 'imaginary', turning the word *imaginaire* into a new technical term. I shall briefly summarize the results of their labours and consider their relevance to the Islamic materials studied here.

It was Jean-Paul Sartre who was the first to submit the 'imaginary' to a sceptical and devastating critique. He argued that the objects of the imagination do indeed exist, but are unreal and impoverished, degraded versions of what is perceived in real life. There is no single imaginary world which would be capable of giving imaginary objects the richness of real contexts. On the contrary, every individual dream has its own individual world, a sadly limited world in which there can be no freedom.[1] Sartre's theory seems to fit the *History of the Uwaysis* extremely well. The book deals with a fascinatingly rich subject-matter (Sufi life, practice and organization), but presents it in a very reductive and schematic manner: we are not given information anything like that garnered by a social historian working on truly informative documents. Similarly, the visions in the book present a stark absence of choice: all is predetermined.

Very different views were put forward by Henry Corbin, who was not only a professional philosopher but also a great specialist in the study of Islamic mysticism. Corbin, in order to rescue the imagination from what he saw as the insulting use of the word 'imaginary', preferred to use the term *imaginal* to designate the objects seen by visionaries. For the same reason he employed the Latin expression *mundus imaginalis* to translate the Arabic *'alam al-mithal*, which means the 'world of the image' that appears in the works of some Muslim thinkers. This world of the image, he insisted, was essential for understanding the whole of Islamic mystical symbolism. It was an indispensable intermediary between our everyday world and a higher world of spiritual realities.[2] Corbin certainly succeeded in drawing attention to a highly original development in Islamic philosophy, where the 'world of the image' plays an important role, but this contribution is not particularly helpful in the case of Sufism itself. In most Sufi thought, as in the *History of the Uwaysis*, there is a straightforward opposition between the phenomenal world of outward form and a hidden 'world of inner meaning'. The actions described by Uzgani usually occur in either one or other, not in an 'imaginal' world in between.

Another contrasting view is provided by the Greek-born political philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis, who has developed a highly influential theory of the 'imaginary' during his long exile in France. He gave the word a new meaning, and later complained that others had taken his term and used it in different ways. For him an *imaginaire* is a vast and all-embracing process of political and cultural change: for example, the winning of individual liberties in Europe from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, or, in opposition to that, the growing exploitation of nature and human beings in the same period. Through the imagination society itself is constructed.[3] This theory seems exceptionally valuable for understanding Sufism, especially in Central Asia, since both in East and in West Turkistan the Sufis did effectively remould society according to their own ideas. In East Turkistan the Naqshbandis actually exercised sovereignty before the region fell to the Chinese, while in West Turkistan the Sufis became the real masters (and had temporal power over a large area from the late sixteenth century to the eighteenth): by the nineteenth century they had produced a zealously religious society deeply engrossed in mystical literature and devotionalism. The *History of the Uwaysis* is indeed part of a project which seeks to transform the world by referring to ideal examples.

Yet another theory of the imaginary has been offered by a historian of the Middle Ages, Jacques Le Goff. For him it is an autonomous area, distinct from both the symbolic and the ideological, an area of dreams, works of art and the supernatural: it would include legends of giants and unicorns, and religious literature in so far as it represented popular beliefs as opposed to their Christian adaptations. Mountains, and the fabulous land of Cockaigne, with its abundance of food and sexual libertinism, would constitute the most obvious territories of the imaginary.[4] Le Goff's views appear to continue an older academic tradition, in which indigenous, pre-Christian elements are naively idealized. The Indo-European motifs which have survived beneath Christianity and Islam are, I suggest, still part of a sinister ideological inheritance which retained an Indo-European logic of order and repression and many aspects of which were resurrected by Nazism. As for the application of Le Goff's concept of the imaginary to the *History of the Uwaysis*, it must be agreed that many of its features are to be found there, but always in a heavily ideological context and with an obvious symbolism: for the Sufi

everything in our world is a metaphor for something real elsewhere. The pre-Islamic materials are always taken from sources which are ideological themselves, whether Buddhist, biblical or shamanistic.

Sufi biography and Christian hagiography

One major question needs to be answered. How do the lives of Muslim mystics correspond to Christian hagiographies? It is not clear that 'hagiography' is the best word to use when speaking about biographies of Sufi 'friends of God'. Perhaps 'hierography' (meaning writing about God's life-increasing force) or 'makarography' (writing about the blessed) would be better. The topic of Christian hagiography is itself a very confusing one, and it will be as well to examine how academics have approached it.

Up to the middle of the twentieth century Western scholars continued to follow a rigorous and old-fashioned procedure in studying the lives of Christian saints: one stripped away the miracles in order to produce a meagre harvest of narrative history. During the second half of the twentieth century, however, the specialists have tried different approaches. They have attempted to reconstruct the mentalities of the Christian authors, or have claimed that the materials were extremely revealing as regards social history. Hagiographies have been seen as representing the 'world-view' of medieval writers. It has been argued that one should produce an 'open' reading of a hagiography, combining different methods in order to allow the text's diverse qualities to emerge. Personally, I am extremely doubtful about the value of all of these approaches in the study of Sufi biographies. Only very rarely can one cut through to a small kernel of genuine narrative history. The accumulation of literary motifs over thousands of years produces texts which do not tell us how people thought or lived at one given time. Imaginary events, as Sartre has well observed, do not happen in a coherent world: thus they cannot give us a world-view.

Recently Sebastian Brock and Susan Harvey have made an extremely useful evaluation of what an example of Christian hagiography is. It is a description of God's presence through a holy person, as an echo of the Incarnation. It is modelled on the Gospels, since the Christian must imitate Jesus. The transcendent sanctity of the saint is rendered tangible in his or her actions.

Ideally, the saint's martyrdom should correspond to the redemptive crucifixion of Jesus himself.[5]

Now a biography of a Sufi cannot show God as somehow infused into the world. God displays himself in various ways, and speaks to the mystic, but cannot be present or immanent. The friend of God is not in himself sacred or holy. He is blessed by God, and God's blessings are made manifest through him, but only at God's own willing. There must not be any echo of the Incarnation, since this is a doctrine which Islam explicitly rejects. The Sufi can be only one of God's specially favoured 'clients'. Similarly, the life and death of a Muslim mystic cannot be the life and death of a God. Whereas Christian scripture yields the model for Christian hagiography, the Qur'an could not be seen as doing the same for Islam. To be sure, Qur'anic stories about prophets are imitated in Sufi biographies (as we have often seen in the case of the *History of the Uwaysis*), but the Qur'an does not itself recount a life of Muhammad. The usual account of Muhammad's life is supposed to guide the Muslim in the details of everyday life, but is only a part of a larger corpus of reports about the Prophet's exemplary practice. Moreover, just as God is not immanent, the Sufi is not transcendent: he is a slave of God, like all human beings. He cannot possess anything like sanctity, but only a relationship with God, just as beneath most Islamic monarchs a leading warrior-aristocrat has possessed no inherent nobility of his own, but has just been dependent on the sovereign. The actions of the 'friend of God', however miraculous they may be, happen only at God's command, and are in any case supposed to be hidden. A Sufi martyrdom can take many forms, and has no single archetype like that of the Crucifixion. Whereas a Christian martyrdom has its most natural setting beneath an unjust ruler, a Muslim martyrdom is most appropriately that of a frontier warrior. For the Christian what is most important is the salvific force of the redemptive sacrifice: Islam has none of this, but prefers instead the inevitable casualties of military expansion. To be sure, the death of Husayn mirrors the death of Jesus, but essentially as a representation of the theme of fertility common to the whole of the ancient Near East: death is necessary for the grain to be reborn, but the killing of Husayn does not bring salvation.

There are other important differences between Christian hagiography and Sufi biography. In the former there is a well-established convention whereby the author claims to know everything at first hand. Since the Gospels are the model, this is

natural enough. In Sufi biographies the author emphasizes the difficulty of finding out what really happened, the conflict of the sources and, eventually, the contrasting omniscience of God (the chapters of the *History of the Uwaysis* always end with the usual Muslim formula 'and God knows best'). This is obviously linked to Islam's own long-admitted difficulties in finding out the facts of Muhammad's life, and the development of an academic discipline devoted to the critical study of Traditions concerning him. Another difference lies in the social and intellectual background to literary composition. The Christian hagiographers have written in order to present saints to ordinary people and in order to have some edifying effect upon them. Sufi writers have written in the context of an organized discipline of their own – Sufism itself, one of the religious sciences of Islam, with a strong practical side. The reader is himself meant to rise up into the hierarchy of God's friends and to follow the Path as far as he can.

Moreover, although many aspects of Christian devotionalism and hagiography were to be preserved in Sufi practice and literature, Sufism has seen itself as a sophisticated transcending of conventional piety. However much acts of self-mortification may be advocated, they are nonetheless seen as worthless compared to the heights of mystical ecstasy. Miracles are portrayed as a time-wasting distraction from the real task of losing oneself in God and obtaining the ultimate theophanies.

The Uwaysi phenomenon and Islam itself

The Uwaysi phenomenon raises important questions about Islamic institutions and the very nature of religious belief and experience in Islam. One problem concerns Muhammad: how can the Muslim believer connect himself with the figure of the Prophet? This is a problem which has come to the fore in the last few centuries, as leading mystics have founded new brotherhoods or sub-brotherhoods while claiming to receive guidance directly from Muhammad himself. The problem is related to perplexing paradoxes in Islam: any attempt to escape from the usual institution of the brotherhood merely leads to its re-emergence, and the same is true for attempts to escape from the elder–disciple relationship.

The position of the Uwaysi is really, as we have seen, the position of every Muslim with regard to Muhammad: like Uways himself,

the believer has not met the Prophet in the flesh, but wishes to know him and learn from him. Given the political and economic decline of Islam from the sixteenth century onwards, it is understandable that the Uwaysi phenomenon should have gained in importance from then on. Thus the *History of the Uwaysis* prefigures an emphasis on direct communication with Muhammad (or with the hidden Twelfth Leader of Shiism) which continues in the succeeding centuries.

The 'Renewerist' (Mujaddidi) sub-brotherhood founded in the seventeenth century by Sirhindi, himself an Uwaysi, within the Naqshbandi brotherhood illustrates the paradox that any attempt to transcend the older structures of allegiance merely reproduced them beneath a new label: Sirhindi was to be succeeded by disciples studying under earthly masters in their turn. A similarly paradoxical development took place in seventeenth-century Christian mysticism: some mystics, because of their highly personal orientation, put themselves in the impossible position of being 'Christians without a church', but the churches were to be their heirs.[6]

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries new Sufi brotherhoods were created, characterized by a direct link between Muhammad and their founders. Ahmad al-Tijani (1737–1815), who was born in Algeria and died in Morocco, claimed that the Prophet had appeared to him in daylight to guide him in starting the new fraternity named after him.[7] Muhammad al-Sanusi (*c.* 1787–1859), who was also born in Algeria, but based his brotherhood in Libya, stressed the need for direct communication with Muhammad during one's waking hours: so the Sanusis aimed at actual union with Muhammad, and prayed to God to grant this.[8]

The nineteenth century was also largely a period of bureaucratic control, during which governments tried to clamp down on independent mystical activity. Thus the Ottoman Empire insisted that dervishes had to take part in the ritual worship and that wandering 'Uwaysi' dervishes in its capital, Istanbul, had to be registered and have their movements recorded. Previously a great deal of mystical libertinism had been tolerated and even subsidized by the state: now the government demanded respect for Islamic legality and the regularized distribution of permits by elders to disciples. The allocation of financial assistance was restricted in such a way as to impose obedience to the brotherhoods. Thus any 'Uwaysism' would have to be within the brotherhoods rather than outside them.[9]

By contrast, it is in the history of Iranian Shiism in the nineteenth

and twentieth centuries, with its hidden Twelfth Leader, that one can see the most powerful force of the idea of an invisible instructor. Here alone the brotherhood and the elder are rendered unnecessary, since Shiism has alternative structures of its own. The figure of the young Leader, who is believed to have disappeared in the ninth century and to be waiting for the right moment to return, is a poignant one. He remains forever young, present in the hearts of the faithful and guiding the leading scholar-jurists in their decisions. In a way he is identified with 'Ali: there is really one Leader, the highest possible entity beneath God. The Leader is infallible, and so too (not in the same omniscient manner, but in one that is highly relevant politically) are the chief jurists: to disobey them is to engage in treasonable warfare against the Leader himself. 'Ali is the 'friend of God' *par excellence*, as is proclaimed in the Shiite call to worship. United with him, the believer has no need for an earthly instructor, and can be both lawyer and mystic without contradiction.

The significance of the History of the Uwaysis

What have we learnt in the course of our study of the *History of the Uwaysis*? What positive discoveries have we made, as opposed to the anachronisms and the straightforward repetition of earlier literary materials? There are, I think, some rewarding and encouraging results that have been obtained, especially if one looks more closely at Uzgani's intentions.

The author's main aim, as we have noted above, has been to teach the reader to become an Uwaysi dervish himself. To this end he has constructed an elaborate arrangement of interlocking themes, and seeing how they interlock has perhaps been the most instructive part of our investigation. 'Traditional narratives', whether they fall under the heading of myths, of epics, or of religious biographies, are usually well-planned expressions of ideology, and in particular deontology, the articulation of duties. They have to be read with a clear eye for the underlying patterns. We have discovered an unusual picture of the Sufi Path, with an original hierarchy of degrees and theophanies. Uzgani has also given us an interesting philosophy of history, in which the usual Islamic problem of relating the past period of prophets to the period following Muhammad is resolved in a striking manner. He has provided contrasting models for Muslim women to imitate, and

has integrated these models with the rest of his structure. Uzgani has also granted us a perspective in which regional and monarchical feelings are combined with Islam, and it is perhaps in this union of the local traditions of East Turkistan with Muslim ones that his most significant achievement is to be seen. The depth of regional sentiment is impressive, and so too is Islam's ability to become part of it.

The *History of the Uwaysis* has yielded many intriguing glimpses of a wild and undisciplined mysticism on the fringes of Islam, shamanistic and libertine, ecstatic and provocative. It has shown us the persistence of a dominant Turkic theme: the role of the animal as the instructor of humans. Uzgani has also demonstrated the apparent arbitrariness of God's commands as manifested in Islam. The parallel between God and an absolute ruler has often been explicit: human beings are slaves and freedom is impossible. We have also been offered a portrayal of Islam's own development: the religion's early asceticism and legalism have been succeeded by subsequent frontier warfare and the conversion of outlying regions. Later Uzgani has depicted the organization of the brotherhoods, and the arrangements for a deputy to succeed his master. He has also evoked the growing veneration of Muhammad himself, as a cosmic figure for whose sake everything has been created. Later still we have had depictions of the *qalandars*, the antinomian dervishes who were to have their heyday in an Islamicized Turkey. Finally, in the last chapter, set in the fourteenth century, we have seen reflections of that period's eschatological forebodings and combination of Sufism with Shiite-inspired reverence for 'Ali.

Above all, the author has enabled us to perceive how he himself contributed to constructing Islam in East Turkistan. We have followed him as he has taken biblical stories and turned them into new legends of local figures. He has also operated in the reverse direction, adapting existing regional legends to the demands of Sufism. Uzgani has succeeded in providing an exceptionally backward area of the Muslim world with a new heritage of its own. This heritage reflects the population's enthusiasm for the pilgrimage to Mecca, and also integrates the royal heroes of the Karakhanid past within a pan-Islamic framework. One is reminded, on a more exalted literary level, of the achievement of Virgil, and his creation of new myths based on Homer's in order to give the Rome of Augustus an inheritance which would seem both

national and imperial. But Uzgani's work is admirably suited to being read to an unsophisticated audience with little knowledge of Islam. It transmits elementary religious teachings as well as furnishing the outlines of the higher stages of the Path.

One feels, then, that the book's subsequent fate has often been appropriate. Its truncations have reflected the failure of the Uwaysi movement itself, and also the author's success in capturing regional feeling. The figure of Satuq Bughra Khan, to whom the book is dedicated and who overshadows it, has survived best of all. King, mystic, warrior and giver of Islam to East Turkistan, he remains enhanced and strengthened by Uzgani's labours. Other subjects of the biographies have also lived on in the devotion expressed at their shrines, often acquiring Uwaysi traits which really make sense only in the context of the book as a whole. But fragmentary reading of major works of Islamic literature has always been normal, among both Muslims and Orientalists. The skill of Uzgani's contribution has remained unperceived.

The construction of an Islamic society in East Turkistan was brutally interrupted by the Chinese conquest. Under the ensuing occupation the *History of the Uwaysis* has served to nourish religious and ethnic feelings which, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have surfaced in brief interludes of independence.[10] Uzgani's work is doubtless destined to have an important role in the years ahead. In its appeal to a wide audience it has already surpassed the region's most famous monuments of ethical and historical literature. Let us hope that the people of East Turkistan will be in a position to judge wisely when evaluating this extraordinary part of their national culture.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 J. Baldick, *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1989), p. 105.
2 Badī' al-Zamān Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī* (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Dānishgāh, 1334/1955), p. 30.
3 R. Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1976), pp. 270–7.
4 See below, pp. 21–4.
5 K. A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961), pp. 216–7.
6 See below, p. 25.
7 B. D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 174–84.
8 Cf. D. Sinor (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 1–18.
9 Cf. J.-P. Roux, *La Religion des turcs et des mongols* (Paris: Payot, 1984).
10 A. F. L. Beeston, *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindustani and Pushtu Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 13–14 (MS. Ind. Inst. Pers. 54, here referred to as 'O').
11 J.-L. Dutreuil de Rhins *et al.*, *Mission scientifique dans la Haute Asie* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1897–8), vol. 2, pp. 120–7.
12 See below, p. 217.
13 Dutreuil de Rhins *et al.*, *Mission scientifique*, vol. 2, p. 81; F. Younghusband, *The Heart of a Continent* (London: John Murray, 1904), p. 144.
14 Dutreuil de Rhins *et al.*, *Mission scientifique*, vol. 3, pp. 3–4.
15 See above, no. 10; H. R. Hofman, *Turkish Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*, Section III (Utrecht: Library of the University of Utrecht, 1969–), vol. 2, pp. 59–61; G. Jarring, *Literary Texts from Kashghar* (Lund: Royal Society of Letters, 1980), pp. 87–8. I have used O and MS London, British Library Or. 8161 (both represent the 'censored version'), as well as MS St Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies D112 (representing the 'uncensored version' – the institute kindly gave me a microfilm of this).

PART ONE

1 A. S. Hussaini, 'Uways al-Qaranī and the Uwaysī Sufis', *Muslim World* 57 (1967), 103–13.
2 Ibid., pp. 103–4.
3 Ibn Sa'd, *Biographien*, vol. 6, ed. K. V. Zetterstéen (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1909), pp. 111–14.
4 Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 1 (Cairo, 1313/1895), pp. 38–9.
5 Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, vol. 1 (Calcutta: Bishop's College Press, 1856), pp. 234–5.
6 J. van Ess, *Die Gedankenwelt von Ḥārīt al-Muḥāsibī* (Bonn: Bonn University, 1961), p. 102.
7 Ḥakīm Tirmidhī, *Kitāb Khatm al-awliyā'*, ed. 'Uthmān Ismā'īl Yaḥyā (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1965), pp. 396–7; *Adab al-nafs*, ed. with his *Kitāb al-Riyāḍa* by A. J. Arberry and 'Alī Ḥasan 'Abd al-Qādir (Cairo: Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1366/1947), p. 140.
8 Ṭabarī, *Annales*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, series 3, part 4 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1890), pp. 2475–6 and 2522–3.
9 'Abd Allāh Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma'*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1914), pp. 5–6 and 16; Abū Bakr Kalābādhī, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, tr. A. J. Arberry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 144.
10 Ibn al-Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, vol. 1, p. 234.
11 M. Mīnuwī (ed.), *Aḥwāl wa aqwāl-i Shaykh Abu 'l-Ḥasan Kharaqānī* (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1354/1975), p. 59.
12 'Abd al-Qāhir Baghdādī, *Moslem Schisms and Sects*, tr. A. S. Halkin (Tel-Aviv: Palestine Publishing Co., 1935), p. 228.
13 Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilya al-awliyā'*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khānajī, 1351/1932), pp. 81–4.
14 'Alī Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, tr. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1911), pp. 83–4.
15 Ibid., pp. 83–4; Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilya*, vol. 2, pp. 81–4; Muḥammad ibn al-Munawwar, *Asrār al-tawḥīd*, ed. Aḥmad Bahmanyār (Tehran: Fardīn wa Barādar, 1313/1934), p. 216; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Ṣifa al-ṣafwa*, vol. 3 (Ḥaydarābād: Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau, 1390/1970), pp. 285–9.
16 Ibid., p. 83.
17 'Alī Harawī, *al-Ishārāt ilā ma'rifa al-ziyārāt*, ed. J. Sourdel-Thomine (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1953), p. 13; *Guide des lieux de pèlerinage*, tr. J. Sourdel-Thomine (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1957), p. 34; cf. J. Sourdel-Thomine, 'Les anciens Lieux de pèlerinage damascains', *Bulletin d'études orientales* 14 (1952–4) 79, n. 6.
18 Harawī, *al-Ishārāt*, p. 63, and *Guide*, p. 142.
19 'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkira al-awliyā'*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (London: Luzac, 1905–7), vol. 1, pp. 15–24.
20 Muḥammad Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh al-Islām*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Maktaba al-Qudsī, 1368/1949), pp. 173–5.
21 C. Rieu, *Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1888), p. 253.

22 Hussaini, 'Uways al-Qaranī', p. 110.
23 See below, pp. 36 and 120–2.
24 A. Munzawī, *A Comprehensive Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in Pakistan*, vol. 3 (Islamabad: Iran–Pakistan Institute of Persian Studies, 1984), p. 2022.
25 C. Huart, *Les Calligraphes et les miniaturistes de l'orient musulman* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1908), pp. 198–201.
26 See below, pp. 198–201.
27 I. Mouragea d' Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'empire ottoman*, vol. 4 (Paris: Imprimerie de Monsieur, 1791), pp. 619–20.
28 A. Vámbéry, *Sketches of Central Asia* (London: Wm. H. Allen, 1868), p. 132.
29 A. Bennigsen and S. E. Wimbush, *Mystics and Commissars* (London: C. Hurst, 1985), pp. 149–50.
30 Mīnuwī, pp. 12–13.
31 Ibid., pp. 137 and 140–2.
32 Ibid., p. 29.
33 Ibid., pp. 32–3 and 143–4.
34 Ibid., p. 33.
35 Ibid., pp. 41–7.
36 Ibid., pp. 55–62.
37 Ibid., p. 67.
38 Ibid., pp. 79–80.
39 Ibid., p. 80, n. 72.
40 Ibid., p. 38.
41 Ibid., pp. 48 and 65–7.
42 Ibid., p. 57; cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, p. 36.
43 Mīnuwī, pp. 82–3.
44 Ibid., p. 69.
45 Ibid., pp. 75 and 82.
46 Ibid., p. 35.
47 R. C. Zaehner, *Mysticism Sacred and Profane* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 115.
48 Mīnuwī, *Aḥwāl wa aqwāl*, p. 55.
49 Ibid., pp. 84–5.
50 Ibid., p. 125.
51 Ibid., p. 141.
52 Ibid., p. 128.
53 Cf. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Shaṭaḥāt al-ṣūfiyya* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Nahḍa al-Miṣriyya, 1949).
54 'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkira al-awliyā'*, vol. 1, p. 24.
55 J. S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.12
56 J. Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968), pp. 276–7.
57 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Nafaḥāt al-uns*, ed. W. N. Lees (Calcutta: published by the author, 1859), p. 715.
58 Rypka, *History*, p. 276.
59 H. Ritter, 'Philologika xv. Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār, III', *Oriens* 12 (1959), 42–7.

60 Muḥammad Pārsā, *Qudsiyya*, ed. Aḥmad Ṭāhirī 'Irāqī (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-yi Ṭahūrī, 1354/1975), pp. 14–15.
61 Hussaini, 'Uways al-Qaranī', pp. 112–13.
62 Y. Friedmann, *Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1971), pp. 27–8.
63 Cf. E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. 3 (London: Luzac, 1904), pp. 217–18, and A. Adıvar *et al.* (eds), *Islâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 13 (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1986), article 'Veysî'.
64 Muḥammad Būlāq, *Maṭlūb al-ṭālibīn* (MS London, India Office 886), fol. 144a.
65 J. M. S. Baljon, *Religion and Thought of Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), p. 85.
66 d'Ohsson, *Tableau*, vol. 4, pp. 619–21.
67 Vámbéry, *Sketches*, pp. 2–3.
68 Cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 147–50.
69 Y. Richard, *Le Shi'isme en Iran* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1980), p. 98; Ghulām- 'Alī Kīyānfar, *Uways-i Qaranī wa ṭarīqa-yi ū* (Baldwin Park: Yuin University, 1983).
70 Cf. EI^2, article '*Istikhāra*'.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, p. 144.
74 See above, pp. 7–8, and Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, pp. 211–14. In summarizing the *History of the Uwaysis* I have rendered *tawajjuh* as 'concentration' (i.e. concentrating on the spirits of the dead or concentrated attention coming from the elder to the disciple's mind) and *murāqaba* as 'meditation' (in a very general sense). This is how Uzganī uses these terms, but in the Sufi brotherhoods, especially that of the Naqshbandīs, they have very special technical connotations of their own.
75 Amīr Ḥasan Dihlawī, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*, ed. Muḥammad Laṭīf Malik (Lahore: M. Sirāj al-Dīn, 1386/1966), p. 99.
76 See above, p. 7.
77 C. Addas, *Ibn 'Arabī* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989).
78 EI^2, article 'al-Khaḍir'.
79 See EI^2, article 'Ḥabīb al-Nadjdjār'.
80 Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al Tarbī' wa 'l-tadwīr*, ed. C. Pellat (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1955), p. 28.
81 Cf. A. J. Wensinck, *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936–88), under *abdāl*.
82 EI^2, article '*al- 'Ashara al-mubashshara*'.
83 Abū Ṭālib Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb* (Cairo: A. al-Bābī, 1310/1893), vol. 2, p. 78.
84 'Abd al-Malik Tha'ālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb* (Cairo, 1326/1908), pp. 186–7. The Muslims have tended to have a rather vague conception (perhaps because of the religious connotations) of the Lebanon mountain-range, including in it not only the Syrian mountain-chain to the north, but also the Anti-Lebanon to the east (cf. EI^1, article 'Lubnān').
85 I. Singer (ed.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 7 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1904), article 'Lamed Waw'.

86 Ibid.
87 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 10 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1971), article 'Lamed Vav Ẓaddikim'.
88 T. Andrae, *Die Person Muhammeds in Lehre und Glauben seiner Gemeinde* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1918).
89 A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), pp. 82–3.
90 S. K. Ibrahimov *et al.* (eds), *Materialy po istorii kazakhskikh khanstv xv–xviii vekov* (Alma-Ata: Nauka, 1969), pp. 533–6.
91 Muḥammad Ḥaydar, *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia*, tr. E. Denison Ross (London: Curzon Press, 1972 reprint), pp. 194, 395 and 397; see below, p. 217.
92 Ibid., p. 98 of the introduction.
93 Ibid., p. 300.
94 Ibid., pp. 293–303.
95 Ibid., p. 304.
96 Ibid., pp. 114 and 369–70.
97 Ibid., pp. 369–71; Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, pp. 58–60.
98 Ḥaydar, *A History*, p. 371.
99 Ibid., p. 395.
100 Muḥammad Ḥaydar, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, MS Oxford, Bodleian fol. 335a.
101 Ibid., fol. 337a-b.
102 Ḥaydar, *A History*, pp. 140–2 and 147.
103 I have used three St Petersburg manuscripts of the *Tadhkira-yi Khwāja Muḥammad Sharif* in the Institute of Oriental Studies: A 237 (fols 50b–71b), C 582 (fols 137b–149b) and D 371 (183a–194b). The institute kindly gave me a microfilm of A 237. Since the language is Uighur, one cannot compare the work's style with Uzganī's Persian, but it looks like a translation of a Persian original by him.
104 See below, p. 36.
105 Muḥammad Sharif's tomb is not far from Yarkand. Cf. Maḥmūd Churās, *Khronika*, ed. O. F. Akimushkin (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), p. 265 of the Russian part.
106 Ibid., Persian text, p. 11.
107 Ibid., pp. 11–12.
108 Ibid., pp. 14–29; cf. above, p. 22.
109 Maḥmūd Churās, *Anīs al-ṭālibīn*, MS Oxford, Bodleian, Ind. Inst. Pers. 45, fols 89a–95a.
110 Ibid., fols 87b–88a.
111 Ibid., fol. 7b.
112 Ibid., fol. 85a.
113 Ibid., fol. 95b.
114 Cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 102–3.

PART TWO

1 Ibn 'Arabī, *Les Illuminations de la Mecque*, tr. M. Chodkiewicz et al. (Paris: Sindbad, 1988), p. 27; J. Baldick, 'Persian Sūfī poetry up to the

fifteenth century', in G. Morrison (ed.), *History of Persian Literature from the Beginning of the Islamic Period to the Present Day* (LeidenL E. J. Brill, 1981), pp. 121–5).

2 J. Baldick, 'The legend of Rābi'a of Baṣra: Christian antecedents, Muslim counterparts', *Religion* 20 (1990), pp. 233–5.

3 Ibid., p. 234.

4 Ibid., p. 236.

5 Ibid., pp. 236–7.

6 Ibid.

7 See below, pp. 183–5.

8 See below, pp. 119–20.

9 Cf. Ibn 'Arabī, *Les Illuminations*, editor's introduction.

10 See above, p. 29.

11 Not a canonical tradition, but a famous one: cf. Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth*, p. 52.

12 Cf. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, p. 202, n. 1.

13 Cf. Khaṭīb-i Fārsī, *Manāqib-i Jamāl al-Dīn Sāwī*, ed. Tahsin Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1972), pp. 61–2.

14 Cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 57, 79, 82, 84, 93 and 95.

15 See below, pp. 200–201.

16 Unidentified.

17 Cf. M. Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des saints* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), pp. 122–30.

18 Ibid., pp. 119 and 129.

19 See above, pp. 30–1.

20 Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, p. 203.

21 See above, Part One, n. 74.

22 Dihlawī, *Fawā'id*, p. 99.

23 For the silver *tanka*, see A. S. Beveridge (tr.), *The Bābur-nāma in English* (London: Luzac, 1922), vol. 2, p. lvii.

24 Cf. Qur'an 12: 84 and Genesis 28: 12.

25 Cf. EI², article 'Bilāl b. Rabāḥ'.

26 Cf. Faridūn Taqīzāda Ṭūsī (ed.), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* (Meshed: Intishārāt-i Bārān, 1363/1984), p. 276.

27 Ibid., pp. 223–7.

28 Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics and Commissars*, pp. 146 and 148.

29 See below, pp. 195–7.

30 L. Massignon, *The Passion of al-Hallāj* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), vol. 1, p. 160.

31 See 'Alī Akbar Dihkhudā (ed.), *Lughat-nāma* (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Dawlatī-yi Īrān, 1325–52/1946–74), under 'Bazda' and 'Bazdawī'.

32 The manuscripts have 'Gh-z-n'.

33 Unidentified.

34 L. Massignon (ed. and tr.), *Le Dīwān d'ál-Hallāj* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1955), pp. 45–6. Cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, p. 47.

35 Cf. J. K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London: Luzac, 1937), p. 139.

36 D. Sidersky, *Les Origines des légendes musulmanes* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1933), p. 65.

37 EI², article 'Baqī' al-Gharḳad'.
38 For his tomb, see Jarring, *Literary Texts*, pp. 85–6.
39 See above, p. 9.
40 Cf. EI¹, article 'Abū Bekr 'Abd Allāh'.
41 Cf. H. W. Bellew, *The History of Káshgharia* (Calcutta: Foreign Department Press, 1875), p. 17.
42 Hārūn Bughrā Khān is a historical figure: cf. Sinor, *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, p. 359.
43 Ibid., pp. 354–8; V. V. Bartol'd, *Turkestan v epokhu mongol'skago nashestviya* (St Petersburg: Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1900), Texts, p. 131.
44 Sidersky, *Les Origines*, pp. 120–2.
45 J.-P. Roux, 'Le Lièvre dans la tradition turque', *Turcica* 3 (1971), 40–8.
46 See above, p. 73.
47 Canonical: see Wensinck, *Concordance*, under *dunyā* (vol. 2, p. 151).
48 Canonical: cf. ibid., under *iḥsān* (vol. 1, p. 467).
49 A famous tradition, not canonical, attributed to 'Alī as well as to Muḥammad (Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth*, p. 167).
50 A mosque in the fourth heaven: cf. Dihkhudā, *Lughat-nāma*, under 'Bayt al-Ma'mūr'.
51 'Aṭṭār, *The Ilāhī-nāma or Book of God*, tr. J. A. Boyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), pp. 228–9.
52 EI², article 'Ayyūb'.
53 See above, p. 16–17.
54 EI¹, article 'Yūsuf ibn Ya'ḳūb'.
55 E. Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco* (London: Macmillan, 1926), vol. 1, p. 93.
56 EI², article 'Ismā'īl'.
57 Ibid.
58 Cf. Baldick, 'The legend of Rābi'a', p. 238.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Cf. ibid.
62 See below, pp. 175–7.
63 EI¹, article 'Shīth'.
64 EI¹ and EI², articles 'Barṣīṣā'.
65 Canonical: cf. Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'arabiyya, 1372/1952), p. 515.
66 Dihkhudā, *Lughat-nāma*, article '*damdama*'.
67 EI², article 'Iram'.
68 See EI¹, under 'Muḥammad b. 'Alī'.
69 Forty real years, plus forty days each the equivalent of a year.
70 EI², article 'Lūṭ'.
71 Cf. H. Corbin, *L'Imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn 'Arabi* (Paris: Flammarion, 1958), pp. 100 and 231–2.
72 EI¹ and EI²,articles 'Djirdjīs'.
73 EI¹, article 'Ramaḍān'.
74 Nizami, *Some Aspects*, p. 226.
75 EI², article 'Idrīs'.

76 EI[1], article 'Idrīs'.
77 See Dihkhudā, *Lughat-nāma*, under '*Raghā'ib*'.
78 EI[2], article 'Ismā'īl'.
79 Ḥaydar, *A History*, p. 301.
80 See above, p. 83.
81 Cf. J. Lacarrière, *Les Hommes ivres de Dieu* (Paris: Arthaud, 1961), pp. 255–8; R. Gramlich, *Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1987), pp. 368–78.
82 EI[1], article 'Yāfith'.
83 EI[1] and EI[2], articles 'Farghānā'.
84 See above, p. 103.
85 EI[2], article 'Makka' (vol. 6, p. 168).
86 See below, pp. 194–7.
87 I have checked a work on Balkh composed in 1214 CE, which contains biographies of seventy famous men of religion connected with the neighbourhood. Its last biography is of a certain Tāj al-Dīn of Balkh, who died in 1188–9, and was known to the author. He was a very pious scholar. The preceding biography is of one Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Basṭāmī, who was born at Balkh, but some of whose ancestors lived in Basṭām. He was a specialist in Tradition, and died in 562/1166–7. ('Abd Allāh Balkhī, *Faḍā'il-i Balkh*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān, 1350/1971), pp. 363–88.)
88 EI[1] and EI[2], article 'Isḥāḳ'.
89 See below, pp. 194–7.
90 A book about the holy men buried in Shiraz was composed by one Junayd Shīrāzī (d. 1339–40 CE): *Tadhkira-yi hazār mazār*, ed. Nūrānī Wiṣāl (Shiraz: Kitābkhāna-yi Aḥmadī Shīrāzī, 1364/1985). No Shaqīq is mentioned in it.
91 See above, p. 97.
92 See above, p. 75.
93 EI[2], article ' 'Īsā'.
94 A famous uncanonical Tradition, which is found in different forms: Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth*, p. 172.
95 See above, p. 60.
96 I have substituted 'sixty' (thirty plus five plus twenty-five) for the 'twenty' of the MSS.
97 See above, pp. 15–20.
98 EI[1], article 'Radjab'; EI[2], article 'Mi'rādj'.
99 See above, p. 106.
100 EI[2], article '*Aṣḥāb al-Kahf* '.
101 Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics and Commissars*, p. 155.
102 Nizami, *Some Aspects*, p. 224.
103 EI[2], article 'Djalāl al-Dīn Rūmī'.
104 EI[1], article 'Nīshāpūr'.
105 I have substituted 'Shikarmat' for the 'Sh-k-r-t-m' of the MSS. For the locality of Shikarmat see A. Stein, *Memoir on Maps of Chinese Turkistan and Kansu* (Dehra Dun: Trigonometrical Survey Office, 1923), p. 186.
106 See above, Part One, n. 74.
107 EI[2], article 'Ilyās'. See below, p. 139.

108 Is this Abu 'l-Fayḍ Ilāhī or the Pole of Poles? See below, pp. 194–7.
109 EI², article 'Dhu 'l-Kifl'.
110 Untraced.
111 Cf. EI¹, article 'Farghāna'.
112 Ibid.
113 Bartol'd, *Turkestan*, Texts, pp. 149–50.
114 EI¹, article 'Shu'aib'.
115 Cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 114–15.
116 See below, pp. 172–4.
117 EI², article 'Ayyūb'.
118 EI¹ and EI², articles 'Ilyās'.
119 EI¹ and EI², articles 'Alīsa''.
120 Cf. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, pp. 37–8 and 111–12.
121 EI¹ and EI², articles 'Hārūn b. 'Imrān'.
122 EI¹ and EI², articles 'Dhu 'l-Kifl'.
123 Cf. Nūr al-Dīn Isfarāyinī, *Le Révélateur des mystères*, ed. and tr. H. Landolt (Lagrasse: Verdier, 1986), pp. 45–8 of the French part.
124 Cf. Rūzbihān Baqlī, *Kitāb-i 'Abhar al-'āshiqīn*, ed. H. Corbin and M. Mu'īn (Tehran: Institut franco-iranien, 1958), p. 210.
125 EI¹, article 'Saif al-Dīn al-Bākharzī'.
126 EI², article 'Ḥiṣār'.
127 For Farkhar, see L. W. Adamec (ed.), *Historical and Political Gazetteer of Afghanistan*, vol. 1 (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1972), p. 68.
128 Faḍl Allāh Mājawī, Fatāwā al-ṣūfiyya, MS Oxford, Bodleian, Uri 321. fol. 11a.
129 EI¹, article 'Sulaimān b. Dāwūd'.
130 EI², article ' 'Aṭṭār, Farīd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm'.
131 Ḥaydar, *A History*, p. 89 (on fifteenth-century East Turkistan).
132 See Stein, *Memoir*, p. 166.
133 I have not been able to identify this figure.
134 EI¹, article 'Semnān'.
135 Cf. H. Corbin, *En Islam iranien* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971–2), vol. 4, p. 510 (where there is also mention of a Kay Khusraw reigning in Tabaristan in the fourteenth century).
136 Cf. Baldick, 'Persian Ṣūfī poetry', pp. 121–2.
137 EI¹, article 'al-Ṣafā'.
138 Ḥaydar, *A History*, pp. 295–303.
139 Ibid., pp. 11–13.
140 Dutreuil de Rhins *et al.*, *Mission scientifique*, vol. 2, pp. 240–1.
141 EI², article 'Malik'.
142 Identified and located by Bellew. *The History*, p. 22, about 56 miles east of Yangi Hisar.
143 Is this the 'Cuduc' mentioned by Bellew, ibid., 'Annexe', p. 10?
144 A. Stein, *On Ancient Central-Asian Tracks* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press, 1974), p. 66.
145 See below, pp. 159, 191.
146 For the solar year-cycle named after animals and used in East Turkistan, cf. R. B. Shaw, *A Sketch of the Turki Language* (Calcutta: Baptist

Mission Press, 1878), p. 71.
147 Cf. Bukhārī, *Les Traditions islamiques*, tr. O. Houdas and W. Marçais, vol. 1 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1903), pp. 414–17.
148 Bartol'd, *Turkestan*, Texts, p. 129.
149 EI[1], article 'Shīth'.
150 Bartol'd, *Turkestan*, Texts, p. 129.
151 See above, pp. 153–4.
152 EI[1], article 'Sulaimān b. Dāwūd'.
153 EI[1], article 'Mūsā'.
154 Cf. Pertev Naili Boratav (ed.), *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1965), pp. 272–3.
155 Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics and Commissars*, p. 138; Dihkhudā, *Lughat-nāma*, article 'Qanbar'.
156 Cf. A. Stein, *Ancient Khotan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907), pp. 187ff.
157 Cf. M. Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 10 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), article 'Nāgārjuna'.
158 See above, p. 106.
159 Cf. EI[2], article 'Hārūt and Mārūt'; D. Ward, *The Divine Twins* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 82–4; M. Tournier, *Le Vent Paraclet* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), pp. 252–4.
160 See above, p. 139.
161 See above, pp. 77–8.
162 H. A. R. Gibb (tr.), *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 580–2.
163 I imagine this to mean Ja'far Ṣādiq (cf. Stein, *On Central-Asian Tracks*, p. 66), but have not been able to reconstruct the topography of the routes mentioned here.
164 Unidentified.
165 There is a place called 'Otraqi' (Stein, *Memoir*, p. 182), but this would not fit in with a route to Ja'far's tomb.
166 Unidentified.
167 Cf. Ḥamīd Qalandar, *Khayr al-majālis*, ed. K. A. Nizami (Aligarh: Muslim University, 1959), pp. 159–61.
168 Ḥaydar, *A History*, p. 304.
169 Cf. M. M. J. Fischer, *Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 162.
170 Cf. Baldick, 'The legend of Rābi'a', p. 238.
171 Ibid.
172 Ibid., pp. 238–9.
173 Ibid., p. 239.
174 EI[2], article 'Laḳab'.
175 'Abd al-Karīm Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 7, ed. Muḥammad 'Awāmma (Beirut: Muḥammad Amīn Damj, 1396/1976), p. 198; cf. Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 71–5.
176 EI[1] and EI[2], articles 'Bilāl b. Rabāḥ'.
177 I have not been able to find a source for this sentence, which is in Arabic.
178 See Dihkhudā, *Lughat-nāma*, under 'Bazda' and 'Bazdawī'.

179 Baldick, 'The legend of Rābi'a', p. 239.
180 Ibid., p. 240.
181 Ibid.
182 See below, pp. 194–7.
183 EI², article 'Ibrāhīm b. Adham'.
184 R. Jones (ed. and tr.), *Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1983).
185 Cf. EI², article '*al- 'Ashara al-mubashshara*'.
186 EI², article ' 'Alīma'.
187 See EI¹, article 'al-Nasafī'.
188 W. Crooke (ed.), *Islam in India* (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1972), p. 202; E. W. Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London: J. M. Dent, 1954), pp. 472–3.
189 Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief*, vol. 1, p. 48.
190 See above, p. 154.
191 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, pp. 241–2.
192 See above, p. 142.
193 Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, p. 29.
194 See above, pp. 133–4.
195 See above, pp. 124–5.
196 See above, pp. 36–7.
197 O. Pritsak, 'Die Karachaniden', *Der Islam* 31 (1954), p. 32.
198 Ibid., pp. 25–6.
199 Cf. H. W. Bellew, *Kashmir and Kashghar* (London: Trübner, 1875), p. 335; F. Grenard, 'La Légende de Saṭok Boghra Khân et l'histoire', *Journal asiatique*, 9th series, 15 (1900), p. 13.
200 See above, pp. 176–7 and 186.
201 See above, pp. 57–8.
202 EI², article ' 'Alī Hamadānī'.
203 See below, pp. 215–16.
204 Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 41 and 84–5.
205 Cf. Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des saints*, p. 120.
206 For the *mithqāl*, see EI², article '*Dīnār*'.
207 Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, p. 213.
208 Cf. Isfarāyinī, *Le Révélateur*, pp. 43–8 of the French part.

PART THREE

1 See above, pp. 194–7.
2 See above, p. 197.
3 See above, p. 179.
4 O, fol. 348b.
5 See above, p. 110.
6 See above, p. 137.
7 O, fol. 222b.
8 A good survey of this development has been provided in a book which has (rightly) been severely criticized: R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 126–32.
9 See above, p. 179.
10 See above, p. 143.
11 O, fol. 302b.
12 See above, pp. 102–3.
13 See above, p. 88.
14 See above, p. 180.
15 See above, p. 10.
16 Cf. Crooke, *Islam in India*, pp. 89–108.
17 O, fol. 15b. This is in Arabic, but is neither Qur'anic nor a canonical Tradition.
18 O, fol. 215b.
19 See above, pp. 83–4, 106, 124–5, 170 and 174.
20 See above, p. 106.
21 See above, p. 136.
22 O, fol. 65a.
23 O, fols 205b–206a.
24 O, fol. 325a.
25 O, fol. 222a.
26 See above, p. 177.
27 See above, pp. 106 and 118.
28 Nizami, *Some Aspects*, p. 177.
29 See above, p. 106.
30 See above, pp. 61, 100 and 103.
31 Cf. Dihlawī, *Fawā'id*, p. 196.
32 O, fol. 126a.
33 See above, pp. 61, 118 and 133.
34 O, fol. 22a.
35 O, fols 65b–66a.
36 See above, p. 70.
37 O, fol. 196a–b.
38 O, fol. 22a.
39 O, fol. 32b.
40 O, fol. 335a–b.
41 See above, p. 183.
42 O, fol. 344a.
43 See above, pp. 83–4.
44 O, fol. 43b.
45 O, fol. 162b.
46 O, fol. 174b.
47 Uzganī, *Tadhkira-yi Bughrā-Khānī*, MS St Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies D 112, fol. 288a.
48 O, fol. 206b.
49 O, fol. 89a.
50 Crooke, *Islam in India*, p. 101.
51 O, fols 189b-190a.
52 O, fol. 206b.
53 O, fols 81a and 82a.
54 O, fol. 96a.

55 O, fol. 311a.
56 Crooke, *Islam in India*, p. 101.
57 O, fols 206b–207a.
58 O, fols 162b–163a.
59 See above, p. 109.
60 See above, p. 142.
61 O, fol. 89a.
62 O, fol. 215a.
63 See above, p. 117.
64 See above, p. 137.
65 See above, p. 190.
66 See above, p. 181.
67 See above, p. 66.
68 See above, pp. 126–7.
69 See above, pp. 94–5.
70 See above, p. 180.
71 See above, p. 58.
72 See above, p. 94.
73 See above, p. 107.
74 See above, p. 63.
75 See above, p. 169.
76 O, fol, 322b.
77 See above, p. 69.
78 See above, p. 115.
79 See above, p. 117.
80 See above, p. 132.
81 See above, p. 108.
82 See above, p. 56.
83 See above, p. 76.
84 O, fol. 143b.
85 R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism* (London: Athlone Press, 1960), pp. 98–9, 113–14 and 132.
86 Hofman, *Turkish Literature*, vol. 4, p. 183.
87 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 60.
88 Cf. MS Oxford, Bodleian, Ind. Inst. Turk. 19, fol. 112b.
89 Jarring, *Literary Texts*, pp. 87–8.
90 Ibid., p. 87.
91 Hofman, *Turkish Literature*, vol. 6, pp. 74–5.
92 Dutreuil de Rhins *et al.*, *Mission scientifique*, vol. 2, p. 81; Younghusband, *The Heart*, p. 144.
93 Dutreuil de Rhins *et al.*, *Mission scientifique*, vol. 2, p. 79.
94 N. Elias, 'Preface' to R. B. Shaw, 'The History of the Khōjas of Eastern-Turkistān', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 66 (1897) extra number, p. iv.
95 S. Hedin, *Central Asia and Tibet*, vol. 1 (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1903), p. 136.
96 M. Hartmann, 'Das Buchwesen in Turkestan und die türkischen Drucke der Sammlung Hartmann', *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin, Zweite Abteilung, Westasiatische Studien* 7 (1904) 74.

97 S. Hedin, *Through Asia* (London: Methuen, 1898), vol. 1, pp. 218–19.
98 Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, p. 45.
99 Ibid., pp. 44–5.
100 Albert von Le Coq, 'Die Abdal', *Baessler-Archiv* 2 (1912) 221.
101 Ibid., pp. 21–34.

CONCLUSIONS

1 J.-P. Sartre, *L'Imaginaire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1940).
2 H. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 4, pp. 499–500 and 523–4.
3 C. Castoriadis, *L'Institution imaginaire de la société* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975).
4 J. Le Goff, *L'Imaginaire médiéval* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985).
5 S. P. Brock and S. A. Harvey, *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 13–19.
6 L. Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans église* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969).
7 Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, pp. 142–3.
8 Ibid., pp. 143–4.
9 Ibid., pp. 145–8.
10 J. Fletcher, 'Les "Voies" (*ṭuruq*) en Chine', in A. Popovic and G. Veinstein (eds), *Les Ordres mystiques dans l'Islam* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1986), pp. 13–26; A. D. W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

'Aṭṭār, Farīd al-Dīn, *Tadhkira al-awliyā'*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (London: Luzac, 1905–7).

Baldick, J., 'The legend of Rābi'a of Baṣra: Christian antecedents, Muslim counterparts', *Religion* 20 (1990) 233–47.

Baldick, J., *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1989).

Baldick, J., 'Persian Ṣūfī poetry up to the fifteenth century', in G. Morrison (ed.), *History of Persian Literature from the Beginning of the Islamic Period to the Present Day* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981).

Bartol'd, V. V., *Turkestan v epokhu mongol'skago nashestviya* (St Petersburg: Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1900).

Bellew, H. W., *Kashmir and Kashghar* (London: Trübner, 1875).

Bellew, H. W., *The History of Káshgharia* (Calcutta: Foreign Department Press, 1875).

Bennigsen, A., and Wimbush, S. E., *Mystics and Commissars* (London: C. Hurst, 1985).

Chodkiewicz, M., *Le Sceau des saints* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986).

Churas, Mahmud, *Khronika*, ed. O. F. Akimushkin (Moscow: Nauka, 1976).

Corbin, H., *En Islam iranien* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971–2).

Crooke, W. (ed.), *Islam in India* (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1972).

Dihkhudā, 'Alī Akbar (ed.), *Lughat-nāma* (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Dawlatī-yi Īrān, 1325–53/1946–74).

Dihlawī, Amīr Ḥasan, *Fawā'id al-fu'ād*, ed. Muḥammad Laṭīf Malik (Lahore: M. Sirāj al-Dīn, 1386/1966).

Dutreuil de Rhins, J.-L., *et al.*, *Mission scientifique dans la Haute Asie* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1897–8).

EI[1] = Houtsma, M. T., *et al.* (eds), *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, 1st edn (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1908–36).

EI[2] = Gibb, H. A. R., *et al.* (eds), *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*, 2nd edn (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954–).

Farquhar, D. M., Jarring, G., and Norin, E., *Sven Hedin Central Asia Atlas: Memoir on maps*, vol. 2 (Stockholm: Statens Etnografiska Museum, 1967).

Fletcher, J., 'Les "Voies" (*ṭuruq*) soufies en Chine', in A. Popovic and G.

Veinstein (eds), *Les Ordres mystiques dans l'Islam* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1986), pp. 13–26.
Forbes, A. D. W., *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
Furūzānfar, Badī' al-Zamān, *Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī* (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Dānishgāh, 1334/1955).
Gibb, H. A. R. (tr.), *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).
Gramlich, R., *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1976).
Gramlich, R., *Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1987).
Grenard, F., 'La Légende de Satoq Boghra Khân et l'histoire', *Journal asiatique*, 9th series, 15 (1900) 13.
Ḥaydar, Muḥammad, *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia*, tr. E. Denison Ross (London: Curzon Press, 1972 reprint).
Hofman, H. R., *Turkish Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*, Section III (Utrecht: The Library of the University of Utrecht, 1969–).
Hussaini, A. S., 'Uways al-Qaranī and the Uwaysī Sufis', *Muslim World* 57 (1967) 103–13.
Ibn 'Arabī, *Les Illuminations de la Mecque*, tr. M. Chodkiewicz *et al.* (Paris: Sindbad, 1988).
Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, vol. 1 (Calcutta: Bishop's College Press, 1856).
(Iṣfahāṇī, Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilya al-awliyā'*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khānajī, 1351/1932).
Jarring, G., *Literary Texts from Kashghar* (Lund: Royal Society of Letters, 1980).
Metcalf, B. D., *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).
Mīnuwī, M. (ed.), *Aḥwāl wa aqwāl-i Shaykh Abu 'l-Ḥasan Kharaqānī* (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1354–75).
Nizami, K. A., *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961).
O = Aḥmad Uzganī, *Tadhkira-yi Uwaysiyya*, MS. Oxford, Bodleian, Ind. Inst. Pers. 54.
Ohsson, I. Mouragea d', *Tableau général de l'empire ottoman*, vol. 4 (Paris: Imprimerie de Monsieur, 1791).
Pritsak, O. 'Die Karachaniden', *Der Islam* 31 (1954) 17–68.
Rypka, J., *History of Iranian Literature* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968).
Schimmel, A., *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1975).
Shaw, R., B., *A Sketch of the Turki Language* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1878).
Sidersky, D., *Les Origines des légendes musulmanes* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1933).
Sinor, D. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
Stein, A., *Ancient Khotan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907).

Stein, A., *Memoir on Maps of Chinese Turkistan and Kansu* (Dehra Dun: Trigonometrical Survey Office, 1923).
Stein, A., *On Ancient Central-Asian Tracks* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press, 1974).
Trimingham, J. S., *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).
Ṭūsī, Farīdūn Taqīzāda (ed.), *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* (Meshed: Intishārāt-i Bārān, 1363/1984).
Vámbéry, A., *Sketches of Central Asia* (London: Wm. H. Allen, 1868).
Wensinck, A. J., *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936–88).
Westermarck, E., *Ritual and Belief in Morocco* (London: Macmillan, 1926).
Younghusband, F., *The Heart of a Continent* (London: John Murray, 1904).

Index I: Brotherhoods, sects, etc.

Index II:
Names of persons mentioned

Index III: Places

Index IV: Technical terms

A: Terms in foreign languages (Arabic except where stated)

B: English equivalents