

Başran Origins of Classical Sufism

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History is largely about rooting out anachronisms. One that bedevils the history of Sufism is an unsurprising tendency to project later forms backward. Our idea of who was a Sufi in the ninth century tends to come from the *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfīya* of the Naysābūran al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) and a few other books, some dependent on his.¹ Sulamī begins his first generation with notices of al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyād (d. Mecca, 187/803), Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (d. al-Ğazīra, 163/779–80?), Dū l-Nūn (d. Ğīza, 246/861?), Bīṣr al-Ḥāfī (d. Baghdad, 227/841?), Sarī al-Saqatī (d. Baghdad, 253/867?), and al-Muḥāsibī (d. Baghdad?, 243/857–58) – the usual big names for the late eighth century and, mainly, early ninth. MASSIGNON’s lineage of Sufism (leading up to al-Ḥallāğ) stays almost entirely within this line, and indeed I have no serious quarrel with it as a lineage of classical Ğunaydī Sufism.²

The trouble is that, so far as we know, not one of these persons was actually called a Sufi (ṣūfī) in his lifetime. (Admittedly, however, I have found Ibrāhīm ibn Adham associated with an attendant called Ibrāhīm ibn Baššār al-Ṣūfī.³) Meanwhile, certain contemporaries of theirs actually were called Sufis. Frustratingly for the modern historian, Sulamī’s forebears and those actually called Sufis in their own time seem to have had much in common. Above all, both parties underwent austerities

¹) Al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfīyya*, ed. Johannes PEDERSEN (Leiden, 1960) = ed. Nūr al-Dīn ŠARĪBA (Cairo, 1953). On the Sufi biographical tradition, see now Jawid A. MOJADDEDI, *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism* (Richmond, Surrey, 2001).

²) The foundational modern history of Sufism is Louis MASSIGNON, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane* (Paris, 1922, rev. 1954), also now available as *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism*, trans. Benjamin CLARK (Notre Dame, 1997).

³) Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā’* (Cairo, 1352–57/1932–38), VII, 346. Also noticed by MASSIGNON, *Essay*, 105.

(*zuhd*), devoted extraordinary amounts of time to Qurʾānic recitation and prayer (*ṣalāt* and *dīkr*), and generally cultivated a solemn attitude toward life. It is difficult to tell what distinguished them.

Our historical problem is then twofold: 1) to determine why some persons in the late eighth and earlier ninth centuries were called “Sufis” and 2) to discern how the term “Sufi” came to shift from them to the people described by Sulamī, et alii. The earliest emergence of persons called Sufis has been studied before, and I have no previously undiscovered data to report here. The time seems to have been the last third of the eighth century.⁴ Bernd RADTKE has already noticed the second problem, of how the term “Sufi” seems to have shifted over time:

As opposed to the *religiosi*, antinomian, anti-social and anti-governmental tendencies became noticeable among them Notwithstanding the fact that the *religiosi* in general rejected these practices [*dīkr* and *samāʿ*], the word *Ṣūfī*, which in the 2nd/8th century still had been an expression for a somewhat disreputable fringe group, had been adopted for the entire mystical movement in the course of the 3rd/9th century for reasons which are not clear.⁵

(As will become clear, I accept little of RADTKE’s characterization of what separated the earliest Sufis from others; however, he is to be commended for clearly identifying the problem.) At least part of the solution, I now propose, is *ninth-century Baṣra*, particularly the circle of *Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār*.

Eighth-century Baṣra seems to have led in the development of Islamic piety. “The legal discernment (*fiqh*) of a Kūfan and the worshipfulness (*ʿibāda*) of a Baṣran” seems to have been a proverbial expression.⁶ In the *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ*, our greatest single source for the early renunciant tradition, Abū Nuʿaym (d. Iṣfahān, 430/1038) considers Baṣrans first after the Companions and the seven jurisprudents of Medina.⁷ The

⁴) R. A. NICHOLSON, “An Historical Enquiry Concerning the Origin and Development of Sufism,” *JRAS* 38 (1906), 303–48, esp. 305. *V* also MASSIGNON, *Essay*, 104–107.

⁵) *ET*², s. v. “Taṣawwuf,” by B. RADTKE.

⁶) Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, II, 321.

⁷) Baṣrans: *Ḥilya*, II, 198–III, 133, VI, 149–315; Medinese: III, 133–266; Meccans: III, 266–381; Yemenis: IV, 4–81; Kūfans: IV, 82–V, 119; Syrians: V, 120–VI, 148. The term “renunciant” (for *zāhid* and *nāsik*), suggested by Michael Cooper-son, is more convenient than “ascetic” inasmuch as it suggests no opposition to “mystic”.

renunciant tradition in Syria seems to have been a branch of the Başran.⁸ The Muʿtazila, a renunciant movement that became theological, first appeared in Başra and maintained a distinctive Başran branch through the ninth century.⁹ Ğunayd, under whom there crystallized classical, Sunnī Sufism, was thoroughly Baghdadī, but one of his principal teachers, al-Muḥāsibī, had important Başran connections and by one report died there.¹⁰

Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār was personally connected with al-Ğunayd, al-Ḥarrāz, and other important Baghdadīs. He was allegedly the first to talk of *iṣārāt* (“allusions”). His followers were expressly called Sufis, and like earlier Sufis they were associated with *al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar* (“ordering the good and prohibiting evil”). Contrary to many earlier Sufis, he did not reject normal gain. He seems to be the missing link between the earlier disreputable Sufism and the classical Sunnī Sufism of Ğunayd and his circle.

Renunciation in the Earlier Eighth Century

The first to be called a “Sufi” was famously a Kūfan named Abū Hāšim (d. 150/767–68?).¹¹ Before then, renunciation (*zuhd*), the deliberate embrace of practical austerities, seems to have been common to all parts of the religious movement. The most obvious austerity is of course the one for which the Sufis were named, mainly wearing wool. Muslims may have taken it over from Christian renunciants.¹² An early Başran renunciant, Abū l-ʿĀliya (d. 90/709), is quoted as rebuking another for

⁸) Josef VAN ESS, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra* (Berlin, 1991–95), II, 102.

⁹) Sarah STROUMSA, “The Beginnings of the Muʿtazilah, Reconsidered,” *JSAI* 13 (1990), 265–93.

¹⁰) Al-ʿAbbādī, *K. Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ al-šāfiʿīya*, ed. Gösta VITESTAM (Leiden, 1964), 27.

¹¹) *V. supra*, n. 4.

¹²) V. Göran OGÉN, “Did the Term “*šūfī*” Exist before the Sufis?”, *Acta Orientalia* 43 (1983), 33–48, offering a philological argument from Syriac, with data on which Muslims were called “Sufis” probably too sparse for conclusiveness; also Tor ANDRÆ, “Zuhd und Mönchtum,” *Le Monde Oriental* (Uppsala) 25 (1931), 296–327, esp. 300. Ofer LIVNE-KAFRI, “Early Muslim Ascetics and the World of Christian Monasticism,” *JSAI* 20 (1996), 105–29, is fuller for the practice of early Muslim renunciants, of which it provides a good survey, than for continuity with Christian monasticism.

wearing wool, “the dress of monks (*ruhbān*)”.¹³ Wool is more liable to tear than cotton and linen, so wearers of wool must have tended to lood ragged.¹⁴ Raggedness would be attractive to critics of customary ways. A prominent anthropologist has suggested that supporters of the status quo regularly prefer “smooth” to “shaggy”, whereas malcontents regularly prefer “shaggy”.¹⁵ In our day, for example, we may think of prosperous lawyers in worsted wool suits as opposed to underpaid academics in tweed. It fits the pattern that Muslims characteristically engaged in *al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf* should prefer to wear shaggy wool. It was also the characteristic dress of the proletariat, for the Baṣran renunciant Mālik ibn Dīnār (d. ca. 130/747–48) urged the *qārīʾ* not to be impressed by vain praise but to wear a woolen gown (*dārīʾa*) and carry a shepherd’s staff, while Muḥāsibī quotes persons who recommend it as the dress of porters and sailors.¹⁶ Al-Ṭabarī mentions someone begging in wool.¹⁷ Compared with cotton and linen, wool had to be less comfortable during the hot season, which in Iraq means most of the year.¹⁸ Also, *ḥadīṭ* reports indicate that wool might be smelly, especially when wet.¹⁹

¹³ Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, II, 217. Abū l-ʿĀliya is also quoted as admiringly attributing a woolen garment to ʿĪsā ibn Maryam, *ibid.*, 221. Cf. MASSIGNON, *Essay*, 104, with similar examples.

¹⁴ Raggedness is expressly one reason to wear wool (*li-l-ḥurūq allatī taḥḍuṭu fīhī*) according to al-Muḥāsibī, *al-Masāʾil fī aʿmāl al-qulūb*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṬĀʾ (Cairo, 1969), 104.

¹⁵ Mary DOUGLAS, *Natural Symbols* (London, 1970), 72.

¹⁶ Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, II, 364; Muḥāsibī, *Masāʾil*, 104. All the *aḥbār* of the Israelites had walked with staffs, according to a Syrian renunciant, *apud* Abū Nuʿaym, V, 238. Muḥāsibī’s advocates of wool likewise identify it as the dress of pious persons (*ṣāliḥīn*) of previous nations (*loc. cit.*). Ibn Qutayba quotes a story in which someone asks an anonymous *ḥakīm* why he habitually carries a staff when he is neither old nor sick. The wise man answers: “To remind me that I am a traveller” (Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn al-aḥbār* [Cairo, 1346/1928], II, 323).

¹⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, ed. M. J. DE GOEJE et al. (Leiden, 1879–1901), II, 1452, noticed by Josef VAN ESS, *Theologie*, II, 88. *V* index, s. v. “*ṣūf*,” for many further examples of wool-wearing; similarly, Richard GRAMLICH, *Alte Vorbilder des Sufitums* (Wiesbaden, 1996–96), index, s. v. “Wolle.”

¹⁸ *V* Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, *ṭahāra* 128, *bāb al-ruḥṣa fī tark al-ḡusl*, on profuse sweating by wearers of wool in a small mosque.

¹⁹ Ibn Abī Šayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Saʿīd AL-LAḤḤĀM (Beirut, 1409/1989), VI, 39 = k. *al-libās, fī lubs al-ṣūf*; Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan* 31, k. *al-libās* 6, *bāb fī l-ṣūf wa-l-šāʿr*; Tirmidī, *Ġāmiʿ* 35, k. *ṣifat al-qimyāma* 38; Ibn Māġa, *Sunan* 32, k. *al-libās* 4, *bāb lubs al-ṣūf*.

Finally, wool was uncomfortably scratchy. The prominent Medinese Successor Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab (d. 94/712–13?) once suffered 30, 50, or 100 lashes for refusing to swear allegiance at once to both the new Umayyad caliph, ʿAbd al-Malik, and his sons al-Walīd and Sulaymān as designated successors. By one account, Ibn al-Musayyab was spitefully flogged on a cold day, then had cold water thrown over him and was dressed in a woolen cloak (*ḡubba*). Alternatively, he was said to have been clothed in a hair shirt (*musūḥ*, *tubbān min šaʿr*): clearly, wool meant discomfort.²⁰

RADTKE mentions antinomian, anti-social and anti-governmental tendencies as hallmarks of the earliest, pre-classical Sufis. They do not seem distinctive of any particular group in the eighth century. Actually, it is hard to find antinomianism at any time.²¹ Renunciants scorned rulers in the name not of freedom but of a superior moral standard. The only exception I have come across is the *rūḥānīya* denounced by the heresiographer al-Malaṭī (d. 377/987–88), perhaps quoting the earlier Egyptian heresiographer Ḥuṣayš ibn Aṣram (d. 253/867). He names two advocates of adultery and drinking alcohol, among other enormities: Rabāḥ and Kulayb.²² The latter is presumably the same as the Kulayb on al-Ġāḥiẓ's

²⁰ Ibn Saʿd, *Biographien*, ed. Eduard SACHAU et al. (Leiden, 1904–40), V, 93–94 = *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Beirut, 1957–68), V, 125–28; Aḥmad, *al-Zuhd* (Mecca, A.H. 1357; repr. Beirut, 1403/1983), 459, 466; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, II, 168–72. Ibn Saʿd also relates that he was flogged by Ibn al-Zubayr's governor, either for refusing to swear allegiance to Ibn al-Zubayr as caliph or for criticizing the governor for marrying before his previous fourth wife had been properly divorced: *Biographien*, V, 90–91 = *Ṭabaqāt*, V, 122–23. A ninth-century Baghdadi renunciant was called Abū ʿAlī al-Musūḥī (d. 256/869–70?). For a conversation between him and Ġunayd, v. al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Tārīḥ Baġdād* (Cairo, 1349/1931; repr. Cairo and Beirut, n.d.), VII, 367. As a Sufi in Baghdad, Ḥallāġ sometimes wore hair shirts (*musūḥ*), among other distinctive clothing (*ibid.*, VIII, 112). For another early example of someone flogged, then dressed in wool, v. VAN ESS, *Theologie*, II, 88.

²¹ *ET*², s.v. “Ibāḥa,” by W. MADELUNG (Shiism) and M. G. S. HODGSON (Sufism), asserts that “antinomian trends were strong among the more radical Ṣhīʿī circles from an early date” but cites only the evidence of later heresiographies, doubtfully rising above the level of insults as historical sources, and that “Among Ṣūfis, antinomianism seems to have been later in developing,” with examples from the *ṭarīqa* period.

²² Al-Malaṭī, *Die Widerlegung der Irrgläubigen und Neuerer*, ed. Sven DEDERING (Istanbul, 1936), 73–74 = *al-Tanbīh wa-l-raddʿalā ahl al-ahwāʾ wa-l-bidʿ*, ed. Muḥammad Zāhid ibn al-Ḥasan AL-KAWTHARĪ (Cairo, 1949; repr. 1418/1997),

short list of Sufi renunciants (*al-ṣūfiya min al-nussāk*).²³ One may doubt whether heresiographical invective is good evidence for their actual doctrine, but it is good evidence of Sufis in disrepute for antinomianism. However, “Rabāḥ” presumably indicates Riyaḥ ibn ‘Amr al-Qaysī (d. 170s/787–97?), a Baṣran traditionist and renunciant sometimes associated with Rābī‘a al-‘Adawīya.²⁴ The critic Abū Zur‘a (d. Ray, 264/878) accepted him as a well-intentioned (*ṣadūq*) transmitter of *ḥadīth*, but Abū Dāwūd (d. Baṣra, 275/889) accused him of *zandaqa* (secret unbelief).²⁵ The trouble is that no one identifies him as a Sufi, whereas he appears in, if not Sulamī’s *Ṭabaqāt*, at least Abū Nu‘aym’s *Ḥilyat al-awliyā’* and some other surveys of the retrospectively legitimate precursors to the classical Sufis. Therefore, antinomianism does not distinguish pre-classical Sufis from the non-Sufi precursors to the classical Sufis around Ḡunayd.

By contrast, anti-social tendencies are not at all scarce in the sources. Mālīk ibn Dīnār, mentioned above, recommended three actions as conducive to humility: restraint of the tongue, frequent pleas for forgiveness, and withdrawal from society (*‘uzla*).²⁶ Sufyān al-Ṭawrī (d. Baṣra, 161/778?) wrote to another renunciant: “Incumbent on you is withdrawal and mixing little with people. It used to be that people benefitted from one another when they met, but that is gone today, and we think salvation is

93–94; also Louis MASSIGNON, *Recueil de textes inédits concernant l’histoire de la mystique en pays d’Islam* (Paris, 1929), 7.

²³) Al-Ġāhiz, *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Muḥammad ḤĀRŪN (Cairo, 1467/1948), I, 366.

²⁴) For the name, v. Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā al-Mu‘allimī AL-YAMĀMĪ (Hyderabad, A. H. 1381–86), IV, 14, and Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tabṣīr al-mushtabih bi-taḥrīr al-Muntabih*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad AL-BIḤĀWĪ, rev. Muḥammad ‘Alī AL-NAĠĠĀR (Beirut, n. d.), II, 588. For biographies, v. al-Dahabī, *Ṣiyar a‘lām al-nubalā’* (Beirut, 1401–1409/1981–88), VIII (ed. Naḍīr ḤAMDĀN), 155–56, with references. Several sources expressly call him *al-baṣrī*, and Abū Nu‘aym lists him among the Baṣran Successors of the Successors, *Ḥilya*, VI, 192–97; however, he is identified as a Kūfan by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Ġarḥ wa-l-ta‘dīl* (Hyderabad, A. H. 1360–71; repr. Beirut, n. d.), III, 511, also by Dahabī, for which v. Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Lisān al-Mizān* (Hyderabad, A. H. 1329–31; repr. Beirut, 1406/1986), II, 469, s. v. Riyaḥ ibn ‘Amr. MASSIGNON takes the heresiographer’s pointing to be correct, the *ḥadīth* collectors’ “Riyaḥ” to be in error (*Essay*, 79–80).

²⁵) Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Lisān*, II, 469.

²⁶) Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilya*, II, 377. He is also said to have recommended living with dogs in refuse heaps, *ibid.*, II, 359, 369.

to be found in leaving them.”²⁷ Al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ stayed home when Sufyān ibn ‘Uyayna (d. Mecca, 198/814) came to the mosque. When Ibn ‘Uyayna called on him at home and asked when he would return to his place, al-Fuḍayl told him: “This is not the time for meeting.”²⁸

Finally, anti-governmental tendencies are also fairly easy to find in the eighth-century mainstream. Outright rebellion might actually be looked on favourably; for example, Sa‘īd ibn Ġubayr’s rebellion against al-Ḥağğāğ and death at his hands count in his favour in the Sunnī biographical tradition.²⁹ The usual expression of anti-governmental tendencies was *al-amr bi-l-ma‘rūf wa-l-nahy ‘an al-munkar*. The phrase is Qur’ānic (Q. 3:110, 7:157, 9:71, 22:41), so it could never become the exclusive property of a sect. In practice, it normally covered two related activities, rebuke of misbehaving rulers and private correction of misbehaviour where the ruler has failed to enforce the law.³⁰ From the *ḥadīṭ*, *naṣḥ* and *naṣīḥa*, “counsel”, also cover telling Muslims what to do, while *tagyīr* is another term for actively correcting misbehaviour. In the eighth century, it was emphatically not only Sufis who were active in rebuking rulers. Mālīk ibn Dīnār got a tax collector to release a merchant’s boat and rebuked the governor of Başra.³¹ There are a number of stories about the rudeness of Sufyān al-Tawrī toward some governor or even caliph.³² Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. Baghdad, 241/855) asserted that Ibn Abī Dī‘b (d. 159/775–76?) was better than the famous jurist Mālīk (d. 179/795) because he commanded and forbade Abū Ġa‘far (al-Manṣūr, the caliph) whereas Mālīk was silent.³³

²⁷ *Ibid.*, VI, 376. One would apparently not like to have lived next to him, for among other anti-social sayings he is said to have declared: “When a renunciant’s neighbours are pleased with him, he is a flatterer” (*ibid.*, VII, 50).

²⁸ Al-Marrūdī, *Kitāb al-Warā‘*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Baṣyūnī ZAĞLŪL (Beirut, 1409/1988), 13 = ed. Zaynab Ibrāhīm AL-QĀRŪṬ (Beirut, 1403/1983), 8–9.

²⁹ Johan WESTSTEIJN and Alex DE VOOGT, “Sa‘īd b. Ġubayr: Piety, Chess and Rebellion,” *Arabica* 49 (2002), 383–86.

³⁰ For discussions of *al-amr bi-l-ma‘rūf* in later Islamic legal literature, v. Michael COOK, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge, 2000).

³¹ Abū Nu‘aym, *Hilya*, II, 374, 384.

³² E. g. *ibid.*, VII, 42 (Abū Ġa‘far), 45 (Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm), 46–47 (Ma‘n ibn Zā‘ida), 49 (‘Abd al-Ṣamad ibn ‘Alī and al-Mahdī). V. also now Steven C. Judd, “Competitive Hagiography in Biographies of al-Awzā‘ī and Sufyān al-Thawrī,” *JAOS* 122 (2002), 25–37, esp. 31–36.

³³ Aḥmad, *K. al-‘Ilal wa-ma‘rifat al-riğāl*, ed. Waṣī Allāh ibn Muḥammad ‘ABBĀS (Beirut, 1988), I, 509, 539 = *K. al-Ğāmi‘ fī l-‘ilal wa-ma‘rifat al-riğāl*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusām BAYDŪN (Beirut, 1410/1990), I, 188, 198.

RADTKE also mentions *dīkr* and *samāʿ* as characteristic, offensive activities of the early Sufis. It is not hard to find *dīkr* associated with the eight-century mainstream. Sometimes, of course, it is used non-technically to mean simply “recollection”, as in the Qurʾān. However, it usually appears in renunciatory literature with reference to reciting praises of God; for example, when the Kūfan Masrūq (d. 63/682–83?) asserts that whoever recollects God in his heart is in *ṣalāt* even if he is in the market, better yet if he moves his lips.³⁴ It is often a formal, scheduled activity. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. Baṣra, 110/728) recalled how the pious predecessors had preferred to be in a state of ritual purity when they recollected God.³⁵ The Syrian jurist al-Awzāʿī (d. 157/773–74?) would not speak to anyone after the dawn prayer until he had finished his *dīkr Allāh*, although he would reply if spoken to.³⁶ Even group recitation was found in the mainstream; for example, the Baṣran Ṭābit al-Bunānī (d. 120s/738–48) would spend a tenth of every day with his *aṣḥāb* in *dīkr*.³⁷

Samāʿ, by contrast, seems to be rare in the eighth century. “In fact,” says Jean DURING, “apart from Qurʾānic psalmody, the tradition of musical audition for spiritual purposes is not attested before the middle of the ninth century.”³⁸ This is probably an overstatement. Ibn al-Ġawzī reports indignantly that Saʿd ibn ʿAbd Allāh, a Damascene worshipper of the early eighth century, bought a slave girl who sang *qaṣāʾid* (presumably *zuhdiyyāt*) to the *fuqarāʾ*, while the Kūfan ʿAwn ibn ʿAbd Allāh (d. before 120/737–38) had a slave girl preach and sing after he had finished his own

³⁴) Aḥmad, *Zuhd*, 418; same attributed to one Hilāl ibn Abī ʿUbayda (ʿAbīda?), *ibid.*, 457; same attributed to another Kūfan, Abū ʿUbayda ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Maṣʿūd (d. after 80/699), Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, IV, 204, citing Aḥmad, probably yet another quotation from *al-Zuhd* untraced by me or simply missing from the manuscript basis of the Mecca edition, apparently far smaller than what was available in the Middle Ages, for which v. Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Taʿḡīl al-manfaʿa bi-zawāʾid riḡāl al-aʿimma al-arbaʿa* (Hyderabad, A. H. 1324), 8 = ed. Ikrām Allāh IMDĀD AL-ḤAQQ (Beirut, 1416/1996), I, 243.

³⁵) Aḥmad, *Zuhd*, 315.

³⁶) Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, VI, 143.

³⁷) *Ibid.*, II, 323.

³⁸) Jean DURING, “Musique et rites: le *samāʿ*,” in Alexandre POPOVIC and Gilles VEINSTEIN, eds., *Les voies d’Allah: les ordres mystiques dans l’islam des origines à aujourd’hui* (Paris, 1996), 157–72, at 159. Similarly, Arthur GRIBETZ, “The *samāʿ* Controversy: Sufi vs. Legalist,” *Studia Islamica* 74 (1991), 43–62, at 44; MASSIGNON, *Essay*, 106.

sermon.³⁹ But *samāʿ* is certainly not closely associated with Sufis, so-called, until the later ninth century. To sum up, then, what was supposed to be offensive in the early, pre-classical Sufis appears to have been characteristic either of eminently respectable figures of the earlier eighth century as well or of practically no one at all until the mid-ninth century.

The Estrangement of Pre-Classical *ṣūfīya* and Proto-Sunnī

The story of pious, proto-Sunnī opposition to renunciation across the eighth century certainly needs to be told in detail, but here I shall attempt only the briefest sketch. Suspicion of renunciation for show has a very long history. Consider, for example: “Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive.”⁴⁰ Therefore, there is nothing inherently incredible about Abū l-ʿĀliya’s stricture against wool. Sometimes the same figure is quoted both for and against outward austerities. For example, al-Ḥasan is said to have identified wool with various paragons of piety, telling the caliph ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz that Moses had worn wool, along with being emaciated and walking instead of riding, and that he had met 70 veterans of Badr who wore wool.⁴¹ At the same time, we are told that he himself wore linen, and Sunnī and Muʿtazilī sources agree that he reproached wearers of wool for being proud of their outward humility.⁴²

There seem to be signs of new tension in about the last third of the eighth century, just when there emerge persons called Sufis. Tension becomes visible between *ḥadīṭ* transmission and renunciation. Sufyān al-Ṭawrī is quoted by turns as calling for one to seek *ḥadīṭ* in complete sincerity (i. e. never for worldly ends), as admitting that he had started out

³⁹) Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs*, ed. ʿIṣām Fāris al-ḤARASTĀNĪ (Beirut, 1414/1994), 316–17. Abū Nuʿaym does not mention preaching, but he does describe a slave girl of ʿAwn’s named Bišra who recited the Qurʾān so tunefully and sorrowfully that ʿAwn’s associates all threw off their turbans and wept (*Hilya*, IV, 264).

⁴⁰) Zechariah 13:4, NASB.

⁴¹) Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, II, 134, 137; VI, 196; Ibn Saʿd, *Biographien*, VII/1, 123 = *Ṭabaqāt*, VII, 169; Ġāḥiẓ, *Bayān*, III, 153; Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn*, II, 372. V. also VAN ESS, *Theologie*, II, 65, for a report from al-Ḥasan that Solomon wore wool.

⁴²) Ibn Saʿd, *Biographien*, VII/1, 123, 126 = *Ṭabaqāt*, VII, 169, 173. Similar comment on wool *apud* Ġāḥiẓ, *Bayān*, III, 153.

without a proper *nīya* but later acquired one, and lamenting that he had not sought *ḥadīṭ* for the sake of God and was now being punished for it.⁴³ Ibn al-Mubārak (d. Hit, 181/797) once refused to relate *ḥadīṭ* in Mecca because Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Iṣbahānī (d. ca. 200/815–16) had forbidden him to do so.⁴⁴ Someone else reproached him in Ṭarsūs for engaging in the innovation of sorting *ḥadīṭ* by topic. He managed to quit for twenty days before the love of *ḥadīṭ* drew him back to it.⁴⁵

Sufyān ibn ʿUyayna, a Kūfan active mainly in Mecca, is the first Muslim authority who seems to have rejected outward austerity. Earlier renunciants such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī had called for matching outward humility with inward, but this Sufyān went further: “Renunciation means shortness of hope, not eating poorly.”⁴⁶ He defended the most modest renunciation by citing prophetic example:

Renunciation (*zuhd*) concerns what God has forbidden. As for what God has pronounced licit, God has made it a matter of indifference for you (*abāḥa-kahu*). The prophets married, rode, and ate, but when God forbade them something, they accepted his forbidding and thus were renunciant with regard to it.⁴⁷

He is a very early advocate of the famous interior *ḡihād* against one’s soul.⁴⁸

⁴³) Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, VI, 362 (for piety’s sake), 367 (acquired proper intention), 371 (self-blame), 384 (reporting in someone’s dream that God had forgiven him, “even my seeking *ḥadīṭ*”). V. also *ibid.*, VII, 64: “I have never reproached myself except when sitting for *ḥadīṭ*.” Ibrāhīm ibn Adham is said to have reproached Sufyān for drawing attention to himself by *ḥaddaṭanā ḥaddaṭanā* (*ibid.*, VI, 34).

⁴⁴) *Ibid.*, VIII, 230.

⁴⁵) *Ibid.*, VIII, 165.

⁴⁶) Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn*, II, 356. Almost the same (with the addition of “or wearing the *abā*”), Wakīʿ ibn al-Ḡarrāḥ, *al-Zuhd*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd al-Ḡabbār al-FARYAWĀʾĪ (Riyadh, 1994), I, 222. Cf. Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *al-Zuhd*, ed. Yāsīn Muḥammad AL-SAWWĀS (Damascus, 1420/1999), 63, and Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, VI, 386, where it is attributed to Sufyān al-Ṭawrī. The sentiment is consonant with some of Ṭawrī’s biography, such as his eating great quantities (*Ḥilya*, VI, 389) and saying: “I prefer that a man, when God has amply provided for him, amply provide for himself” (*ibid.*, VII, 80).

⁴⁷) Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, VII, 297. The prophet ʿĪsā was famously celibate, but Sufyān explained that he simply had no desire for women on account of his special creation, without a human father (*ibid.*, VII, 299; sim., Aḥmad, *Zuhd*, 97).

⁴⁸) “*Ḡihād* comprises ten [parts]: *ḡihād* against the enemy is one, your *ḡihād* against your self is nine” (Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, VII, 284).

At an earlier point in my researches, I expected at this point to identify what was offensive about the earliest Sufis as distinct from the non-Sufi renunciants whom Sulamī and others recognized as the precursors to the classical Sufis. I thought I could identify two doctrines that would distinguish the rejected Sufis from the proto-Sunni mainstream better than “antinomian, anti-social and anti-governmental tendencies”, likewise *dīkr* and *samāʿ*: 1) the repudiation of normal gain, *inkār al-kasb*, in favour of living off whatever should come one’s way (normally alms, we may presume), and 2) ordering the good and prohibiting evil, *al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar*. Both are indeed associated with pre-classical Sufis of the late eighth and early ninth century and also with contemporary, non-Sunni theological movements, outstandingly the Murǧīʿa and Muʿtazila.⁴⁹

Unfortunately, it appears that these characteristics also are largely common to the earliest, pre-classical Sufis and to Sulamī’s precursors to the classical Sufis. As for *inkār al-kasb*, distrust of trading is attested early in the mainstream. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī complained: “There is no good in the people of the market. I have heard one of them will do his brother out of a *dirham*.”⁵⁰ Mālik ibn Dīnār warned: “The market increases wealth but takes away religion.”⁵¹ (Al-Ḥasan lived off a pension, Mālik ibn Dīnār by copying the Qurʾān.) On the other hand, Muḥāsibī names two Sufis who repudiated buying and selling, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yazīd and ʿAbdak, perhaps in particular at the time of the Fourth Civil War (Amīn *vs.* Maʾmūn, 195–98/810–13, much longer in Syria).⁵² Certain Muʿtazila are likewise identified with the repudiation of normal gain; among others, Abū ʿImrān al-Raḡāṣī (*fl.* early 3rd/9th cent.) and al-Rummānī (d. 384/994).⁵³ And in the ninth century, the repudiation of normal gain became a distinctive doctrine of the Karrāmiya, who tended to ab-

⁴⁹) For Murǧīʿ devotion to *al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf*, v. Wilferd MADELUNG, “The Early Muriǧīʿa in Khurāsān and Transoxania and the Spread of Ḥanafism,” *Der Islam* 59 (1982), 32–39, esp. 36–37. *Al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf* of course appeared among the five defining principles (*al-uṣūl al-ḥamsa*) of Muʿtazilism.

⁵⁰) Aḥmad, *Zuhd*, 351; al-Fasawī, *K. al-Maʿrifa wa-l-tārīḫ*, ed. Akram Ḍiyāʾ al-ʿUMARĪ (Medina, 1410/1989), II, 42.

⁵¹) Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, II, 385.

⁵²) Muḥāsibī, *al-Makāsib*, *al-Masʿūʿil fī aʿmāl al-qulūb* (henceforth C), 212 = *al-Makāsib*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā (Beirut, 1987; henceforth B), 64.

⁵³) V. Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Die Klassen der muʿtaziliten*, ed. Susanna DIWALD-WILZER (Wiesbaden, 1961), 77 (Abū ʿImrān); *GAS*, VIII, 114 (Rummānī, *Tahrīm al-makāsib*).

sorb the Muʿtazilī renunciant tradition.⁵⁴ But Muḥāsibī attributes the doctrine above all to Šaqīq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Balḥī (d. Kūlān, Transoxania, 194/809–10): “According to what is related of him, Šaqīq asserted that effort (*ḥaraka*) in pursuit of gain is a sin.”⁵⁵ Ibrāhīm ibn Adham is quoted as remonstrating with Šaqīq against his repudiation of gain.⁵⁶ Šaqīq does appear in Sulamī’s *Ṭabaqāt al-šūfīya*. Thus, *inkār al-kasb* works no better than antinomianism, anti-social attitudes, and the rest to distinguish the unacceptable pre-classical Sufis from the acceptable precursors to the classical Sufis.

A previous article mentions several examples of early, pre-classical Sufis who undertook *al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf*: al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Muʿammal al-Šūfī, imprisoned by Hārūn for “ordering the good”; rowdies in Alexandria who “ordered the good” and rejected the governor’s authority in the year 200/815–16; someone who rebuked al-Maʾmūn (who successfully defended himself rather than punish the man); and someone who rebuked Ibn Ṭūlūn (who did punish the man), among others.⁵⁷ To these might be added other Sufis in the entourage of the Egyptian *qāḍī* ʿĪsā ibn al-Munkadir (d. Baghdad, after 215/830–31), who was himself later taken away to Iraq to die in prison for defying the governor’s authority, and the Sufis who, in alliance with the local Zaydiyya, took over Kūfa for a few weeks on behalf of two Ḥasanids in 255/869.⁵⁸ Although he was not called a Sufi,

⁵⁴) V esp. Josef VAN ESS, “Une lecture à rebours de l’histoire du muʿtazilisme,” *REI* 46 (1978), 163–240, at 190, 192; idem, *Ungenützte Texte zur Karrāmīya* (Heidelberg, 1980), 30–32; Louis MASSIGNON, *The Passion of al-Hallāj*, trans. Herbert MASON (Princeton, 1982), III, 227. “Karrāmīya” has become the conventional form, but some early poetry in praise of the movement’s eponym requires “Kirām” to scan properly. V Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tabṣīr al-mushtabih*, III, 1191. Edmund Bosworth preferred yet another form in his initial article describing them: “The Rise of the Karāmiyyah in Khurasan,” *Muslim World* 50 (1960), 5–14.

⁵⁵) Muḥāsibī, *al-Makāsib*, C194 = B61; followed by MASSIGNON, *Essay*, 173.

⁵⁶) Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya*, VIII, 37.

⁵⁷) Christopher MELCHERT, “The Ḥanābila and the Early Sufis,” *Arabica* 48 (2001), 352–67, esp. 354.

⁵⁸) Wakiʿ, *Aḥbār al-quḍāt*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muṣṭafā AL-MARĀĠĪ (Cairo, 1366–69/1947–50), III, 240. As an example of anachronism, let me note Jonathan E. BROCKOPP, *Early Mālikī Law* (Leiden, 2000), 45, 47, which assumes that the Sufis around Ibn al-Munkadir were mystics and thinks it paradoxical that Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 214/829), a close associate of Ibn al-Munkadir’s, should have led the persecution of the early Egyptian mystic Ḍū l-Nūn (d. 245/860?; for the persecution, v. Ḍahabī, *Siyyar*, XI [ed. Šāliḥ AL-SAMR]: 534, drawing on Sulamī, *Miḥan al-šūfīya*). The paradox dissolves as soon as one recognizes that “Sufi” had as yet

the ‘Alid ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mu‘āwiya clothed himself in wool when he commenced his open rebellion against the Umayyads (127/744).⁵⁹ Again, however, several of Sulamī’s precursors to the classical Sufis are also identified with *al-amr bi-l-ma‘rūf* specifically in the sense of rebuking rulers; for example, Ibrāhīm ibn Adham and al-Nūrī.⁶⁰

The Sunnī tradition is ambivalent when it comes to *al-amr bi-l-ma‘rūf*. However much he believed in its opposition to the dogma of a create Qur’ān, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal would have nothing to do with the rebellion of Aḥmad ibn Naṣr (carried out in the name of *al-amr bi-l-ma‘rūf*) and told some Baghdadi jurists that they were obliged to repudiate the caliph (al-Wāṭiq) in their hearts but should not disobey or cause strife among the Muslims.⁶¹ Apparently, Aḥmad could admire Muslims of the previous centuries bold enough to rebuke rulers, yet recommended against rebuking in his own time. A Baghdadi follower asked him: “When must a man engage in ordering and prohibiting?” Aḥmad answered: “This is not the time for forbidding Do not oppose the ruler (*lā tata‘arraḍ li-l-sultān*), for his sword is drawn and his staff [is likewise ready].”⁶²

We should not imagine, then, the two parties set up by RADTKE: 1) the general, proto-Sunnī religious movement and 2) the disreputable Sufis. Rather, we seem to have 1) the proto-Sunnī religious movement, becoming suspicious in the later eighth century of all renunciants, 2) the precursors to the classical Sufis, not called Sufis in their lifetimes, and 3) the disreputable pre-classical Sufis themselves. Of course, there were borderline figures such as Biṣr al-Ḥāfi, often quoted in the earliest Ḥanbali tradition but also one of Sulamī’s precursors (hence straddling 1 and 2), and Riyāḥ ibn ‘Amr al-Qaysī, apparently a precursor but also condemned along with a pre-classical Sufi (hence straddling 2 and 3).

no necessary connection with mysticism and that *Dū l-Nūn* was doubtfully known in his lifetime as a Sufi. On Kūfa, v. al-Ṣūlī, *Kniga listov* (i.e. *K. al-Awrāq*), ed. Anas ḤALIDOV (St. Petersburg, 1998), 366.

⁵⁹ Noticed by VAN ESS, *Theologie*, II, 88.

⁶⁰ Abū Nu‘aym, *Hilya*, VIII, 10 (Ibn Adham); Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XIV, 76 (Nūrī).

⁶¹ For the rebellion, 231/846, v. Ṣūlī, *apud* Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XI, 167–68; Ḥanbal ibn Ishāq, *Dīkr miḥnat Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, ed. Muḥammad NAĞŞ (Cairo, 1397/1977), 81–83; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid AL-FIḤ (Cairo, 1371/1952), I, 145.

⁶² Ibn Hānī, *Masā’il al-imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, ed. Zubayr AL-ŠĀWIS (Beirut, A. H. 1400), II, 175. For many quotations of Aḥmad cautioning against active correction of wrongdoing, v. al-Ḥallāl, *K. al-Amr bi-l-ma‘rūf wa-l-nahy ‘an al-munkar*, ed. Ismā‘īl AL-ANṢĀRĪ (Cairo, 1969).

As for what divided the proto-Sunnī movement of the late eighth and early ninth centuries from renunciants, it seems most likely to me that it was above all proto-Sunnī determination to promote a style of piety available equally to all the Muslims. The proto-Sunnīs admired renunciants of the earlier eighth century, when the Muslims had been a small élite at the top of society, but now, with Muslims the clear majority, the style of an élite seemed less viable. In al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's day, one did not have to worry about having no clothes to wear or food to eat if all the Muslims should retire from economic activity in favour of religious exercises: there would still be the *ʿaṭāʾ* from (ultimately) *ḍimmī* taxpayers to pay for the products of *ḍimmī* labour. This was no longer so in the day of Sufyān ibn ʿUyayna or Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.⁶³ What separated Sulamī's precursors from the Sufis of the late eighth and early ninth centuries is harder to say, since only meagre reports survive of the Sufis. Association with rejected theological movements (especially Muʿtazilism) and unsuccessful politics (e.g. Egyptian independence) must have been a good part of it.

Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār

All three strands come together – the term “Sufi,” recognition by Sulamī as a precursor, and emphatic Sunnism – with the Baṣran Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār (d. 260's/874–84). He evidently had an entry in the biographical dictionaries of the Baṣran Ibn al-Aʿrābī (d. Mecca, 340/952?), *Ṭabaqāt al-nussāk*, and Sulamī, *Tārīḥ al-ṣūfīya*, but both these works survive only in scattered quotations.⁶⁴ He was omitted from Sulamī's short dictionary, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfīya*, which is extant; also, oddly, from Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ*; however, he does have a short chapter in ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī's *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfīya*, probably based immediately on the entry in *Tārīḥ al-*

⁶³) Cf. Leah KINBERG: “Renunciation of worldly goods was always the main current in Islam, and traditions favoring property and wealth arose only as a concession to the ruling economic power of the bourgeoisie” (“Compromise of Commerce: A Study of Early Traditions Concerning Wealth and Poverty,” *Der Islam* 66 [1989], 193–212, at 195); similarly, Shelomo Dov GOITEIN, “The Rise of the Near-Eastern Bourgeoisie in Early Islamic Times,” *Journal of World History* 3 (1956), 583–604.

⁶⁴) For Ibn al-Aʿrābī, v. *GAS*, I, 660–61; for al-Sulamī, v. *GAS*, I, 671–74. Numerous quotations by Ḍahabī from Ibn al-Aʿrābī are indicated below. For quotations from Sulamī's *Tārīḥ*, v. *infra*, nn. 69, 91, 93.

şūfīya and ultimately on Ibn al-Aʿrābī.⁶⁵ What follows is based primarily on al-Dahabī's quotations from Ibn al-Aʿrābī.

As for Abū Ḥatīm's express doctrine, Dahabī relates eight short sayings. Their main thrust is to deprecate demonstrative renunciation. One should cultivate humility by making oneself inconspicuous in one's own eyes and in the eyes of others; for example: "Whoever remembers the grace of God forgets his work," and: "Woe betide you. How much you weep and wail. Correct [your behaviour] and relax."⁶⁶ To the same effect is his comment on obvious renunciants who prayed in skirts, cloaks, and wool (*fuwaṭ, abrād, şūf*): "You have published your emblems and beaten your drums. Would that I knew what sort of men you are."⁶⁷ I have argued elsewhere that a predominantly mystical piety first emerged about the time of abū Ḥatīm's death; that is, with the generation of his disciples.⁶⁸ Indeed, none of Abū Ḥatīm's remembered sayings speaks distinctively of union with God, reciprocal love of God, or God's immanence in creatures, as a mystic would speak. Rather, as in the sayings of contemporaries, one sees the self-abnegation and concentration on God that would soon conduce to mysticism. Sulamī, on the other hand, asserts that Abū Ḥatīm was the first to speak in Iraq of *ʿulūm al-işārāt* (allusions to the ineffable), which sounds more in the line of Ğunaydī mysticism.⁶⁹

Abū Ḥatīm al-ʿAṭṭār did not renounce normal gain but seems to have made his living as a druggist and looked like any trader.⁷⁰ Ibn al-Aʿrābī relates the reminiscence of his Baghdadi disciple Ruzayq al-Naffāṭ, who once saw Abū Ḥatīm offering merchandise to a customer and asked him a question. He heard in return that there was a proper saying for every station, "but have patience until I am free".⁷¹

⁶⁵) ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt al-şūfīya*, ed. Muḥammad Surūr MAWLĀʾĪ (n.p., A. H. 1342), 93–94.

⁶⁶) Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām TADMURĪ (Beirut, 1407–21/1987–2000), XX (A. H. 261–80), 211–12.

⁶⁷) Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 212. Hişām al-Fūṭī (Fuwaṭī) was a prominent Başran Muʿtazilī of the early ninth century, on whom v. Johann FÜCK, "Neue Materialien zum Fihrist," *ZDMG* 90 (1936), 298–321, at 318 and n. His *nisba* plainly refers to a characteristic dress of the renunciants.

⁶⁸) Christopher MELCHERT, "The Transition From Asceticism to Mysticism at the Middle of the Ninth Century C. E.," *Studia Islamica* 83 (1996), 51–70.

⁶⁹) Sulamī, *apud* Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XV (A. H. 211–20), 212.

⁷⁰) Ibn al-Aʿrābī, *apud* Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 211–12.

⁷¹) Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 212.

Abū Ḥātim's followers were associated with moderate Sunnism. At least one of them was friendly towards *kalām*. Ibn al-Aʿrābī names altogether seven Baṣrans who were close to Abū Ḥātim: Ibn al-Šuwayṭī, Abū Saʿīd al-Ġanawī, al-Marzūqī, ʿAbd al-Ġabbār al-Sulamī, al-Ḥasan ibn al-Muṭannā, Aḥmad ibn ʿAmr ibn Abī ʿĀšim, and al-Ġudūʿī. Ibn al-Aʿrābī identifies the last four as “Sufis of the Mosque, of *ahl al-sunna wa-l-ḥadīth*, adhering to austerity (*nusuk*) and ordering the good and prohibiting evil (*al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar*). They had weight and prestige in the city.”⁷² As *ahl al-sunna wa-l-ḥadīth*, these Sufis sound close to the Ḥanābila of Baghdad. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal identified his beliefs as those of *ahl al-sunna wa-l-ġamāʿa wa-l-āṭār*.⁷³ As orderers of the good and prohibitors of evil, however, they sound closer to the pre-classical Sufi tradition and more distant from the Ḥanābila, who did not take up the active ordering of the good until the tenth century.⁷⁴

Concerning one of Abū Ḥātim's Baṣran followers, Abū Saʿīd al-Ġanawī, Ibn al-Aʿrābī adds that he “inclined towards something of *kalām* and knew it.”⁷⁵ Again, this does not sound Ḥanbalī, for Aḥmad emphatically rejected all *kalām*. Given the emphatically Sunnī character of Abū Ḥātim's following, al-Ġanawī could hardly have been committed to any other tendency in *kalām* than what I have called the semi-rationalist, of which Muḥāsibī had been a leading adherent; that is, the defence and elaboration of traditionalist doctrines by the means of their rationalist adversaries.⁷⁶

The only one of these Baṣrans I have been able to locate separately in the usual biographical sources is Aḥmad ibn ʿAmr ibn Abī ʿĀšim, namely

⁷²) *Ibid.*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 212. Editor TADMURĪ counts two men, “Aḥmad ibn ʿUmar” and “Ibn Abī ʿĀšim”, where I count one. After my own notes from Köprülü 1071, I read “*yantaḥilūna al-nusuk*” where TADMURĪ has rather *yataḥḥal-lūna*.

⁷³) Aḥmad, Creed I, *apud* Ibn Abī Yaʿlā, *Ṭabaqāt*, I, 31. For the numbering of Aḥmad's creeds, v. Henri LAOUST, *La profession de foi d'Ibn Battā* (Damascus, 1958) xv–xvi.

⁷⁴) On one ninth-century example of ordering the good and prohibiting evil mistakenly taken to be the work of the Ḥanābila, v. Wilferd MADELUNG, “The Vigilante Movement of Sahl b. Salāma al-Khurāsānī and the Origins of Ḥanbalism Reconsidered,” *Journal of Turkish Studies* 14 (1990), 331–37, *contra* Ira M. LAPIDUS, “The Separation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society,” *IJMES* 6 (1975), 363–85, esp. 382–85.

⁷⁵) Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 212.

⁷⁶) V. Christopher MELCHERT, “The Adversaries of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal,” *Arabica* 44 (1997), 234–53.

the Başran traditionist, jurispudent, and renunciant Abū Bakr ibn Abī ʿĀṣim al-Nabīl (d. Isfahan, 287/900).⁷⁷ Among his works now lost are reportedly a huge *Musnad* of 40,000 *ḥadīth* reports and two lesser collections each comprising 20,000.⁷⁸ Compare the *Musnad* of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal at about 28,000 reports, the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Buḥārī at about 7,000. Early biographers Ibn al-Aʿrābī and Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī report that he rejected analogy (*qiyās*) and adhered to the Zāhirī school of jurisprudence; however, Ḍahabī doubts this characterization, for Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim composed a book comprising 40 sound *ḥadīth* reports that Dāwūd had rejected.⁷⁹ One of his extant works is a collection of *ḥadīth* reports used by al-Šāfiʿī.⁸⁰ Probably, indeed, an actual adherent of the Zāhirī school before the eleventh century would have been called a *dāwūdī*, another indication that Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim was not one. But it matters little here, and it is not surprising that someone in this early period should have appeared sometimes a Zāhirī and sometimes a Šāfiʿī, inasmuch as Dāwūd al-Zāhirī himself was something of a Šāfiʿī.⁸¹ What Zāhirism and Šāfiʿism bespeak at this point is the rational manipulation of *ḥadīth* and Qurʾān in jurisprudence, the rational defense of traditionalist doctrines in theology; that is, again, the semi-rationalist position.⁸²

In theology, the *Kitāb al-Sunna* ascribed to Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim seems oddly inconclusive. It comprises mainly *ḥadīth* reports from the Prophet, as one might expect of a Šāfiʿī. It condemns the Qadariya, Rawāfiḍ, and Murǧiʿa but is silent on the questions of *raʾy* (rational speculation as a basis of jurisprudence), the createdness of the Qurʾān and one's pronunciation of it (*lafẓ*), and whether faith comprises both word and deed. (There is one statement that faith increases but does not decrease, a position sometimes associated with Mālik ibn Anas.⁸³) In other words, it seems consist-

⁷⁷) V. GAS, I, 522 and Florian SOBIEHOJ, *Ibn Ḥafīf aš-Šīrāzī* (Stuttgart, 1998), 113–19.

⁷⁸) Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XIII (ed. ʿAlī ABŪ ZAYD, 1403/1983), 436.

⁷⁹) *Ibid.*, XIII, 430–31.

⁸⁰) GAS, I, 522 no. 7.

⁸¹) For example, Dāwūd al-Zāhirī was responsible for the first two biographies of Šāfiʿī: Abū Ishāq al-Šīrāzī, *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ*, ed. Iḥsān ʿABBĀS (Beirut, 1970), 92.

⁸²) On the Zāhirī school, v. Christopher MELCHERT, *The Formation of the Sunni Schools of Law* (Leiden, 1997), 178–90; Devin STEWART, “Muḥammad b. Dāwūd al-Zāhirī's Manual of Jurisprudence,” in Bernard WEISS, ed., *Studies in Islamic Legal Theory* (Leiden, 2002), 99–158.

⁸³) Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim, *K. al-Sunna* (Beirut, 1980), II, 630. Mālik's position is variously reported: that faith increased, while he was reluctant to say whether it de-

ent with a semi-rationalist position but lacks distinctive tenets such as the create pronunciation.

Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim al-Nabīl was appointed *qāḍī* for Iṣfahān in 269/883 by the caliph al-Muʿtamid.⁸⁴ His appointment fits a larger pattern of favour to semi-rationalist Baṣrans, which reached its height under Muʿtamid and his half-brother the shadow caliph al-Muwaffaq.⁸⁵ He was finally removed about 282/895–96 for imprisoning a local renunciant, ʿAlī ibn Mattawayh, who had insulted him in the course of a dispute over stipends to renunciants. (Presumably, Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim was in charge of disbursing them as supervisor of local *awqāf*.)⁸⁶ It is hard to say what he learnt from Abū Ḥatīm al-ʿAṭṭār, though, as the biographies usually stress his discipleship to Abū Turāb al-Naḥṣabī (d. Hijaz, 245/859–60).⁸⁷

As for disciples from outside Baṣra, Ibn al-Aʿrābī also mentions three Baghdadis who came to Baṣra seeking Abū Ḥatīm al-ʿAṭṭār: Muḥammad ibn Wahb, Yaʿqūb al-Zayyāt, and Ruzayq al-Naffāt.⁸⁸ The last I have been unable to identify further. Ġunayd knew the second (d. 280s/894–903), who was disciple to Abū Turāb al-Naḥṣabī as well as to Abū Ḥatīm al-ʿAṭṭār and Abū ʿAlī ibn al-Ḍārī.⁸⁹ The first (d. ca. 270/883–84) is recognizable as an associate of Ġunayd's, Ġunayd overseeing his burial next to Sarī al-Saqāṭī. He was a disciple to the same Abū ʿAlī (ibn) al-Ḍārī as well as to Abū Ḥatīm al-ʿAṭṭār.⁹⁰ Sulamī adds that another Baghdadī

creased (Ibn Wahb, *apud* Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Intiqāʾ* [Cairo, A. H. 1350; repr. Beirut, n. d.], 33); that it increased, while he emphatically refused to talk of decrease (Ibn al-Qāsim, *apud* al-Qāḍī ʿIyād, *Tartīb al-madārik*, ed. Aḥmad Bakīr MAḤMŪD [Beirut, 1967–68?], I, 174); that it decreased but did not increase (Ibn Wahb, *apud* Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, VIII, 59); and, with the traditionalists, that faith was word and deed, increasing and decreasing (al-Qāḍī ʿIyād, *Tartīb*, I, 173–74).

⁸⁴ Abū Nuʿaym, *Geschichte Isbahāns*, ed. Sven DEDERING (Leiden, 1931–34), I, 82; Abū Muṣā al-Madinī, *apud* Ḍahabī, *Siyar*, XIII, 435.

⁸⁵ V. Christopher MELCHERT, “Religious Policies of the Caliphs from al-Mu-tawakkil to al-Muqtadir,” *ILS* 3 (1996), 316–42, at 338–40.

⁸⁶ Abu l-Ṣayḥ, *Ṭabaqāt al-muḥaddithīn bi-Iṣbahān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ġafūr ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Ḥusayn AL-BALŪSHĪ (Beirut, 1412/1992), III, 380–81.

⁸⁷ For biographies of Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim al-Nabīl, v. *GAS*, I, 522, also Ḍahabī, *Tārīḥ*, XXI (A. H. 281–90), 75n.

⁸⁸ Ḍahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 211.

⁸⁹ Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Tārīḥ*, XIV, 408; Ḍahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XXI (A. H. 281–90), 344. Apparently called *Abū* Yaʿqūb al-Zayyāt by Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, X, 223–24, 342, although distinct from the Abū Yaʿqūb al-Zayyāt (d. 262/876) mentioned by Ḍahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 208.

⁹⁰ Al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Tārīḥ*, III, 333.

with a similar name was disciple to Abū Ḥātim, mainly Abū Ğāʿfar Aḥmad ibn Wahb *al-ṣūfī* (d. 270/883–84 or a little after), also associated with Ğunayd in Baghdad.⁹¹ One would guess that Muḥammad and Aḥmad were the same but that al-Ḥaṭīb devotes a separate biography to each of them. Additionally, Quṣayrī describes Abū Turāb al-Naḥṣabī as a disciple to Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār.⁹² The chronology is difficult, so *ṣaḥība* here probably indicates no more than their meeting at some time; indeed, the same might be said of Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim al-Nabīl and Abū Turāb al-Naḥṣabī.

Sulamī actually identifies Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār as *ustād* directly to Ğunayd and Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥarrāz.⁹³ Al-Sarrāğ quotes Ḥarrāz himself as saying:

I heard of Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār and his virtue, he was in Baṣra, so I travelled to him from Old Cairo, continuing until I came to Baṣra and entered its Friday mosque, where I found him sitting with a number of his followers about him ...⁹⁴

The saying he quotes praises God but mainly compliments Ḥarrāz as the one for whom Abū Ḥātim had been teaching. Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī has no entry for Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār, as for few ninth-century Baṣrans in general, but does say of Abū Turāb al-Naḥṣabī that he met an otherwise unknown Abū Ḥamza al-ʿAṭṭār al-Baṣrī.⁹⁵ Textual confusion may have conflated Abū Ḥātim with some Abū Ḥamza.

Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār was distant from Baṣran rivals to Ğunaydī moderation in mysticism, notably certain “spirituals” and possibly Sahl al-Tustarī (d. Baṣra, 283/896?). By the former we may understand the ering minority of Baṣrans who asserted that their love of God had caused the fear of him to fall from them, provoking the rage of another Baṣran renunciant, Ğulām Ḥalīl (d. Baghdad, 275/888).⁹⁶ As for Sahl al-Tustarī,

⁹¹ Sulamī, *apud* al-Ḥaṭīb al-Bağdādī, *Tārīḥ*, V, 190; Dahabī, *Tārīḥ al-islām*, XX (A. H. 261–80), 57.

⁹² Quṣayrī, *al-Risāla* (Cairo, 1359/1940), 18. Cf. *Das Sendschriften al-Quṣayris*, trans. Richard GRAMLICH (Wiesbaden, 1989), 61.

⁹³ Sulamī, *apud* Dahabī, *Tārīḥ*, XV (A. H. 211–20), 212).

⁹⁴ Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥarrāz, *apud* al-Sarrāğ, *The Kitāb al-Lumaʿ*, ed. Reynold Alleyne NICHOLSON (Leiden, 1914; repr. London, 1963), 180.

⁹⁵ Abū Nuʿaym, *Hilya*, X, 220.

⁹⁶ For Ğulām Ḥalīl and his Sufi Inquisition in Baghdad, v. MASSIGNON, *Passion*, index, s.v. Ghulām Khalīl; Carl ERNST, *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism* (Albany, 1985), 101; MELCHERT, “Transition,” 65–66, based again on Ibn al-Aʿrābī as quoted by Dahabī; also GRAMLICH, *Alte Vorbilder*, II, 384–85, s.v. Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī.

it is possible that we have no record of his interacting with Abū Ḥātim merely because Sahl transferred to Baṣra only after his death; however, Sahl did have difficulty from some Baṣran adherents of the nascent Ṣāfiʿī school, which is to say the tendency of Abū Ḥātim's followers.⁹⁷

To conclude, then, Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār emerges as a figure close to Ḡunayd and the Sufis around him in Baghdad, known to some of them personally and teaching similarly. Like the generation of Baghdadis just before Ḡunayd, Abū Ḥātim himself preached a single-minded renunciation with elements that suggest incipient mysticism. Like Ḡunayd and the Sufis around him, Abū Ḥātim's Baṣran followers tended toward Ṣāfiʿī or Mālikī semi-rationalism rather than Ḥanbalī traditionalism. Whatever the personal connection between Ḡunayd and Abū Ḥātim, Ḡunayd certainly associated with a number of Baghdadis who were also at some point close to Abū Ḥātim.

Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār and his circle also provide a thoroughly Sunni basis for the activity of the Ḥanbalī al-Barbahārī in the next century, who led some active ordering the good and prohibiting evil in Baghdad in the 320s/930s, in contravention of the earlier Ḥanbalī tradition as represented by Abū Bakr al-Ḥallāl (d. Baghdad, 311/923).⁹⁸ Ordering the good and prohibiting evil is no longer a defining character of Sufis in the Ḡunaydī tradition, but it would never entirely disappear; for example, the Ḥanbalī ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn ʿAbd Allāh (d. Damascus, 666/1267) was blessed with *aḥwāl* (mystical states) and *karāmāt* (miracles) but was also an active *āmīr bi-l-maʿrūf* (orderer of the good).⁹⁹

⁹⁷) *ET*², s. v. "Sahl al-Tustarī," by G. BÖWERING.

⁹⁸) On Barbahārī, v. *ET*², s. v., by H. LAOUST, and Dahabī, *Siyar*, XIV, 90–93, with references. Cf. Christopher MELCHERT, "Ḥanābila," esp. 366–67, which explains Barbahārī's distinctiveness by his discipleship to Sahl al-Tustarī, overlooking Abū Ḥātim al-ʿAṭṭār. That article is also to be corrected as to the identification of Ḡulām Ḥalīl with Ḥanbalism, not alleged by Wilferd MADELUNG but by Louis MASSIGNON (e.g. *Passion*, I, 80). It has also been alleged anew by Maher JARRAR and Sebastian GÜNTHER, "Ḡulām Ḥalīl und das *Kitāb Ṣarḥ as-sunna*," *ZDMG* 153 (2003), 11–36.

⁹⁹) Ibn Raḡab, *K. al-Dayl ʿalā Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid AL-FIḤ (Cairo, 1952–53; repr. Beirut, n. d.), II, 278.