ABSTRACT

This study argues that mysticism, as found in representations of sanctity (\textit{walāya}) in Sufi philosophy and practice formed the basis of schema of political and economic leadership among the Egyptian elite through a case study of Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt, head of the Wafāʿī brotherhood in Egypt. The study employs an intertextual approach, analyzing resonant narratological themes in sources from a variety of genres of writing, including descriptions of Sufi devotion, certificates of learning (\textit{ijāzāt}), deeds of religious endowment (\textit{awqāf}), biography and hagiography, as well as bureaucratic documents, all of which share a connection to the Wafāʿī brotherhood. Sufi philosophy and practice reflect a view of religious authority as “embodied,” placing the physical bodies of Sufi saints (\textit{awliyāʾ}) rather than conceptual knowledge at the center of institutions for the transmission of authority. The \textit{habitus} of interacting with religious authority as “embodied,” produced particular kinds of political and economic actors. Specifically, the distribution of resources and positions of authority flowed through patron-client networks of exchange made up of a seamless combination of military households and Sufi brotherhoods. The study considers the mechanisms and principles by which an understanding of religious authority as embodied allowed religious elites to participate in the production of a new modern \textit{nizām} (order) without rejection of “tradition.”
For my mother and father
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Introduction

This study is being completed in what feels like a watershed moment in Egyptian politics. The election of Muhammad Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood as the self-described first civilian President in the history of Egypt appointed through a democratic election\(^1\) is a major transition, after decades of support for the authoritarian Mubarak government from American policymakers justified by fear that the democratic process would lead to the Islamization of politics in Egypt. It is difficult to deny that major change is under way in Egypt, but what has been writ large for the world to see, by the vigorous use of social media by Egyptian activists is the lack of clarity, even among closely allied activists, regarding the desired outcomes of the “revolution” much less regarding what the future is most likely to bring. Journalists, activists and intellectuals move between anxiety regarding what appears to be a descent into disorder (with major segments of society expressing nostalgia for the Mubarak regime, the Nasser regime, or even the era of the khedives) and frustration with the slow and arduous pace of change, and the intractability of the old elite, referred to as *falūl* (leftovers, or excrement).

This study centers on the career of the Wafāʾī shaykh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt (d. 1228/1813), who was an important religious and political figure during a period that has also been hailed, though in retrospect, as a watershed moment in Egyptian history. The perception of this period as a watershed can be seen in the common periodization in Western histories of Egypt that place the shift from medieval to modern Egyptian history at the end of Egypt’s occupation by French troops under the leadership of Napoleon Bonaparte from 1798 to 1801.\(^2\) The Bonaparte watershed thesis has rubbed some contemporary historians the

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\(^1\) In his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, September 26, 2012, Morsi stated, “I am the first civilian Egyptian president elected democratically and freely, following a great, peaceful revolution.”

\(^2\) Popular works such as P.J. Vatikiotis, *The History of Modern Egypt: From Muhammad Ali to Mubarak* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) are based on this periodization.
wrong way, as it gives implicit support for Eurocentric ideas that modernization, and even change itself is a European import. The approach to unpacking the Bonaparte baggage has typically been to demonstrate that some of the economic and political changes that are hailed as evidence of the deep and lasting influence of the brief French occupation are in fact continuations of trends that started in the eighteenth century. Albert Hourani was probably the first to do this, and many other studies followed this line of argument. For example, Cuno argues that some of the economic changes associated with the modernization of the Egyptian economy, such as a purposeful shift toward the production of goods for trade, and the accompanying efforts at rationalizing agriculture were continuous with earlier trends. ʿAlī Bey Baltut Kapan (d. 1187/1773) made independent deals with European merchants to expand trade, and allow trade through Suez against Ottoman injunctions. Similarly, his successor, Muḥammad Bey Abū al-Dahab (d. 1189/1775) continued to pursue policies meant to expand trade and centralize control of what is now Egypt.

Egyptian “nationalist” historians, also view this period as a watershed transition from the old and stagnant to the new and progressive. However, their periodization places the turning point a few years later, after the departure of the French troops, at the investiture of Muḥammad

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3 For an overview of this periodization and its detractors, see Dror Ze’eve, “Back to Napoleon? Thoughts on the Beginning of the Modern Era in the Middle East.” Mediterranean Historical Review 19, no.1 (June 2004): 73-94.
6 Also known as ʿAlī Bey al-Kabīr. He is known for his ambitious character, and his attempt to separate Egypt from the Ottoman Empire and restore the Mamluk Sultanate. See Michael Winter, Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 1517-1798 (London and New York: Routledge, 1992): 25.
7 Muḥammad Bey eventually betrayed ʿAlī Bey after having been sent on a (successful) campaign to take control of Syria in 1770. He claimed that the reason he had to take ʿAlī Bey down was because he was surrounding himself with Christians, advisors Egyptian and foreign, and some Europeans to advise about the military. Further, he had made an alliance with Russia against the Ottomans. So when Muḥammad Bey took over, he pledge submission to the Sultan and paid his remittances (taxes owed)
8 The concept of “nationalist historiography” is put forth by Khalid Fahmy in All the Pasha’s Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002).
'Alī Bāshā as governor of Egypt in 1220/1805. This periodization is reflected in the work of the Egyptian historian, reformer, and bureaucrat, ‘Alī Mubārak (d. 1311/1893). For him, the turn of the nineteenth century was no less than a transition from the stagnation and backwardness that he describes as the state of affairs under Ottoman sovereignty, to expansion and progress, as Egypt became increasingly oriented toward European styles of social organization. Marsot has even asserted that his vision was so clearly progressive as to have seized the imagination of the general population: “the people [supported Muḥammad ‘Alī] because he promised a new departure for them.”

The argument of historical continuity is also used by revisionist historiographers of this period to discredit the view of Muḥammad ‘Alī’s leadership as a radical break with the past. For example, though he is typically given credit for enacting a nationalist vision by using this stronger army to wrest increased autonomy from Istanbul, and to centralize control over the rural parts of Egypt. However, before the arrival of the French in Egypt, local governors, such as ‘Alī Bey made significant efforts toward centralization, using military force to bring more areas under the control of the government in Cairo. Fahmy adds to this by showing that the institutional changes that Mubārak attributes to the Bāshā’s desire for national progress, even in the field of education, were merely a means of strengthening the military, and asserting greater independence from the Ottoman empire, just as centuries of mamluk governors before him had done. From this perspective, the change that occurred under Muḥammad ‘Alī was the result of his taking full advantage of the new ways of organizing material resources that resulted from the globalization of trade in order to pursue goals that were hardly progressive.

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11 Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men*. 
Fahmy’s study is particularly important, as it suggests that Muḥammad ‘Alī undertook the importation of Western European institutions to achieve ends that could only be understood within the Egyptian-Ottoman context. That is, administrative tools for the rationalization of agriculture and the inscription and training of soldiers and bureaucrats, were undertaken not for the principles of “nationalism” or “progress,” which may have been the buzz words of the day in France, but in order to achieve outcomes that were considered worthwhile from within cultural schema completely alien to the Western European context. In other words, just as the watershed periodization is problematized by policies considered to be “modern” that predate Napoleon and Muḥammad ‘Alī, it also fails to provide a useful framework for understanding “traditional” values and institutions that persist, even as they change and adapt, beside new ones.

If the conventional wisdom hails either Bonaparte or Muḥammad ‘Alī as the engine behind progress in Egypt, religious scholars (the ulamā’), or religion itself is typically blamed for what are perceived as setbacks in the Egyptian nation’s march of progress. Religious education is viewed as a fundamentally conservative force, by which scholars “perpetuated the Islamic belief system and attained the continuity of society,”\textsuperscript{12} or, more specifically, “their own vested interests.”\textsuperscript{13} Nineteenth century reformers like Mohammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905)\textsuperscript{14} wrote passionately against taqlīd, by which he meant the blind adherence to tradition, which he saw as typical of the scholarly culture of the religious elite.\textsuperscript{15} Elsewhere, the religious elite are portrayed as a group lacking the flexibility and intelligence to respond to their waning influence in an

\textsuperscript{13} Marsot, \textit{Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali}, 43.
\textsuperscript{14} ‘Abduh studied logic, philosophy and mysticism at al-Azhar. He was exiled 1882 for his participation in the ‘Urabi Revolt, lived in Lebanon and Paris, and returned to Egypt in 1888, where he worked as a judge and a muftī (legal counselor).
ideological manner, and thus resorting to mere political obstructionism.\textsuperscript{16} Crecelius goes so far as to describes the emergence of this fundamental division in Egyptian society as a watershed of its own, as a society that was once homogeneous and traditional, became “bifurcated” after the arrival of the French, so that the two groups coexisted “centuries apart.”\textsuperscript{17}

From the historical record, it is unclear that there was any meaningful resistance from the religious elite as a class to reform. On the contrary, biographical details suggest that some of the most prominent members of the religious elite had already begun to integrate modern subjects into the curriculum in the eighteenth century. The Shaykh Aḥmad al-‘Arūsī, rector of al-Azhar from 1192/1778 to 1208/1793, did not find any problem in principle with the teaching of non-religious sciences, and suggested during his tenure that medicine be added to the curriculum of al-Azhar.\textsuperscript{18} When Muḥammad ‘Alī first opened the military schools, they were staffed in part with talented students and teachers from al-Azhar university, Cairo’s premier madrasa, or school for the religious sciences. Even the rector of al-Azhar, Ḥassan al-‘Āṭṭār (d. 1245/1830), acted as a lecturer for the exams in the medical school, and spoke in support of the study of medicine in general. He also had close acquaintances with French scholars,\textsuperscript{19} and is credited with encouraging Rifā‘a Rāfi‘ al-Tahtāwī to accompany Muḥammad ‘Alī’s mission to France as Imam in 1241/1826.\textsuperscript{20} ‘Abd al-Karīm asserts that ‘Āṭṭār’s interest in “modern” education and

\textsuperscript{17} Crecelius, “The Ulama and the State,” 122. Voll argues that this dichotomy is rooted in the Ottoman historical experience. Selim III (d. 1223/1808) attempted to adopt Western institutions wholesale, as the \textit{nizām i-jedid} (the new order). This effort was violently rejected by the religious establishment, leading to the overthrow of Selim III by the Janissaries, the local notables, with the support of the ‘ulamā‘, ending his \textit{nizām-i-jedid}. See John Voll, \textit{Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World} Syracuse University Press, second ed., 1994): 36.
“Western” sciences was not perceived as impiety.  

Yousef has shown that even into the nineteenth century, the distinction between shaykh and bureaucrat, traditional and modern, was not clear.  

What most of these histories that attempt to address this perplexing periodization of modernity in Egypt share is that their approach focuses on the interrogation of policies, that is, the actions and their purpose as made explicit in khedival decrees, institutional plans and procedures, administrative policies, or even military plans. What can be missed in such analyses are the cultural schema—the collection of principles that are the starting point for distinguishing a good policy from a bad one—that form the backdrop for these policies. Because the principles that make up cultural schema are, to those raised up in it, so obvious that they need not be articulated, cultural schema are by definition not explained for the outsider, but are immanent in practice. Bourdieu calls such beliefs doxa. The participation of the religious elite in implementing new forms of institutional organization suggests that just as historians have foisted the social value of progress onto Muḥammad ʿAlī, we have imagined its opposite, “backwardness” as the orientation of the religious elite. This study will argue that religious, military and other elites in Egypt at this watershed moment operated from shared, if evolving, understandings about social values, expectations, and norms. Further, it will be argued that many of the principles that formed the moral basis of the economic, political and social order were influenced by beliefs about the nature of the relationship of human beings to the divine referred to in what follows as “mysticism.”

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21 ‘Abd al-Karīm. Taʾlīm, 590.
Mysticism, Sufism and walāya

Taṣawwuf, transliterated as Sufism, is sometimes translated as “Islamic mysticism,” by analogy to parallel practices and beliefs within other major religious traditions. Some scholars of Islam have questioned the usefulness of mysticism as a concept for the study of Islamic belief and practice as an historical phenomenon, because it contributes to a tendency to reify taṣawwuf and read it outside its sociopolitical and historical context. It will be useful, for the purposes of this study, to use the term “Sufi” (a term which has proven to be equally problematic for different reasons) only to denote those practices, institutions and individuals that are explicitly associated with al-ṭuruq al-ṣufiyya, or the Sufi brotherhoods in Egypt. The term “mysticism” will be used to denote the epistemology (that is, a set of ideas about reality, and about the ways through which that reality can be known) that underpinned practice within the Sufi milieu. In its most basic sense, this mystical epistemology can be summarized as the belief that absolute reality (ḥaqīqa) is divine, and that it is possible to have a direct experience of that divinity. This most basic and abstract belief forms the foundation for a variety of practices undertaken by the devout with the intention of to bringing themselves into a state in which an experience of this Reality is possible. In the literature on taṣawwuf, those engaged in these practices are described with various metaphors of a journey, as sālikīn (voyagers) yaslukūn al-ṭarīq (traveling the narrow path) toward that Reality, that is, toward God.


The state of “being close,” or “drawing close” to this Reality is referred to as walāya, and people who are viewed as having a place of privileged proximity to God are referred to as awliyā’ (the singular form is wali). The term wali is often rendered into English as “saint” by analogy to Christian saints, because of some common features, including the role of the awliyā’ as exemplary models, teachers, intercessors and means to divine power, miracle-workers, ascetics, and sources of divine wisdom. An important difference is that, in the absence of any process of canonization in the Islamic tradition, walāya has a relative and progressive quality. A similar observation can be made about the use of the term taṣawwuf (purification) which is a set of practices, as opposed to a state of being ṣūfī (pure). In manuals from this period, the terms wali or ṣūfī are used to honor someone who is understood to have reached some state of proximity or purity. What is striking in descriptions of practices that promised spiritual progress along this path to God, and in the documents that attest to religious authority, is the primacy of place given to physical intimacy with the sanctified bodies of the awliyā’ Allāh, those viewed as particularly close to God, his “friends.” More important than any concept, ruling or report that could be learned from an esteemed teacher was the time spent bayn yadayhi, between his hands.

This brief description makes no claims at being a comprehensive overview of mysticism as a universal phenomenon. Rather, its goal is to establish the focus of the study on these basic principles about the relationship of human beings to divinity that organized religious authority in Egypt at the turn of the nineteenth century. It will be argued that mysticism, defined in the

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28 In his ‘Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn fil-dhikr wa-turuq al-ilbās wal-talqīn, Zabīdī refers to several individuals as “al-shaykh al-ṣūfī.” Some examples include his teacher Muzjājī (Ibid., 56), and another, Mawqārī: the Sheikh al-ṣūfī al-mashīkh al-mashīkh, Zabīdī (Ibid., 57) and Marzūqī (Ibid., 70), and al-Sammān as the Sheikh al-ṣūfī al-mashīkh al-mashīkh (Ibid., 71). The work is edited and published in Abit Yaşar Koçak “Murtaza ez-Zebîdî ve ikd el-cevher es-semîn’i” (PhD diss., İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986): 1-150.
broadest sense as ascribing to the belief that Reality is divine, that it is accessible only to some, and that it is accessed through physical proximity, was the outlook of the vast majority of the Egyptian population. In this sense, a mystical worldview cut across classes and institutions. Furthermore, this worldview informed the most basic principles of the cultural schema that organized political, economic and social life in Egypt at this time. Just as students of religion believed that their spiritual progress resided literally and figuratively between the hands of their teachers, so individuals of all walks of life looked to cultivate relationships of trust and intimacy with the sources of more material blessing outside the Sufi milieu.

Methodology: An intertextual approach

It has been argued above that a deeper understanding of the individual actions that make up the process of historical change requires that one look beyond policy statements about what is good or desirable to practice itself. Because this study seeks to “observe” practices from centuries ago, it is left to draw upon the idealized representations of practice found in manuals describing the proper performance of ritual, as well as hagiography. Such an analysis does not require that these representations be accurate, and, indeed, hagiography includes accounts of supernatural events that defy modern sensibilities about the limits of historical reality. Still, these representations give insight into principles of social organization, insofar as they express those qualities that the people and communities that produce them cherish most.29 Some practices that are described but not explained in eighteenth century sources are given a theoretical context with reference to classic works of theology that were commonly studied in Egypt in the period under

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This approach is the starting point for grasping the philosophical framework through which actions which may appear to outsiders as irrational can be better understood from within the schema in which they were actually enacted. Furthermore, every attempt is made to express historical phenomena using the Arabic concepts found in these texts, rather than expressing them by imperfect analogy to Western cultural forms through translation. This approach brings out the striking lexical and metaphorical resonances between religious and official texts.

The first three chapters work toward two main goals. First, they attempt to articulate the unarticulated *axia* that unite the many varieties of belief and practice that made up the landscape of religious authority in Egypt during this period through analysis of discourse in three genres of Islamic writing. Chapter one focuses on a manual of Sufi devotion that describes rituals of initiation, teaching and *dhikr* (meditative practices of remembrance) in detail. Chapter two analyzes certificates of learning (*ijāzāt*) produced by scholars at al-Azhar, while chapter three reads the hagiography of Shams al-Dīn Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt. Because all three of these genres of writing were concerned with the assertion or cultivation of religious authority, their deconstruction unveils the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin the authority of religious elites in this period. A second goal of these chapters is to demonstrate the prevalence of what is described as a mystical world view in elite culture in Egypt at this time.

The last three chapters show that this mystical worldview also structured relationships outside the Sufi milieu by considering resonant narratological themes across sources from a variety of genres of writing. Themes of mysticism expressed in devotional writings are also

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30 Works by well-known theorists such as al-Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī (d. between 295/905 and 300/910), Muḥyī al-Dīn Muhammad b. ‘Arabī (d. 638/1240) are categorized in the literature as *al-ṭaṣawwuf al-falsafi*.

31 The term and the methodology were introduced by Jaques Derrida in *Of Grammatology*, originally published in 1967.
expressed in government documents granting the right to ownership of iltizām, or tax farms to religious elites, and deeds of religious endowment (awqāf), all of which share a connection to the Wafā’ti brotherhood. Ideas about sanctity are seen to exercise a productive power expressed through practices outside the Sufi milieu. The political and economic importance of mysticism was thus in informing “social processes and systems of knowledge through which meaning is produced, fixed, lived, experienced, and transformed.”32 Ideas about authority articulated only in philosophical works were internalized through day to day interaction with mystical authority, such that the scope of its influence extended into all aspects of social life. As such, mysticism functioned as what Messick calls a “total discourse,”33 in that it served not only as a way of understanding the relationship of humanity to divinity, but also provided the organizing principles for a broader social understanding of authority, and its proper deployment for the moral good in academic, spiritual, economic and political realms of action. The association of hierarchies in secular spheres with notions of sanctity served to consecrate the existing social order, asserting the conformity of temporal social hierarchies, as well as inequalities in terms of social mobility and the distribution of resources, to a divine will and order.

Finally, by considering continuity and change through the period of so-called “reform” under Muḥammad ʿAlī, the chapters will show that understanding the particular view of religious authority that flows from the epistemology of mysticism helps to explain how the religious elite could so blithely participate in reforms that, in retrospect, undermined their previously privileged position in economic and political structures.

The first chapter explores conceptions of sanctity reflected in the writings of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, a prominent contemporary of Abū al-Anwār. Zabīdī’s ‘Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn, completed in 1181/1768, describes various rituals performed by pious scholars in addition to the obligatory rituals that form the “pillars” of Islamic practice. Focusing on the ritual of clasping hands in the bay’a, the chapter argues that the rituals of taṣawwuf described by Zabīdī express a “pedagogy of proximity,” by which physical closeness to the awliyā’ was understood to be the means of attaining proximity (qurba) to the sources of divine guidance and blessing, and thereby an elevated level of sanctity (walāya). The chapter further argues that sanctity was viewed as “embodied” in that a broad range of authoritatively roles were understood to converge in the sanctified bodies of the awliyā’. Being “between the hands” of the wālī meant learning fiqh (understanding) of the sharī’ā, but also learning by inculcation through companionship (ṣuḥba). Furthermore, the metaphor of being “between hands” evokes an idealized relationship between a biological father and son. The wālī-as-father in the walāya paradigm is owed obedience and submission, and the murīd (disciple or follower) is rewarded with the material and spiritual welfare that flow from qurba (proximity) to the shaykh. Zabīdī’s ‘Iqd attests to the many varieties of practice that were considered to be valid ways (ṭuruq) toward a unified Reality (ḥaqīqa). Still, the idea of authority flowing through physical proximity was a unifying element, so deeply internalized that it is implicit in all of the rituals that Zabīdī describes, even when not expressed explicitly.

The second chapter provides discursive evidence that walāya, far from being a paradigm for authority only among marginal social groups, was critical in defining religious authority and

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34 Muhammad b. Ṭabd al-Razzāq al-Husaynī al-Zabīdī, known as Murtadā al-Zabīdī (d.1205/1790) was of Indian origin, and trained as a Ḥanafī scholar. He published prolifically in lexicography, linguistics, ḥadīth, genealogy, biographies and personal histories.

35 Obligatory rituals include the profession of faith or shahāda, performance of ṣalāt, that is, the five daily prayers, fasting in Ramadān, the paying of alms (zakāt) and the performance of ḥajj.
the mechanism for its transmission among the elite ulamā’. The chapter uses the ijāza of the Shaykh Ḍhāt al-Iṣkandarī al-Ṣabbāgh, an index of his scholarly efforts in the fields that he labels shar‘i sciences36 along with other Azharī ijāzāt, to argue that conceptions of walāya underpinned many of the pedagogical practices of the leading shuyūkh at al-Azhar. Many of the works studied in such ijāzāt are in the field of taṣawwuf, and many of the teachers are marked as awliyā’. More importantly, the majority of salāsil (chains of transmission) in the field of ḥadīth are valued for expressing proximity to the sanctified body of the shaykh, rather than for their importance in deriving rulings in the field of fiqh.37 This suggests that being “between the hands” of a teacher of fiqh was valued not only for whatever conceptual learning was accomplished, but also for the authority transmitted through physical proximity to the sanctified body of the wali as teacher. Thus, while any eager student could conceivably learn the fine points of the law by finding explanations in a book, the process of initiation as an authoritative member of the religious elite required physical proximity to the bodies of the awliyā’.

The third chapter will argue that the same ideas about proximity expressed in earlier chapters is expressed in schema of leadership based on the principle that authority flows through proximity to the awliyā’. In this schema, the claims to walāya that entitled the religious elite to posts of religious authority were asserted through a broad range of personal ties. Abū al-Anwār is shown to have demonstrated his connection to the awliyā’ through genealogical ties such as biological claims, student-teacher relationships, his chain (silsila) of esoteric initiation, and his appointment in a line of representatives (khulafā’) of the founder. Through discussion of Abū al-

36 According to Ṣabbāgh, the shar‘i sciences include “tawḥīd (theology), tafsīr (exegesis), ḥadīth (reports of the deeds and sayings of the Prophet), fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and [its] statutes (ṣafā‘i’d) among others.” See “Ijāzat al-shaykh al-Iṣkandarī al-Ṣabbāgh” (Azhar, Majāmī’ 1444/3606): 15.

Anwār’s efforts to secure various posts of authority based on his genealogical pedigree, including the positions of *shaykh al-sajjāda al-Wafā’iyya* (head of the Wafā’ī brotherhood) and *naqīb al-ashrāf* (chief of the nobility), it is argued that despite the attempts of religious elites to project these ties as natural and impervious to contest, entitlement to posts of religious authority had to be actively asserted. This had the result that horizontal relationships played an important role in the cultivation of *walāya*. Horizontal ties included those of companionship (*ṣuḥba*), patronage and service to the military elite, to other members of the religious elite, and to his followers (*tābi‘ūn*). In Abū al-Anwār’s social milieu, the sum of these horizontal and genealogical ties is a collection of social relationships referred to as the *bayt* or household.

Chapter four compares themes across chronicles and hagiography to view the role of the *awliyā’* in politics through the lens of *karamāt*. Though this term is sometimes translated as “miracles,” this chapter argues that the close relationship between “nobility” and “generosity” expressed in the Arabic term includes a variety of mundane (that is, not supernatural) acts that are viewed as *karamāt* because they are perceived as generous. Specifically, Abū al-Anwār and others viewed in his day as *awliyā’* were understood to contribute to the day-to-day maintenance of social order by the miraculous ability of intercession (*shafā‘a*) to resolve situations of dispute or confusion. From the crisis of leadership in 1200/1786, to the disastrous flood and plague of 1790-91, the crisis of French occupation and the ascendancy of Muḥammad ‘Alī to power in 1805, Abū al-Anwār and other *awliyā’* are shown to play a pivotal role in mediating these conflicts. By situating *karamāt* temporally in times of crisis, the chapter shows that even in well-established elite brotherhoods like the Wafā’iyya, charismatic acts, in which religious elite assert their authority against the will of the governors, were essential to maintaining the status as a holy person.
Chapter five argues that another manifestation of *walāya* was through *karamāt* as material generosity of the shaykh. This can be seen in the importance of the public presentation of a combination of services (*khadāmāt*) to the prestige of a holy family. These included the provision of sessions of *dhikr* rituals of remembrance of God, the maintenance of shrines for the purpose of *ziyāra* (visitation of the deceased *walī*) and *tarbiya* or the training of initiates. Of increasing importance in this period was the expression of sanctity through hospitality (also expressed as *khidma*). The rivalry between the Wafā’īyya and the Bakriyya brotherhoods for control of economic resources, including *awqāf*, *iltizām*, and *manzil* (the family home) shows that *walāya* had come to be indistinguishable from the prestige of the household (*bayt*) by the lifetime of Abū al-Anwār. The rivalry also brings to light the principles at play in what can be classified as a “good faith” economy, in that there is a sense of the complete interchangeability of the material capital of resources with the symbolic capital of prestige, expressed as the sanctity of the *bayt* or household. This can be seen most clearly in Jabartī’s perception of Abū al-Anwār’s lavish expenditure at the al-Ḥusayn *mawlid* as an act of aggression against the Bakriyya. Furthermore, the relationship between Abū al-Anwār as *multazim* comes to be fully integrated with his social role as a *walī*, such that labor on the *iltizām* and the payment of taxes came to be expressed as a form of piety. Abū al-Anwār’s failure to project the bounty expected of a *walī* through acts of conspicuous generosity led to a loss of prestige from which the Wafā’ī household would never recover. Finally, the chapter argues that because the *awliyā’* were viewed as stewards and not owners of their property, the nationalization of the *awqāf* in 1809, typically characterized by historians as the “breaking the power of the ulamā’” may not have been as dramatic a blow as assumed. Indeed, many families continued to enjoy hereditary appointment of

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the nāẓir of these institutions, and financial patronage from the military governors over the course of the nineteenth century.

In chapter six it is argued that learning, like multiple other functions that typically took place in endowed institutions, was considered to be one among many karamāt of the shaykh. As such, learning was understood to flow not from the endowment of buildings, but from the bodies of the awliyā’ that passed through them. It is argued that the new military schools were not seen as a threat to the authority of the religious elite. On the contrary, the religious elite worked to demonstrate their ability to make their customary practice legible to outsiders by instituting new administrative practices coming into vogue in the interest of order (nizām). The Azhar reform law of 1288/1872, as well as a maḥḍar issued in 1263/1847 are analyzed as processes of “disembodiment” because they served to shift authority from the relative and subjective sanctity of the individual, to limited and abstract expectations of a post in an institution. Ironically, efforts on the part of the awliyā’ to be more “orderly” eventually sealed off physical and discursive spaces in which creative and spontaneous responses to emerging communal and personal crises, articulated as karamāt, could be manifested.

In the conclusion, the notions of reform and progress themselves will be interrogated by placing the values and beliefs that underpin them in conversation with the epistemology referred to as mysticism. The values and beliefs associated with Sufism present a philosophical challenge to the “metaphysics of modernity” that drove the colonial project in the nineteenth century. In contemporary Egypt, Sufi institutions also present an institutional challenge, as they continue to play a role in the ordering of social life where the modern nation state has failed.
Chapter 1

Mystical authority embodied: the concept of walāya and Zabīdī’s pedagogy of proximity

In his *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, Trimingham attempts to give coherence to the complex and fragmented history of diverse practices and institutions associated with Islamic mysticism across Muslim-majority societies. To him, the story of the development of belief and practice associated with Sufism over the centuries is a story of a golden age, followed by what he describes as a gradual decline. According to him, one way in which Sufism declined was that over the course of the Ottoman period, classical mysticism had been overtaken by “popular” forces, and had become the religion of the common people. His evidence for this is that during the Ottoman period, Sufism became increasingly intertwined with the cult of Muslim saints, the awliyā’. Indeed, the Egyptian brotherhoods in the eighteenth century were deeply integrated with the saint cult. But it is questionable whether this integration should be seen as evidence of popularization defined as a movement away from the philosophical heritage of Sufism. The concept of sainthood or sanctity (walāya) as an important theme in philosophical Sufism. Philosophers developed theories about the different ways that God communicates with the awliyā’ (holy

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1 Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders*, 103.
2 This view is also expressed less directly by Lane, who labels many of the practices associated with Sufism “superstitions,” to distinguish them from beliefs that are the result of refined intellectual processes, in Edward William Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London: A. Gardner, 1898): 223. Lane made the observations he records in this work while living in Egypt from 1825-1835. Trimingham also distinguishes between ritual practices understood to lead to the experience of divine reality, over the theoretical, philosophical articulation of these truths in *Sufi Orders*, 107.
3 The term walāya is often rendered into English as “sainthood” by analogy to Christian saints, because of some common features, including their roles as exemplary models, teachers, intercessors and means to divine power, miracle-workers, ascetics, and sources of divine wisdom. For a discussion of similarities across saintly traditions, see Hawley, ed. *Saints and Virtues*.
4 The work of scholars who employed the deductive approach associated with neoplatonic rationalism to answer questions about the relationship of mankind to God and His universe is labeled in eighteenth century Sufism al-taṣawwuf al-falsafi.
people) and prophets, including *waḥy* (communication of the sort received by prophets), *ilhām* (divine inspiration), and *firāsa* (clairvoyance or intuitive discernment), and the relative qualities and merits of each. There is a particular emphasis on the question of the differences between *walāya* (sanctity) and *nubuwwa* (prophethood), which important figures in the Islamic heritage should be associated with each, and which is superior. Philosopher-mystics such as al-Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī (d. between 295/905 and 300/910) and Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Arabī (d. 638/1240) discuss in detail the location of the *awliyā’* in the physical universe, their number, and their role not only in the present, but in the history of creation and at the end of time. Tirmidhī developed the concept of a *quṭb* (an axis or pole) of which there was only one at a time, which would be replaced in each age until the end of time, when a final *walī, khātim al-awliyā’* (the seal of the Saints) would play an important cosmic role parallel to that of Muḥammad, *khātim al-anbiyā’* (the seal of the prophets). Ibn ‘Arabī expanded this with an incredibly complex discussion of the components of a *dīwān al-awliyā’* or “Congress of Saints” that sorted these individuals into classes and levels of saints, adding below the *quṭb* several other rankings or levels of saints including the “rescue” (*ghawth*), “outstanding” (*akhyār*), “devoted” (*abrār*), “pegs” (*awtād*), “chiefs” (*nuqabā’*) and “replacements” (*abdāl*) including exact numbers of each. For Ibn ‘Arabī, the highest station was the “Station of Proximity” (*maqām al-qurba*) the location of the highest *awliyā’*, including the prophets.

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6 A thorough survey of the early literature regarding *walāya* can be found in McGregor, *Sanctity and Mysticism*, 9-26.

7 Christopher S. Taylor *In the Vicinity of the Righteous* (Leiden: Brill, 1999): 82. Other commonly debated aspects of Sufi theology and practice include the tripartite theory of the soul as *nafs* (ego-self), *qalb* (heart) and *rūh* (spirit). This paradigm was introduced by Ja'afar al-Sadiq (d. 765), and taken up by Muḥāsibī (d. 857), Abū Yazīd al-Bistāmī (d. 877), Tirmidhī (d. 905), Junayd (d. 910) and Qushayrī (d. 1074). Also important were theories of the states (*ahwāl*). See Robert Rozehnal, *Islamic Sufism Unbound: Politics and Piety in Twenty-First Century Pakistan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
This chapter will argue that diverse practices for the cultivation of religious authority in the Sufi milieu in which Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt functioned, including expectations for relationships between teachers and students, prayers and meditations, and the veneration of the awliyā’ living and dead, reflect implicit beliefs about the nature of sanctity very similar to those made explicit and brought to bear on broader metaphysical questions in theoretical works of philosophical Sufism. The phenomenon that Trimingham sees as a popularization, then, is not the emergence of the concept of walāya, but the fact that this concept came to be widely accepted and propagated in the form of ritual practice rather than in theoretical or philosophical discussions. Trimingham perceives the marginalization, and in some cases, even stigmatization of theoretical articulations of mystical principles as an enormous loss to the Islamic intellectual tradition, while he places little value on the survival of these principles in practice in the rituals for the veneration of the awliyā’ (the cult of saints).

Abū al-Anwār was not a productive writer, and did not leave behind any descriptions of ideal ritual practice within the Wafā‘iyya. For this reason, the consideration of practices for the cultivation and transmission of religious authority in the milieu in which Abū al-Anwār functioned as head of the Wafā‘ī brotherhood, and the implicit principles they embody, will be based on descriptions in Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī’s ‘Īqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn, a manual of Sufi devotions. Zabīdī is particularly suited to act as a murshid (guide) as he was among Abū al-Anwār’s most prominent scholarly companions. Zabīdī had also been a student and admirer of Abū al-Anwār’s predecessor in the position of head of the Wafā‘īyya, Abū al-Hādī. Furthermore, besides his Sufi credentials, Zabīdī was an accomplished scholar in the fields of ḥadīth and

For the most comprehensive survey of philosophies of walāya, see Michel Chodkiewicz, Le Sceau des saints: prophé'tie et saintété dans la doctrine d’Ibn Arabi (Paris: Gallimard, 1986).

8 Few of the heads of the Wafā‘ī brotherhood were. See McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 57.
Arabic language. Zabīdī’s ‘Iqd was completed in 1181/1768⁹ as an elaborate answer to a question put to him by one of his associates, who wished to be initiated into a Sufi way. It includes discussions of dhikr (and its inculation), giving al-bay’a (allegiance), being dressed in the khirqa (the robes of the brotherhood), and Zabīdī’s extensive collection of chains of transmission of authority (salāsil) from his many teachers, on the authority of their teachers. In the ‘Iqd, Zabīdī draws upon a broad spectrum of Sufi experts, often quoting them at great length. The most extensively quoted is al-Simaṭ al-mujayyid of Safī al-Dīn al-Qushāshī (d.1071/1661),¹⁰ sometimes cited from al-Jawāhir of Ghawth al-Shaṭṭārī.¹¹ He also uses Miftāḥ al-falāḥ by the early Shādhilī Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 709/1309),¹² among others.¹³

Focusing on the ritual of the handshake as sealing the bay’a, (pledge of allegiance) between the murīd (disciple or initiate) and his shaykh,¹⁴ it will be argued that in the ‘Iqd, true knowledge is represented as embodied, rather than conceptual. Where conceptual knowledge, or

¹⁰ Safiyy al-Dīn al-Qushāshī was the muftī of both the Mālikī and Shāfī’ī madhhab in Medina. He is grandson of Shihābud-dīn Aḥmad, also known as Aḥmad al-Dajānī who was known for having visions of the Prophet, was recognized in his day as quṭb by his followers, and was put in charge of the waqf of Mt. Zion by the Ottoman Sultan Sulaymān the Magnificent in the mid-Sixteenth century. Qushāshī’s father, Yūnus, moved from Jerusalem to Medina, where Qushāshī grew into one of the most important scholars in that area. He and his student, Kurānī, formed an important link between the Sufism of Southeast Asia and that of Arabia. His teachers were Ḥanbaṭī followers of Ibn ‘Arabī. He wore the khirqah from Shāṭṭārī’s line. Qushāshī traced his authority through a silsila of ancestors and teachers to Ibn ‘Arabī.
¹¹ Muhammad al-Ghawth Gwāliyārī (d. 1563), referred to by Zabīdī as al-Qushāshī as a common link in the chains of many later silsilas of the so-called Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya, including the Ṣamānīyya (founded by ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Sammān). Qushāshī traced his authority through a silsila of ancestors and teachers to Ibn ‘Arabī. Muhammad al-Ghawth Gwāliyārī was famous as a scholar and teacher of Mālikī fiqh and Sufism. His Miftāḥ al-falāḥ is a treatise on the proper performance of dhikr derived from the practice of Abū al-Ḥassan al-Shāḥīḥ, founder of the Shāḥīḥī tariqa, and his successor, Abū al-‘Abbās al-Mursī.
¹² Born in Alexandria, Ibn ‘Aṭī Allāh al-Iskandarī was famous as a scholar and teacher of Mālikī fiqh and Sufism. His Miftāḥ al-falāḥ is a treatise on the proper performance of dhikr derived from the practice of Abū al-Ḥassan al-Shāḥīḥ, founder of the Shāḥīḥī tariqa, and his successor, Abū al-‘Abbās al-Mursī.
¹⁴ In this section Zabīdī borrows extensively from al-Jawāhir al-Khams, meaning The Five Jewels (original Persian written 1549, translated to Arabic by Šibghat Allah [d.1606]) written by M. al-Ghawth Gwāliyārī (d. 1563), quoting Qushāshī.

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understanding (fiqh) is transmitted through verbal expression, embodied knowledge is transmitted through physical closeness (qurba). From this perspective, sanctity (walāya) is primarily a state of the body, specifically of being physically “close,” or in “proximity.” In translations of the oft quoted line from Sūrat Yūnus (10:62), this proximity often rendered as fellowship or friendship: “Remember, there is no fear nor regret for the friends of God.”\(^{15}\) The phrase developed into an epithet of wālī Allāh for holy people, also rendered in English as “friends of God.”\(^{16}\) It will be argued that this underlying theme of embodiment is what links diverse experiences, including fanā’ (extinction into God) the transmission of blessing (baraka) by means of the bodies of His friends (al-awliyā’), and emulation of the way (ṭarīqa) in which the shaykh does things, through inculcation in the context of a relationship of ṣuḥba (companionship). The analysis will focus on the ritual of the handshake, and its record in the form of the silsila. Because the many teaching rituals share a fundamental understanding that true knowledge comes through cultivating a distinctly physical intimacy to the sources of divine knowledge, this epistemology of walāya is referred to as a “pedagogy of proximity.”

While acknowledging that different forms of belief and practice continued to exist simultaneously, Trimingham divides the developments in Sufism since the earliest Islamic centuries into four stages. Mysticism originated as simply personal contemplation, loosely organized around an enlightened master, but free of any formalized religious institution.\(^{17}\) In the


\(^{17}\) Trimingham, Sufi orders, 2.
fifth/eleventh century, organized “convents” (*khanqâh*) emerged, followed by the development of formalized “schools” of Sufism (*ṭuruq*) with a more standardized doctrine and method in the ninth/thirteenth century, recorded in the form of chains of transmission (*salāsil*). Finally, the rise of the Ottoman Empire, beginning in the fifteenth century witnessed the development of the more formalized brotherhoods he terms *tā'īfa*. In this stage, besides the fuller integration of the cult of saints, the requirement of initiation and allegiance became widespread, and the brotherhoods took a more rigid ritual and organizational form. This description of the development of Sufi practice risks giving the false impression that earlier forms of practice became extinguished with the rise of new institutions for worship and learning. This chapter will argue that the diverse practices that Trimingham describes as chronological stages—personal contemplation, the collection of formalized ways in the form of chains of transmission (*salāsil*), initiation and allegiance, and the belief in ongoing walāya (sainthood)—are represented in Zabīdī’s *‘Iqd* as coeval. Though Trimingham may be accurate in his description of the periodization of the emergence of new modes of learning and worship, the emergence of new forms does not seem to have lead to the extinction of earlier ones. Specifically, Zabīdī represents solitary meditation, the collection of chains of transmission, and absolute obedience to a living master as different ways of cultivating proximity to a unified *haqīqa* (Reality, or absolute Truth), rather than contradictory in meaning and purpose.

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18 Trimingham explains this development as parallel to the purposeful funding of *madrasa* or teaching colleges under the Seljuks with the purpose of standardizing religious doctrine against the popularity of Shi’ism. They also funded *khânâqah*, making Sufism seem more “respectable” to legalists (Ibid., 8-9). He views the mysticism of the brotherhoods as serving “to fill the gap left through the suppression of Shi’i sectarianism” (Ibid., 11).

19 (Ibid., 10). The *Ţariqa* is a “traced-out Way” (Ibid., 29) as opposed to the less formal and more mobile education of traveling mystics that preceded this period.

20 He associates this development with the influence of guild structures on the *khângâh*, leading to the adoption of the rigid hierarchies typical of relationships of master and apprentice in the trades (Ibid., 14 and 24-5). In other words, to him, “*Ţariqa* is the method, *tâ’īfa* is the organization,” (Ibid., 67).

21 Though Trimingham acknowledges the coexistence in later periods of all of the earlier forms of organization for learning mystical philosophy and practices labeled *taşavvuf*, his periodization downplays this complexity.
Indeed, the possibility of a diversity of practices is itself an important component of this epistemology of walāya. This tolerant disposition to apparently contradictory practices allowed space for the possibility of change through time in practice without a clear rejection of earlier traditions. Specifically, the increasing popularity of the practice of solitary dhikr for the purpose of connecting with the body of the Prophet associated with the ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya is seen by Trimingham as evidence of a move away from the silsila and by extension a rejection of the restriction of personal freedom that he sees as one of the key characteristics of ṭarīqa Sufism. However, solitary dhikr is represented by Zabīdī in the ‘Iqd as compatible with the extensive collections of salāsil, and rituals that seal the murīd in a relationship of absolute obedience to the master.

The nature of knowledge: fiqh versus fanā’

The ‘Iqd is a practical manual, and not a work of philosophical mysticism. However, ideas about the nature of knowledge can be read by placing the practices he describes in conversation with theoretical discussions of the nature of knowledge found in earlier works of philosophical Sufism that were popular with Zabīdī and his contemporaries. Zabīdī sometimes gives a theoretical or theological justification for the rituals he describes, with reference to those philosophical writings most widely read in his day, but more often merely nods to these discussions with common aphoristic statements (ḥikam), which set the context for ritual practices in the form of formulaic introduction. These shorthand versions of accepted wisdoms are uttered and written

22 This discussion uses the works of early Shādhilī khulafā’, as well as that of Suhrwardī (see note 81 below), the writings of the most popular philosophers, Ibn ‘Arabī and al-Ḥākim al-Tirmīdhī, as well as Ghazālī.

23 For example, Zabīdī references ideas about the existence of secret truths in the physical hearts of God’s elect with the phrase: “the breasts of the free are a tomb of secrets.”
in prayers and supplications, and in the introductions to texts. Their value lies not in their novelty, but in that they express truths that are simultaneously common and familiar, but also inaccessible in their deepest meaning to the uninitiated. Reading epistemology through a work whose primary purpose is to describe rituals of initiation and learning for aspiring Sufis (murīdīn) gives insight not only into the principles of the schema in which Zabīdī and Abū al-Anwār asserted themselves as religious authorities, but also reveals how these ideas about knowledge translated into practice.

Zabīdī describes a broad range of practices for learning and transmitting authority, among them the clasping of hands in the bay’a or pledge of allegiance. When describing the process Zabīdī explains:

فَاذَا قَبِلَ الشَّيْخُ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ وَارْتَضَاهُ وَصُوْرَةُ الْبَيْعَةِ أَنْ يَضُعَ الْمَرِيدُ يَدَيْهِ جَمِيعًا بَيْنَ يَدَيِّ الشَّيْخَ وَيَحْيَطُ الشَّيْخُ بِيَدَيْهِ تَفَاوُلًا بِقِبْوَلِهِ وَاسْتَعَابَ الْقِبْوَلِ كَلِتَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ الْظَّاهِرَةُ وَالْبَاطِنَةُ

When the shaykh accepts the bay’a from him, and favors him for it, then he makes a pledge to him, and the manner of the pledge [bay’a] is that the murīd puts both his hands between the hands of the shaykh, and the shaykh covers them with his hands, signaling his acceptance of him. This acceptance includes both of his hands, the exterior (al-zāhir) and the interior (al-bāṭina).

The terms, ẓāhir and bāṭin are commonly used to explain a principle of Sufi exegesis, by which the language of revelation is understood to be miraculous precisely because it reveals multiple ẓāhir (apparent) and bāṭin (metaphorical or esoteric) meanings, all of which are simultaneously true. The distinction between bāṭin and ẓāhir can also be elucidated by Sufi exegesis of the story of al-Khiḍr (or al-Khāḍir). In the Iqd, al-Khiḍr appears as a teacher in one of Zabīdī’s

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24 Trimingham argues that the bay’a which came to predominate Sufi practice across the Muslim world was initially adopted from Shi’ī practice after it became submerged at the beginning of the Seljuk period in Persia in Trimingham, Sufi Orders, 14.
25 Zabīdī, Iqd, 16-17.
salāsil, but he is also identified in exegetical works with a Qur’anic figure described as simply “a servant of God” who acts as Moses’ guide in Sūrat al-Kahf. In the parable, al-Khiḍr agrees to give Moses guidance on the condition that he not question the actions of his guide. Moses objects as al-Khiḍr sinks a ship, kills a young man, and builds a wall without taking payment for his work. When al-Khiḍr explains each act, it becomes clear how his greater knowledge of circumstance makes apparently bad actions good. Al-Khiḍr refers to his knowledge as ta’wil which can be understood to mean simply explanation or interpretation, but is rendered by Sufi exegetes as indicating his knowledge of the esoteric or bāṭin meaning of things.

This dichotomy has also been extended to classify different kinds of knowledge of religious truth. Knowledge of jurisprudence, or fiqh is sometimes represented as apparent (zāhir) knowledge that a teacher may pass on to a student through regular instruction through hearing, reading, or memorizing great books in the shar’ī sciences. It is significant that the prophet in the parable is Moses, who received the Law as simple rules literally written in stone. He represents the most rigid understanding of moral behavior. As such, he was unable to understand the subtleties of circumstance that make it conceivable that apparently random or irrational acts may actually represent the greater good. The contrast between these two approaches to morality in

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28 (18:65) “Then they found one of Our votaries, whom We had blessed and given knowledge from Us.” Translation from Ali, Al-Qur’ān, 256. This is based on a well-accepted hadīth. See Stefan Wild “Al-Kidr” from Oliver Leaman (ed.) The Qur’ān, an Encyclopedia (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2006): 343-4.
31 Another reading of this story by Sufi exegetes is that it signals the need for a spiritual guide. See Blain H. Auer, Symbols of Authority in Medieval Islam: History, Religion and Muslim Legitimacy in the Delhi Sultanate (London: I.B.Tauris, 2012): 82.
the parable demonstrates that “divine omniscient justice prevails against the limitations of human understanding, and divine knowledge transcends all human knowledge.”

This is not to assert that Sufism is fundamentally antinomian, actively refuting the consensus of legal scholars. The importance of the study of *fiqh* and the *sharī‘i* sciences, is well documented in the writings of scholars of Sufism. An example is the common saying: “He who claims to know the secrets of the Koran without having mastered the exoteric commentaries of the Book can be compared to one who claims to have reached the innermost part of a house without having passed through its door.” However, such knowledge is understood to be, by nature, *ẓannī* (speculative or probable) because it is the product of human understanding. The sense that any derivation of *sharī‘a* was subject to some margin of error is a mainstream Islamic concept, and is cited as the rationale behind the plurality of the schools of Islamic *fiqh*. This sense of approaching but never reaching certainty is best expressed in the convention of closing of a legal ruling: *wa-llāhu ‘ālim* (and God knows best). Thus, *fiqh* knowledge is what is achieved through a process of analysis and understanding, the use of the ‘*aqil* (mental faculties). Indeed, one translation of the word *fiqh* is “understanding.” The epistemological importance of al-Khidr is as a personification of the inherently limited nature of legal articulations of righteousness. While the law is seen as an indispensable foundation, *sharī‘a-as-fiqh* is understood to be the human application of divine ordinance to the condition of a temporal context. It addresses itself to the “world of the senses” and is thus subordinate to a more universal *ḥaqīqa* that is not bound

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32 Wild, “Al-Khidr,” 344
33 Attributed to the Iraqi Sufi Alūsī (d. 1853) as cited in Geoffroy et. al., *Introduction to Sufism*, 42.
34 See Wael B. Hallaq, “Can the Shari’a Be Restored?” in *Islamic Law and the Challenges of Modernity* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004).
35 “*Fiqh* … usually translated by the term Islamic law, is really a process of discerning what religious conduct is, what the sources of such knowledge are, and what the consequent statutes must be…” A. Kevin Reinhart “Islamic Law as Islamic Ethics” *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 11, No. 2 (Fall, 1983): 188.
by context and material conditions. If this zāhir knowledge of fiqh is about abstraction through
cognition or understanding, the writings of Zabīdī and others represent esoteric or bāṭin
knowledge as embodied. This can be seen in a variety of metaphors of physical connection which
are staple themes in writing about Sufism to express an epistemological distinction between fiqh
(understanding), and a knowledge of this esoteric (bāṭin) Truth that can be experienced but not
articulated. These include the metaphor of mushāhida (witnessing), of fanā’ (extinction or
extinguishing of the self into God), and of truth as a light, with its location in the physical heart,
as opposed to the mind.

Zabīdī describes the experience of “extinction” into God (fanā’) in distinctly physical
terms: “[God] connects with them [the awliyā’] after having cut them off, and separates them
after having united with them.” Ibn Bakhīla (d. 733/1332), one of the Shādhilī shaykhs in the
Wafā’ī silsila describes the knowledge that comes through the level of qurba known as fanā’ as
“witnessing”. According to him, by losing oneself in God, the walī becomes a true witness of
God, and thereby privy to mysterious knowledge (‘ārif) about Him, and about the ineffable
secrets of the Qur’ān. Ibn ‘Āṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 709/1309) calls the state of those who
have experienced “the extinction (fanā’) in man of his ego from the world, and his subsequent
unity in God” the walāya of certainty (walāyat al-yaqīn). He contrasts this with what he calls a
walāya of faith (walāyat al-īmān) in which the believer works in the way of God with faith in his
retribution. Thus, on an epistemological level, the discourse of walāya in the Shādhilī tradition
links absolute proximity (fanā’) with absolute certainty (yaqīn). This idea of certainty stands in

36 Geoffroy, Introduction to Sufism, 59.
38 Ibn Bakhīla, ‘Uyūn al-Haqā’iq as discussed in McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 36.
contrast to the ḣannī (probable or speculative) knowledge achieved through fiqh (understanding).

Ibn ‘Arabī refers to this non-conceptual, ineffable knowledge of ḥaqīqa as:

“a reality that sights and insights (al-absār wa al-basā’ir) are utterly unable to see, nor can mental powers and minds stumble upon its knowledge except through a divine bestowal and token of the All-Merciful’s generosity towards him whom He nourishes among His servants, and who was fore-chosen for this at the time he was summoned to witness. He then came to know – when He was given to know – that the Godhead devised this allotment and that it is one of the refinements of the One Who is without beginning.”

An eighteenth century ijāza echoes this theme of a divine reality that cannot be understood with the rational mind with the common aphorism: “Indeed, God is hidden from the minds just as he is hidden from sight.” That this ineffable knowledge is transmitted through the experience of physical proximity is also reflected in prayers asking for qurba. In the opening prayers of an eighteenth century Egyptian ‘ahd, the concepts of qurba and fanā’ are invoked together:

فافنا نفسه في مساعدة مولاه فالبسبه ثياب النقا فقبريته بجنيه ووالاه، سقاه من شراب جنة، وجعله من أهل وده

Extinguish his nafs into his master’s guidance, dress him in the robes of purity, bring him close to his side, and into his guardianship. Give him to drink from the drink of paradise and make him one of those who are loved by means of his proximity. I witness that there is no God but God alone, He has no partner.

Another metaphor of the body used to express this kind of knowing through physical proximity and witnessing, and without the mental faculties of conceptualization, is of knowing in the heart (qalb) as opposed to the mind (‘aql). A twentieth century Shādhilī shaykh expressed this theme of ineffable knowledge having its location in the heart: “The human mind is limited, he said. There are things it cannot know or embrace, but the human heart can know directly from God.”

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40 Ibn ‘Arabī al-Futuḥāt al-Makkiyya, as cited in Hoffman, Sufism Mystics and Saints, 172.
42 From the “Ijāzat Sharunbābilī” (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, Taṣawwuf Taṭmūr): 81.
43 Hoffman, Sufism, Mystics, and Saints, 35.
Zabīdī describes the feeling of the effect of fanā’ on the heart as a distinctly visceral experience: “the heart comes to life because of much dhikr, until it moves like a fetus in its mother… until the person doing the dhikr becomes the dhikr or becomes one with his heart. If he has this feeling, then this is an unveiling called fanā’, the beginning of the road toward God.44

The expression of knowledge of al-ḥaqīqa (here expressed as enlightenment, or fath) as acquired through the physical experience of proximity is also present in the most famous prayer composed by Muḥammad Wafā, sometimes called Ḥizb al-Fath (the prayer of enlightenment or revelation), which begs for this blessing of qurba through a series of repetitive supplications:

وادي لنا في استغراق رؤية ذلك بنور المعرف والمشاهدة اللهم
استغرق أنفسنا وعقلنا وقلوبنا وأرواحنا وأسرارنا في أنوار جمالك وجمالك والبسنا خلع الكمال وافتنا
في نور التوحيد وابتغينا بك ونمثنا منك وفهمنا نك وعيننا الأبود
واحينا بروح القرب ونفحنا بروح الشوق
واحجب أبصارنا بأنوار جمالك عن مشاهدة الايام وضيق علينا
بشريك حتى نشهدك أقرب اليها من كل شيء

Lead us to drown in the vision of it, by the light of [mysterious] knowledge (al-ma’rif) and witnessing. O God, drown our [ego] selves and our minds and our hearts and our souls and our secrets in the lights of your beauty and greatness and dress us, stripping us down completely, and make us dissolve (iftanā) in the light of unity, and make us remain in you, and make us hear from you and make us understand about you, and make us see in your company, and make us live in the spirit of proximity and inspire us with the spirit of desire, and hide our sight with the light of your beauty from witnessing the others and close in on us with your proximity until we see you as closer to us than everything [else].

Another prominent theme in this prayer is the comparison of this mysterious knowledge to light. In only a few lines, light is associated with knowledge of mysteries (ma’rif), the beauty (jamāl) and majesty (jalāl) of God, and his unity (tawhīd) into which the supplicant is asking to be dissolved, echoing the concept of fanā’ in order to remain in existence (baqā’) in God. Ghazālī contrasts the light of ma’rifā with conceptual knowledge citing the ḥadīth: “knowledge is not the
knowing of so many traditions, but a light that floods the heart.”

Similarly, in his commentary on *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*, Zabīdī, states, “it is said: knowledge is light God pours into the hearts of his awliyā’...it is not every heart into which light is poured.” The view of the light of knowledge as a substance poured into the physical being of the walī is continuous with the theme of physical proximity as the mechanism for the transmission of knowledge.

Knowledge of the deeper Reality (*ḥaqīqa*) that is God is most clearly separated from cognitive intelligence in the trope of the *majdhūb*, which is given theoretical articulation in the writings of al-Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī (d. between 295/905 and 300/910). According to him, unlike pious people who attempt to understand the revelations though their rational faculties, and the explanations of books and teachers, or follow the normal path to initiation through learning, practice and imitation, a *majdhūb* is “drawn” to God by His generosity. Thus one who is *majdhūb* is able to “travel the path swiftly, by the grace of God and his gifts.”

Zabīdī includes the *salāsil* of several teaching awliyā’ who he refers to as “*majdhūb,*** but in practice, some individuals who would be categorized today as afflicted with mental illness were sometimes identified as *majdhūbīn*, as described by Lane:

“An idiot or fool is vulgarly regarded by them as a being whose mind is in heaven, while his grosser parts mingles among ordinary mortals; consequently he is considered an especial favorite of heaven...A reputed saint is often called “sheykh,” murābit, or “welee.” If afflicted with lunacy or idiocy, or of weak intellect, he is also, and more properly, termed “megzoob.”

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49 Lane, *Manners and Customs*, 234-5. Italics in original. Both Emile Dermenghem and Louis Massignon described the Egyptian *majdhūb* as a court fool.
According to Tirmidhī, the student of fiqh may, through striving, eventually win the favor of God and be granted qurba out of His compassion (raḥma). The best that such a student can achieve through his own effort is to become wali ḥaqq allāh (the guardian of God’s rights), that is, he who protects and keeps those divine commands that constitute the sharī’a. However, even if he is of inferior intelligence, Tirmidhī views he who is majdhūb to God as wali allāh ḥaqqān (the true friend of God), the closer and more holy of the two. Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī also articulates these two forms of walāya into a theoretical hierarchy. One who is pulled (majdhūb) toward God by His will is in a “greater” mode of walāya (walāya kubrā), and the one who wins God’s generosity through striving is in the “lesser” mode (walāya ṣughrā). In either case, qurba is represented as a kind of blessing, contingent on the divine will.

**Pedagogy of proximity: diverse ways to God**

This epistemology, by which true knowledge is non-conceptual and located in the physical body, underpins a variety of rituals for the cultivation of religious authority described by Zabīdī. Beyond their importance in understanding religious practice in this period, these rituals also give insight into the way that the religious elite understood the basis of their authority as political brokers, managers of the affairs of their followers and economic agents, as will be seen in following chapters. After the clasping of hands, Zabīdī states that the murīd should recite some words with his shaykh, including verse ten from Sūrat al-Fatḥ:

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إن الذين يبايعونك إنما يبايعون الله يد الله فوق أيديهم فمن نكث فإنما ينكث على نفسه
ومن أوفي بما عهد عليه الله فسيؤتاه أجر أعظم
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51 Laṭā’if al-minān as discussed in McGregor. Sanctity and Mysticism, 38. McGregor speculates that this two-tiered conception of walāya may have been due to the emergence of the Sufi brotherhood, an organization that individuals could join in order to participate in practices intended to bring them into closer relationship to divinity, its secrets and blessings.
Those who swear allegiance to you indeed swear allegiance to God; and God’s Protection is over them. Then whosoever breaks the promise, breaks it to his own loss; but whosoever fulfills the promise made to God will receive a great reward from Him.\(^5^2\)

The recitation of this \textit{sūra} as one of the ritual steps of the \textit{bay’a} underscores the role of the shaykh as \textit{khalīfa},\(^5^3\) or proxy for the Prophet, by analogy to the role of the Prophet as proxy for God in the text of the \textit{sūra}. The \textit{murīd}, upon touching the hand of his shaykh, is initiated into a line of covenants reaching back to the covenant between the Prophet and his followers, and before that, between man and God.\(^5^4\) Though the translation quoted here has rendered the symbolic meaning of the pact between God and the person swearing allegiance to avoid anthropomorphism, a more literal translation would render the verse as “\textit{God’s hand is over their hand.}” Thus, by drawing close to the body of the shaykh, the \textit{murīd} is understood to be drawing physically closer to God. It is in this sense that, to Zabīdī, the role of the Prophet and the role of the shaykh are similar. Both serve the function of bringing the believer closer to God:

\[\text{وقد يطلق على الشيخ الوسيلة وراثة أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يصح أن يكون وسيلة صالة بالوضع الألامي}\]

“The shaykh may be called the means, in terms of heritage, just as it is correct that the Prophet (Peace and blessings upon him) be a means of connecting to the divine location.”

Furthermore, this statement expresses the view that the \textit{awliyā’} are seen as the heirs\(^5^6\) of the Prophet, sharing the trait of \textit{qurba} to God.

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\(^5^3\) \textit{Khalīfa} was also a post in the formalized brotherhood organization, as discussed in chapter four.

\(^5^4\) All of humankind is described as \textit{khalīfa} of God elsewhere in the \textit{Qur’ān}, for example, in the context of creation: إني جاعل في الأرض خليفة (\textit{Qur’ān}, 2:30).


\(^5^6\) \textit{Walāya} is often expressed through this metaphor of inheritance. Ibn ‘Arabī describes \textit{walāya} as the \textit{wirātha}, or heritage of the prophets. When he discusses this term, he means that each \textit{wāli} is the bearer of the authority of one of the prophets from before the lifetime of Muḥammad, \textit{khātim al-awliyā’}. Only Muḥammad, \textit{khātim al-anbiyā’} inherited the totality of states and knowledge of all of the prophets. See William C. Chittick, \textit{Ibn ʻArabi: Heir to the Prophets} (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005): 12. In \textit{Laṭā’if al-minan}, Mursī (d. 686/1287) states that \textit{karamāt} (miracles) of
This line of covenants is recorded in the form of a silsila (a chain) for the transmission of authority, or of esoteric initiation. Each shaykh in a given silsila is a step in a chain reaching back to God. In his ‘Iqd, Zabīdī meticulously documents the hands that he takes, and the hands that they have taken, through his collection of salāsil.\(^{57}\) He includes a total of one hundred and twenty seven transmissions, recording the hands he took, and the hands for which those hands stood as proxies in the section he calls salāsil ahl al-tawhīd (chains of transmission from the monotheists).

Zabīdī distinguishes those chains in which a relatively small number of transmitters are required to reach the origin of the authority of the chain as mutaqaddim (preferred). Such chains were preferred because they conferred qurba in terms of a greater generational proximity to the Prophet.\(^{58}\) The ranking of Muslims in terms of generations (ṭabaqāt) of separation from the source of authority is as old as the ranking of the generations after the death of the Prophet as companions, followers, and followers of the followers. In this schema, the chronological closeness of generations is conceived not as “a numerical abstraction measured solely in years and centuries. Instead, the passage of time is indicated through human lifespans whose sequencing brings one close to the Prophet’s body.”\(^{59}\) The collection of salāsil acted not only as a record of all the prominent hands that Zabīdī shook throughout his career, but also a text-ritual. It was both an assertion of religious accomplishment, and a means of drawing closer to God in and of itself.

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the saints are mu’jiza (miracles) of the Prophet, since they are his followers. Similarly, Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 855/1451) states in his Durrat al-Asrār that Shādhilī viewed every wali as endowed from the Prophet. see McGregor. Sanctity and Mysticism, 41.

\(^{57}\) A similar purpose is served by his collection of the biographies of all of his associations, his Mu’jam, which was meant to be an historical account of his very personal network of teachers, students, friends, visitors, patrons. See Reichmuth Zabīdī, 50.


The importance of physical proximity to the walī, and by means of him to other awliyā’ and to the Prophet is also expressed through the concept of baraka or tabarruk (blessing), which Zabīdī explains is one of the explicit goals of the collection of salāsil. The concept of baraka is pervasive in Zabīdī’s manual, though not explained or described anywhere. Baraka is most commonly associated with rituals of visitation (ziyāra) of tombs of the saints or awliyā’. In the context of ziyāra, baraka is the spiritual power of the walī which can be transmitted through physical proximity (qurba), to ordinary people simply by touching the body of the saint or even something that he touched or that belonged to him. After his death, visitors to the tombs of the awliyā’ understand that they can receive the blessing of the walī by approaching or touching his tomb. The physical nature of baraka, as something “contagious” is also described by Kugle in his analysis of visitors to a tomb of a Shādhilī walī in Tunisia. Visitors understood foods including olive oil left in a bowl on the tomb as absorbing the baraka of the walī, infusing it, just as the chilis soaking in the oil were meant to do, and passing it on to the bodies of visitors to the shrine.

A few transmissions recorded by Zabīdī in his ‘Iqd are clearly distinguished as transmissions of tabarruk, such as one of several transmissions for the Zanfaliyya, a branch of the Aḥmadiyya in Egypt. In an ijāza from the eighteenth century, tabarruk as the purpose of the certificate is also made explicit: “He asked for an ijāza from me, wishing for righteousness and baraka.” Thus, beyond its symbolic value, as the acknowledgement of, or analogy to, other relationships of authority and benefit, the handshake in and of itself was seen to be a means of

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64 طلب مني الإجازة راجيا’ راحة اليمن والبركة” (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, Mustaṭaḥ al-Ḥadīth Ṭalāʾat 2475, Taṣawwuf Ṭalāʾat 1590, microfilm 336).
benefit, through baraka that could be accessed through touch. This interaction, and the blessing that flowed from it, were understood to be enshrined in the silsila.

The term ṭarīqa is sometimes used to refer the highly structured initiatory organizations characterized in Egypt by well-defined administrative relationships, and mechanisms for the acquisition and use of resources, and can therefore be rendered into English as “order” or “brotherhood.” Zabīdī mentions having “taken” (akhadha) one hundred and twenty-seven ṭuruq in his Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn, suggesting that the term has a far broader meaning than exclusive initiatory organizations. In some cases, when Zabīdī speaks of transmitting a ṭarīqa, he is referring to specific sets of prayers or recitations, and the particular way in which they are used. When used to give this sense, the term ṭarīqa is best rendered as “devotional path,”65 that is, the legacy of teachings associated with a particular master, or his “way” of moving toward God.66

Though Zabīdī’s enthusiasm for the collection of salāsil is particularly marked in a survey of his work,67 it is also a part of a general trend in the period, such that records of salāsil appear in an increasing number of eighteenth century works on Sufism in book form, as catalogues meant for circulation.68 In such works, a variety of salāsil, from multiple brotherhoods are gathered together, “tying it into a single package for further transmission.”69 Zabīdī distinguishes those individuals who have taken multiple chains through multiple ṭuruq as mutawātir.70 This echoes the terminology of ḥadīth criticism, by which knowledge of the truth of

66 This meaning is also emphasized by Najjār. al-Ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya fī Miṣr, 26-7.
67 For a complete annotated survey of Zabīdī’s writings see Reichmuth, Zabīdī.
68 For example, Jabartī mentions that his father received a “book of authorizations” from ‘Abdallah b. Sālim al- Başrī, a prominent teacher of ḥadīth in Voll, “‘Abdallah Ibn Salim al-Basri,” 358. Other similar transmissions were called fihāris.
69 Reichmuth, Zabīdī, 50.
70 Zabīdī, Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn, 46.
a given ḥadīth was understood to approach certainty by its repetition through the multiple, distinct, corroborating lines of transmission. While there were historically debates regarding exactly how many reports qualified a given ḥadīth as mutawātir, jurisprudents agreed that they could experience, after hearing a given report enough times from enough transmitters, a sense of certainty as to its veracity.71 By the eighteenth century, this had developed into a general pedagogical principle in the study of mystical ways (ṭuruq) by which “a book read again with a shaykh of higher status than before becomes more certain knowledge and learning on a higher level.”72 By extension, each of the ārūq that end at the Prophet reinforces the relationship of the student to him. In this way, the different ṭuruq with their varied prayers, rituals, practices and scholarly heritage appear to be understood as multiple complementary ways to a unified ḥaqīqa. An oft quoted hadith attributed to the Prophet is “there are as many ways to God as there are souls of men”, or “The Ways to God are as numerous as the breaths of mankind.”73

Emulation of the ways of the body: ṣuḥba (companionship)

Besides the importance of qurba for blessing, Zabīdī also expresses the process of accumulating actual knowledge of the sunna as embodied, through the institution of ṣuḥba (companionship). Zabīdī distinguishes only three of well over one hundred transmissions as a transmission of fellowship (ṭarīqat ṣuḥba). These include his initiation into the Zarūqīyya, in which each link in

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73 The popularity of the hadith may have originated with Najm al-dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221) founder of the Kubrāwīyya. See Mitchell Ginsberg, The Inner Palace : Mirrors of Psychospirituality in Divine and Sacred Wisdom-Traditions (Nevada City, CA: Blue Dolphin Publishers, 2003): 286. The hadith is rendered elsewhere as ṭarīqat ṣuḥba. Geoffroy records the expression of this epistemological orientation valuing a diverse collection of practices geometrically: The apparent (zāhir) elements form a circle, at the center of which is Truth (ḥaqīqa). The ways from the zāhir to ḥaqīqa are multivalent, but share their orientation the center of the circle, in Introduction to Sufism, 9.
the chain is expressed as “and he was the fellow of…” (wa huwa ṣaḥbat...). Other chains mention the relationship between certain links in the chain as ṣuḥba such as in his transmission for the Zīla'īyya branch of the Qādiriyya, in which the relationship between only two of the transmitters is distinguished as being a relationship of ṣuḥba. In his discussion of the two different ways (ṭuruq) through which he took initiation into to the Shādhilī brotherhood, Zabīdī distinguishes his silsila for “companionship and emulation” from a separate silsila for “blessing and inculcation.” In the legal sciences as well, the term ṣāḥaba (and its synonym lāzama) “denote the notion of following or adhering to a master in a constant and exclusive way, devoting themselves to working under his direction.”

The view that a certain kind of knowledge is transmitted through ṣuḥba is expressed in writings that were popular among Zabīdī and his contemporaries. Abū al-Najīb Suhrawardī, whose manual of Sufi devotion is mentioned and cited in the ‘Iqd, states that praxis, or embodied...
knowledge of the way to behave was understood to be acquired through constant companionship (ṣuḥba or lāzima) and emulation. In his Kitāb ādāb al-murīdīn. He explains that the first stages of gaining knowledge involve the imitation of the practice of the shaykh. He mentions hygiene, the performance of rituals, dress, poverty, and meditation on one’s personal shortcomings with the guidance of the shaykh, referring to the following ḥadīth: “knowledge (meaning ‘ilm) calls out to praxis (meaning ‘amal), but if the latter does not respond, knowledge will go away.”

He views the akhlāq (character, disposition, or nature) contained in the bodies of the awliyā’ as both part of God’s revelation and the means to reaching Him, by making a clear connection between the akhlāq of the masters and the sunna of the Prophet: “The characters (akhlāq) of the masters have been polished through their perfection in modeling themselves after the Messenger of God, peace and blessings upon him. They are the most successful of people in revivifying his sunna, in all that he commanded and commissioned, censured and enjoined.”

Companionship was also one of the main functions of Sufi lodges. These were spaces meant to house and provide for large numbers of fuqarā’ (students of Sufism). Zawāyā that served a resident community often belonged to a particular ṭarīqa, or Sufi brotherhood. The primary function of such spaces was to bring bodies together for extended periods of time, or, in the words of Trimingham, for Sufis “to live a common life under discipline.” This common life consisted of a highly regimented internal order, in which rules of everyday behavior were clearly

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83 These institutions will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four.
85 Trimingham, Sufi Orders, 170.
defined. As such, the zāwiya served as the location for the transmission through inculcation of Sufism as a set of practices, passed on from teacher to student through practical training or tarbiya. McGregor argues that tarbiya was in fact the earliest form of Sufi practice. It was only later that a theory of tarbiya was developed in relation to broader metaphysical issues and theoretical questions. The unity of routine and the constant proximity self-consciously created a sense of brotherhood among those residing there. It also honed mundane day-to-day actions into a kind of ritualized unity under the direction of the shaykh that produced a homogeneity of minute bodily habits among the fiqarā’ that may have enhanced this sense of family-like similarity (familiarity). Such relationships developed between individuals living together in a variety of institutions endowed to support students of religion, be it a zāwiya, an endowed madrassa or kuttāb, or in the riwāq (study spaces) of al-Azhar. Such intimacy and trust between people who are not biologically related has been described as a kind of “spiritual kinship.”

The importance of this intimacy of companionship is expressed in popular metaphors. Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī described the ideal relationship between God, the shaykh and his disciples as analogous to the cock, hen and egg. The shaykh must “enter the dominion of the cock and submit fully to it, so that the cock’s workings upon it attain perfection. It will then produce eggs and be able to brood on them.” This metaphor powerfully captures the physical intimacy of the interaction by comparing it to sexual intercourse, as well as the degree of ego-negation, as the shaykh puts himself in the place of a passive female in intercourse, and finally, the indispensable role of the shaykh in passing on this “perfection” to his disciple, the metaphorical egg, which

87 It was only in the third/ninth century that writings on the philosophy behind Sufi practice came into full articulation. McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 4.
88 Reeves, Hidden Government, 208-09.
89 Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 654/1256) was born in Iran and traveled widely. He was a disciple of the founder of the Kubrawiyya brotherhood, and a student of Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234). He is best known for his work on Sufism entitled Mirshad al-‘Ībād min al-mabdā’ ilā al-ma‘ad, from which this quote is taken. Malamud, “Gender and Spiritual Self-Fashioning,” 96.
must pass through the natural stages toward maturity. This requisite intimacy made this special embodied knowledge more available to the children of the shaykh, and other close relatives, as well as friends and their children. It also excluded women almost completely from these lines of intimate males because of social taboos regarding the mixing of unrelated men and women so entrenched in Islamic gender culture that they need not be elaborated here.

This “metaphysics of presence,” or preference for the presence of a teacher over the written word may be seen as a superstition, but contemporary work in anthropology suggests that bodily dispositions and behaviors experienced as “natural” are in fact culturally contingent and learned, just as are those values and ideas articulated and passed on through verbal expression. Bourdieu calls such bodily dispositions, gestures and practices *habitus* and argues that these are also the mechanism for the transmission of the unconscious beliefs and values that underpin them. Unlike conceptual knowledge, beliefs passed on by *habitus* are learned through practice and imitation, conscious and unconscious. Bourdieu calls the beliefs that are transmitted through *habitus doxa* “so as to distinguish it from an orthodox or heterodox belief implying awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs.” Along with gestures and habits, beliefs and values as *doxa* can be completely mastered without ever being verbalized, explained or studied. Because they are not verbalized, and thus are beyond dispute and discussion, such beliefs are assumed to be universal and unquestionable, common-sensical.

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91 Derrida argues that the preference for presence in ancient philosophy stemmed from the belief that spoken word was the essence of the thing signified by the text. It followed that the closer the text is to the one whose speech it is supposed to represent, the more completely it will be represented. This view is the basis for the preference among scholars of the Platonic tradition that a teacher be present when students were reading a text. Jaques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, trans. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974): 49. This preference is expressed in the tradition of *ḥadīth* criticism in the preference for *qara’a ‘ala*, meaning, to read a text to the author or teacher, over *wajada* or “finding” a *ḥadīth* in a text.

92 Bourdieu’s concept builds upon the earlier work of Maus and others’ writing on body technique. For a review of the literature on the social body and Sufism, see Kugle, *Sufis and Saints’ Bodies*.

Such concepts are therefore necessarily absent from explicit discussion. According to Bourdieu, *habitus* and *doxa*, so far as they are internalized and embodied in a person, form a set of dispositions through which he or she interacts with his or her social reality. Pinto calls the phenomenon in Sufism “embodied correctness, a normative framework of cognitive categories, practical dispositions, and power relations that constitute the moral aspects of a social actor’s conception of self.”

*Doxa* is also supportive of the *status quo*, favoring the power of those already in power and the submission of those already expected to be submissive.

The concept of *sunna* itself is based on the belief that the habits, gestures and even tastes and preferences of the body of the Prophet were a form of revelation containing important moral content complimentary to the Qur’anic speech. As it was articulated in a Sufi *ijāza* from the eighteenth century, God is “the Reality towards which the ancient *sunna* points.” Yet another resonant layer of significance in the clasping of hands to signify allegiance is that it is *sunna*, since it is the way that reports have described individuals offering allegiance to Muḥammad. The most famous is the first *bayʾat al-ʾAqaba*, in which several people from Yathrib pledged allegiance to Muḥammad through clasping hands. In turn, the rightly guided *khulafāʾ* took *bayʾa* from their followers in the same manner. Both the terms *sunna* and *ṭarīqa* carry an etymological relationship to the sense of a *path* or *way*, referring to both the way that the body of a sanctified person did things, and to the more formalized legacy of that behavior. Just as the *sunna* can be understood to have been formalized in Sunni *fiqh*, the ways of the *awliyāʾ* were

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95 الحقيقة التي أشارت عليها السنة السنية from “The *ijāza* of ‘Abd al-Karīm b. A. al-Sharābbātī” (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, 1586 Ṭaṣawwuf Ṭalāʿāt 692 Majāmī’ Ṭalāʿāt).
97 Trimingham associates the use of the ṣayʿa with the rise of what he calls “institutional Sufism” in the era of Ṣaḥḥa al-Dīn (twelfth century) as contrasted with earlier less formal relationships of companionship. *Sufi Orders*, 14.
understood to have been carried on in formal ṭuruq, the initiatory organizations of the brotherhoods.

It is in contrast to this embodied knowledge of the sunna-as-akhlāq, by which practices described in the hadīth can be experienced in the flesh, that book learning is sometimes denigrated. While the sunna of the Prophet was being passed on in a verbal, conceptual form through the texts of hadīth, and in a more abstract form in the science of fiqh, it was understood by Suhrawardī to also be embodied in the akhlāq of the awliyā’. The akhlāq were, in this sense, yet another “body” of knowledge to learn by heart, put into practice, and carried on to the next generation of scholars. The Shādhilī shaykh who took Hoffman as a companion expresses this view of book learning as secondary through a miraculous story:

For fifteen years I have not opened a book or read, because the words mix together and move, except one book: the glorious Qur’ān. The one who caused this was Sīdī Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī. I was holding a book, and something happened, and I daydreamed. I saw Sīdī Abū al-Ḥasan standing before me with a stick of the Prophet and wearing a cloak and a red turban. And he tapped me with a stick and said ‘Don’t be a Sufi in speech, but be yourself a Sufi word.’

Though in practice, scholars may have depended more heavily upon manuscripts than the sources admit, suspicion of the written word is a longstanding theme in Islamic scholarly culture. Many hadīth exist regarding the unreliability of “finding” information in a text as opposed to receiving it through oral transmission. For example, “strive eagerly to obtain hadiths and get them from men themselves, not from written records, lest they be affected by the disease of corruption of the text.” This concept was deeply embedded in hadīth pedagogy, which preferences oral transmission over textual transmission, and its emphasis on “knowing the men”

98 Hoffman, Sufism, Mystics, and Saints, 23.
99 Messick, Calligraphic State, 23.
(‘ilm al-rijāl) as the basis of knowing the reliability of transmissions. Whether or not one agrees with the theories of Bourdieu regarding the importance of presence as a mechanism for transmitting deeply held beliefs, it appears to have been an important component of the cultivation of religious authority for Zabīdī and his contemporaries.

**The imperative of obedience**

The recitation of Sūrat al-Fatḥ after giving the bay’a emphasizes the analogy between the authority of the shaykh and the authority of God, with implications for the nature of the relationship between shaykh and murīd. In the ‘Iqd and elsewhere, this analogy translates into the duty of the murīd to surrender completely to the wali: “Whatever he forbids quit it absolutely, whatever he commands, do nothing but that.” Just as the wali is a servant of God, owing Him absolute obedience, the disciple is in an analogous relationship of complete obedience to the wali.

The necessity of obedience for enlightenment is also expressed in rich metaphors of the shaykh as a parent to the disciple. Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234) describes being in the hands of the shaykh by the metaphor of a child carried in the hands of parents, advising the murīd to “surrender himself and become like a small child with his father,” This emphasizes the need for the disciple to obey his master unconditionally, also as a child to a father. As Zabīdī puts it, the bay’a is “a symbol that he [the murīd] will follow whatever [the shaykh] commands and not neglect anything on purpose, and that [the murīd] puts himself under [the shaykh’s]

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102 He was nephew of ‘Abd al-Qāhir and founder of the Suhrawardiyya. This quote is from *Awārif al-ma`ārif* as cited in Malamud, “Gender and Spiritual Self-Fashioning,” 94.
protection (waqāya), and submits to the teacher completely.”

Zabīdī’s commentary on Ghazâlî’s Iḥyā’ ʻulûm al-dîn echoes this authoritarian view of learning: the student of any science should “throw the reigns” to his mu‘allim in all things, every detail. In his section on knowledge, Ghazâlî writes that a student is best served by being to his shaykh “as an ignorant sick person to his physician,” submitting in complete dependence to the greater knowledge of the latter.

Zabīdī intensifies this metaphor of dependence, adding that “the student should be like a corpse in the hands of the undertaker or a piece of straw in a current.”

Other metaphors of submission emphasize the nurturing role of the shaykh-walî as parent. According to Rāzî, “just as the infant drinks milk at the breast of its mother or wet nurse, receiving from them the sustenance without which it would perish, so too the infant of the spirit drinks the milk of the Path and the Truth from the nipple of the mother of prophethood, or the wetnurse of walāya, receiving from the prophet or the shaykh—who stands in place of the Prophet—the sustenance without which it would perish.”

The role of the shaykh-walî as nurturing parent is also expressed in the Risālat al-qushayriyya, a fifth/eleventh century manual on Sufism that continues to be read in Egypt into the modern period, it is narrated that “a tree that grows without a gardener can bloom but will not yield fruit.”

The same metaphors also express the belief that the relationship of master and disciple is the foundation of the path. This concept is present in early writings, such as that of Ibn ʻArabī, who wrote, “the sanctity [of the shaykh-disciple relationship] is the foundation of [spiritual]
prosperity.”\textsuperscript{109} In Zabīdī’s description, the submissive aspect of being between the hands of the shaykh is repeatedly emphasized as a necessary disposition for enlightenment.\textsuperscript{110} Complete submission to the master takes the form of the voluntary negation of adulthood through obedience. Elsewhere, it is described as a negation of manhood.\textsuperscript{111} The belief in the necessity of an initiating master would seem to support the monopoly on spiritual virtue by an entrenched religious elite, defined by their salāsil (chains of authority), which are most (and sometimes only) accessible to those born into families of awliyā’.

**Imitation through pure visions**

Among the salāsil in Zabīdī’s collection is one by which he received the transmission of the Khāḍiriyya\textsuperscript{112} tarīqa. In this entry, Zabīdī nods toward an ongoing historical debate regarding the immortality of al-Khiḍr by citing Sha’rānī\textsuperscript{113} who states simply “he is alive, and will live until the day of resurrection.” That al-Khiḍr was understood to have originated as a human being, is evident in Zabīdī’s inclusion of his biological genealogy (taken from Ibn ‘Arabī’s al-Futūḥāt al-makkiya). Although represented in this fashion as a living master, al-Khiḍr is also described as a visionary experience. Zabīdī mentions in his brief biography that “Our master Abū al-‘Abbās al-Khiḍr, peace upon him, is one of the eight means,”\textsuperscript{114} probably referring to theological

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\textsuperscript{110} Gestures of submission are followed by the dressing in a turban or other clothes which are a mark of increased status vis a vis the rest of society. They are described as “a sign of his changing from one state (hāl) to another.” Zabīdī, *‘Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn*, 17.

\textsuperscript{111} Abdellah Hammoudi finds in hagiography from Morocco that it was common for a murīd to perform domestic tasks reserved for women, like cooking, making the master’s bed, bringing him wash water, washing his clothes, collecting wood, or grinding with the handmill, in *Master and Disciple: The Cultural Foundations of Moroccan Authoritarianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997): 97.

\textsuperscript{112} This is distinct from the Khuḍayriyya which was a branch of the Khalwaṭiyya in Egypt mentioned in F. De Jong, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-linked Institutions in Nineteenth Century Egypt: A Historical Study in Organizational Dimensions of Islamic Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill Archive, 1978): 13 and 21.

\textsuperscript{113} ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha’rānī (d. 973/1565) was a well-known Shādhilī who popularized the writings of Ibn ‘Arabī in Egypt in the sixteenth century.

\textsuperscript{114} Zabīdī. *‘Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn*, 68.
discussions of “pure visions” as one of eight means of achieving the true knowledge and worship of God.\textsuperscript{115} He also cites details from Sha’rānī about visionary initiation by al-Khiḍr:

\begin{quote}
يعرفه كل من حق له قدم الولاية ولا يجتمع بحد إلا لتعليمه وتأديبه وقد أعطى قوة النظر في أي صورة شاء ولكن من علامته أن سبائته تعال الوسطي في الطول ولا يجتمع بحد إلا أن اجتمعت فيه ثلاث خصال أن يكون على سنة وأن لا يكون له حرص على الدنيا وأن يكون سليم الصدر لأهل الإسلام ومن ل يجتمع فيه هذه الخصال لا براء أبداً
\end{quote}

Whoever has the right to be offered \textit{walāya} knows [al-Khiḍr], and he does not meet with anyone except to teach and to educate him. And he has been given the ability to be seen in any form he wishes. But one of his features is that his index finger is longer than his middle finger. He does not meet with anyone unless [that person] meets three requirements: that he adheres to the \textit{sunna}, that he is not eager for the things of this world, and that he be of sound heart toward the people of Islām. And whoever does not meet these requirements will never see him.

Zabīdī refers to the Bayḍāwīyya brotherhood as a “branch” (\textit{shu’ba}) of the Khāḍirīyya because its \textit{silsla} ends at Sayyidnā al-Khiḍr.\textsuperscript{117} The same is the case of the Jahriyya.\textsuperscript{118} Despite their description as “branches” of a brotherhood (the Khāḍirīyya), there is no evidence that these are united by ideology, organization, or even masters and members. They share only a common source of authority in a vision of the figure of al-Khiḍr. The term \textit{ṭarīqa}, when referring to the Khāḍirīyya has the sense of a spiritual rather than organizational brotherhood. That is, those who draw their authority from al-Khiḍr are bound by a similar experience, rather than a structured initiatory organization.\textsuperscript{119} A similar sense of community is expressed among those who have had

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\item \textsuperscript{115} Such as in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, \textit{Teachings of Islam} (Kessinger Publishing, 2003): 131. He lists the “eight means” as recognition of God, knowledge of God’s beauty, realization of His goodness, prayer, sacrifice, perseverance, the company of the righteous, and pure visions and revelations.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Zabīdī. \textit{‘Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn}, 69.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 54-55.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 61.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Ahmad b. Idrīs (see note 133 below) mentions being linked to the Moroccan ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Mas‘ūd al-Dabbāgh (d.1132/1719 or 1718) by this “brotherhood” of a common visionary experience. Dabbāgh claims to have taken his litany from al-Khiḍr. Radtke, “Ibrīziana,” 118.
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visions of the Prophet, who sometimes claim to be members of a ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya, or “brotherhood of seeing the Prophet.”

According to Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Ujaymī, the basis of this path [the ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya] is that the inner being of the one who follows it is absorbed in Muḥammad’s dhāt [physical self] while he is zealously imitating the Prophet outwardly in word and deed, busying his tongue invoking blessings upon him, and devoting himself to him at all times whether in seclusion or in public, until honoring the Prophet comes to dominate his heart and to permeate his inner being to such an extent that he need only hear the Prophet’s name and he starts trembling, his heart is overwhelmed beholding him and the visible appearances of the Prophet emerge before his inner sight. Thereafter, he will see a vision of the Prophet in many of his dreams while asleep as a first step; secondly he will see him unexpectedly while dozing off. Finally he will see him awake.

Even this description of a visionary experience is marked in its emphasis on the physical, as the goal of the vigil is to “make present” the Prophet himself. That is, from this description, the goal of summoning the vision was not to get unadulterated information from him (from the horse’s mouth), but to make contact with the physical body of the Prophet.

Quoting Ujaymī’s teacher, Qushāshī, Zabīdī prescribes a special dhikr meant to summon a vision of the Prophet. After a period of purification through prayer and isolation,
Then he sits, legs and arms crossed, and begins the dhikr “May God reward our master and Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings upon him and his family” one thousand times every night before he sleeps. And this should be the last thing he does in his bed. He should sleep after completing the dhikr having made present the Prophet, blessing and peace upon him, as if he can see him, as a pupil between his two hands by this presence and invocation as if he sees him and he is lying next to him in the bed.”

The emphasis on physical intimacy is expressed through the image of the Prophet lying in the bed of the murīd. Furthermore, the same motif of submission and absolute authority are evoked in the description of the experience as being like a student “between his [the Prophet’s] two hands,” evoking the parental role of the Prophetic vision, and the submission of the devotee. Finally, this relationship of dependence and absolute surrender to the nurturing power of the parent is likened to the relationship of a teacher to his student.

Conclusion

Besides tracing organizational developments in the practice of taṣawwuf, Trimmingham’s history also envisions a progression in terms of the space allowed for individual freedom in each stage. He sees a progression from the “unfettered” early stage to a gradual limitation of freedom. In the ṭarīqa stage, the expectation of conformity to doctrine is seen as “making docile the mystical spirit within organized Sufism to the standards of tradition and legalism.” Finally, in the ṭāʿifa stage, Trimmingham laments that “the individual creative freedom of the mystic was fettered and subjected to conformity and collective experience. From this perspective, where guidance under the earlier masters had not compromised the spiritual liberty of the seeker, in the final phase, “subjection to the arbitrary will of the shaikh turned him into a spiritual slave, and not to

128 Ibid., 12.
129 Bayn yadahi is commonly translated as “in front of” but the more literal rendering has been used to emphasize the repetition of this theme in the literature.
God, but to a human being, even though one of God’s elect.”

Framing these historical developments as a progression from a golden age of freedom to an age of decadence and lack of creativity is problematic on several levels that are outside the scope of this chapter and its sources. What can be said is that the trajectory of loss of individual freedom mapped by Trimingham leads him to misread the deeper principles that underpin developments in ritual practice that he observes during Zabīdī’s lifetime, and into the nineteenth century.

Specifically, he points to the increased emphasis on visions of the Prophet by masters such as Aḥmad al-Tijānī132 and Aḥmad b. ʿIdrīs133 as a means of breaking away from subjection by the earlier masters by placing less stress on the silsila.134 One of the clear implications of the multiplicity of practices included in Zabīdī’s manual is that absolute obedience to the master and the practice of solitary dhikr for the purpose of Prophetic visions were not seen as incompatible. Rather, when speaking of the ritual meant to bring the prophet in presence, Zabīdī places it in the context of talqīn al-dhikr, the inculcation of the proper practice of dhikr through emulation, between the hands of a living master. To him, meditation with the goal of drawing close to the

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130 Trimingham, Sufi Orders, 103. Besides evaluating the developments he observes in terms of personal freedom, Trimingham also links them to the organization of production, arguing that Sufism proceeded from the khanqāh stage, which was aristocratic, to the bourgeois ṯarīqa stage, and finally the popular ṯā’ifa stage, as discussed in the introduction.

131 This narrative is immediately suspect for so closely mirroring discourses of political rise and decline, as well as rise and decline of the sciences after the twelfth or thirteenth century. Though this is view is so standard that Brockelmann places these six centuries in his History of Arabic Literature as “the decline (Niedergang) of Islamic literature.” Carl Brockelmann, Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur, 2. den Supplementbinden angepasste Aufl (Leiden: Brill, 1943), it has been challenged by George Saliba in Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007) and others. The historical framework of rise and decline has been most famously linked to the colonial endeavor by Edward Said in Orientalism (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). Further, Trimingham’s ascription of meaning in terms of personal freedom values organizations for the practice of taṣawwuf based on ideas about individual freedom and progress that emerged with the ideology of humanism.

132 Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1230/1815) was born in Algeria and died in Fes. He was initiated in the Khalwatiyya of Egypt. He founded the Tijaniyya brotherhood in 1781, after seeing a vision of the Prophet. The Tijaniyya is represented as a grass-roots brotherhood, and is noted for the role of adherents of later generations in anti-colonial activities, especially in West Africa, including Ḥajj ‘Umar al-Fūṭī (d. 1864). See Jean-Louis Triaud et al., La Tijāniyya: une confrérie musulmane à la conquête de l’Afrique (Paris: Karthala Editions, 2000).

133 Aḥmad b. ʿIdrīs (d. 1253/1837) was a famous Sufi master, whose work survives only in the writings of his students. See O’Fahe, Enigmatic Saint.

134 Trimingham, Sufi Orders, 106-7. This claim is challenged by Radtke who argues that visions of the Prophet were understood to be compatible with the idea of fanā’. Radtke, “Ibrīziana,” 118.
Prophet is understood as a step in the process of elevation of status taken in relation to the master (similar to the handshake, and wearing the turban or cloak) rather than as a means of breaking away from his authority. Furthermore, Zabīdī writes of solitary dhikr with the goal of uniting with a vision of the Prophet as a common practice. He quotes the commentary of Shaʻrānī (d. 973/1565) on a particular hadīth that Ibrāhīm al-Matbūlī took directly from the Prophet in his sleep (manāmān) and in vigil (yaqẓat). According to Shaʻrānī, this was achieved “in the usual manner among the Sufis” (bil-khayfiyyat al-ma’huḍa bayn al-qawm) which is “by extensive prayers upon the Prophet: five thousand prayers per day.” Finally, the practice of the ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya cannot be seen as novel, as it is continuous with ancient practice. Zabīdī mentions certain chains of transmission through masters from centuries before who were initiated by visions of the Prophet. Solitary dhikr with the goal of connecting to the Prophet, as well as the connection through multiple or short salāsil, and the process of šuḥba or companionship of obedience to a master are presented as mutually reinforcing components of a varied pedagogy of proximity.

The belief in the possibility of multiple modes of accessing this embodied authority is also present in the practice of the Wafā’iyya. Muḥammad Wafā’, the founder of the brotherhood claimed to have begun his mission on earth after having seen a vision of the Prophet. According to the story, the Prophet appeared to Muḥammad Wafā’ and commanded him to recite (iqrā’) echoing the first word of the Angel Gabriel to Muḥammad at the beginning of his

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135 Abū al-Muwāḥib ‘Abd al-Waḥhāb b. Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Anṣārī al-Shaʻrānī was a biographer, a Shāfi’ī faqīh and a Shādhili shaykh.
137 One of his transmissions for the ‘Uwaysiya comes through Ibn ‘Arabī, who got it from Jesus (presumably in a vision), who received it from the Prophet during the night journey mentioned in Sūrat al-Isrā’. Zabīdī. ‘Iqd al-jawāhir al-thamīn, 31. Others include the Bayāniyya, whose founder, Abū al-Bayān Nabā b. Muḥammad b. Maḥfūz al-Qarshī (d. 551) took his license directly from the Prophet, “by vigilance (yaqẓat).”
prophethood.\textsuperscript{138} The belief in the possibility of this experience was not restricted to the charismatic founder. Muḥammad al-Zawāwī, an acquaintance of the Wafāʾī Yahyā (d.857/1453) who was in no way related to the family, claimed to have been initiated into the Wafāʾī brotherhood by its founders Muḥammad and ‘Alī Wafāʾ in a vision. Zawāwī dreamt that after praying and weeping on their tombs at the Wafāʾī shrine in the Qarāfa cemetery, Muḥammad and ‘Alī appeared and gave him the kunya (patronymic) Abū Ḥamīd. This was recognized by the khalīfa Yahyā as making him a higher ranking walī than himself.\textsuperscript{139} The historical veracity of the visions themselves is of course immaterial. Rather, it suggests that even within the Wafāʾī brotherhood, this mode of initiation was possible.

This was despite the fact that in other ways the authority of this family of holy men was elitist and hierarchical. It was based on a silsila that closely mirrored the genealogy of the brotherhood through the male line, as will be discussed in later chapters. Furthermore, veneration of the shaykh, with all this applied for expectations of obedience from his disciples, has clearly been a consistent part of the Wafāʾī brotherhood culture. During the same period that Zawāwī experienced his visions, Ibn Ḥajar al-`Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) was writing against the Wafāʾī shuyūkh, including Yahyā, criticizing the intense devotion they enjoyed from their followers as excessive.\textsuperscript{140} The Wafāʾī shuyūkh also referred to themselves as absolute authorities by claiming the title of khātim al-awliyāʾ (the seal of the saints), a role analogous to that of Muḥammad vis à vis the other Prophets: the best and last,\textsuperscript{141} and the title of quṭb, which carries the cosmological

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\item \textsuperscript{138} He also dressed him in a white shirt. This story is included in a collection of reports collected by the Wafāʾī Abū al-Fath (d. 852/1448), translated by Richard J. A. McGregor in “The Wafāʾīyya of Cairo.” In Tales of God’s Friends: Islamic Hagiography in Translation, John Renard, ed. (Berkley: University of California Press, 2009): 64.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Katz. Dreams, Sufism, and Sainthood, 156-8.
\item \textsuperscript{140} McGregor. Sanctity and Mysticism.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Both Muḥammad Wafāʾ (d. 765/1363) and ‘Alī Wafāʾ (d. 807/1405) declared themselves in their writings to be khātim al-awliyāʾ (seal of the saints). The theme was introduced in Tirmidhī’s work on walāya then taken up by Ibn ‘Arabī, after which time it came into widespread use. While there were many debates about the cosmic position of the seal, his role and moment in chronological history, discussions were unified by the belief that his role was
\end{itemize}
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meaning of a pole, or axis point on the earth. This is extrapolated into the spiritual sense of the *quṭb* as the center or pinnacle of the faith around whom the world revolves.\(^{142}\) It is arguable that the term *quṭb* is understood to refer merely to a rank within the brotherhood, as has been observed elsewhere.\(^{143}\) However Abū al-Anwār seems to have seen himself as both *quṭb* and *khātim al-awliyā’* in the absolute sense, in that he made the dramatic gesture of demolishing the walls of the seclusion where the *shuyūkh* of the Wafā’iya had traditionally meditated alone at the beginning of their tenure, claiming that there would be none after him.\(^{144}\)

Because Zabīdī doesn’t organize the authorities he references in terms of historical time or context, his ‘*Iqd* serves to reify *walāya* as a hierarchy of sanctity existing outside of time. This historical flattening portrays change through time in the form of innovations or simply trends in ritual practice as diversity rather than dynamism. Rather than representing change as a series of reversals or rejections of earlier ways, this principle of tolerance for diversity allows for historical change to be interpreted as part of a continuous tradition. That is, the coexistence of multiple *ṭuruq*, meaning ways and communities of devotion, are represented as equally pertinent in the present as pathways to the same universal *ḥaqīqa*.

What the visions and the *silsila* share is that they both express authority predicated on the experience of physical intimacy, of being “between hands” (*bayn yaday*). Whether through closeness to the earthly body of the shaykh, to a vision of an earlier master or prophet, or to God

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\(^{142}\) The earliest use of this term in the latter sense was probably by Tirmidhi. In his view, there is only one *quṭb* at a given time, who stands at the head of a hierarchy of saints. See Annemarie Shimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1978): 200. In Egypt, four individuals are generally recognized as axial saints, (*aqṭāb*). They are Ahmad al-Rifā’i founder of the Rifā’iyya, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, founder of the Qadīriya, Ahmad al-Badawī of the Ahmadiyya and Ibrāhīm al-Dusūqī who founded the Burhamiyya. Reeves, *The Hidden Government*, 57-8.

\(^{143}\) As in a manual referring to the “ranks of men” not as a cosmological hierarchy akin to the described by Ibn ‘Arabī but to functions within the brotherhood. Hoffman, *Sufism, Mystics, and Saints*, 94.

Himself through *fanāʿ*, knowledge of *ḥaqīqa* can only be experienced through the body. Just as changes in practice through time were tolerated, so the ideology of a given *ṭarīqa* tended to change through time.145 For example, Sedgwick shows in his book on the Rashīdī Ahmadī brotherhood that successive *shuyūkh* adjusted interpretations of the same sacred text (*matn*), such that little ideological continuity is observed between generations of leaders.146 McGregor observes the same phenomenon between generations of Wafāʿī *shuyūkh*.147 In what follows, the principles by which the religious elite approached their role as political brokers, economic agents, and educators will be shown to rely as much upon the principles of the schema by which they moved in the world as sanctified bodies as it was upon the abstract rules of behavior articulated in manuals of *fiqh*.

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145 See, for example Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule*, 129; De Jong, *Ṭuruq*, 27 and 32; and Tringham, *Sufi Orders*, 12.
147 McGregor, *Sanctity and Mysticism*. 

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Chapter 2

The role of the awliyā’ in the study of the sharī‘ sciences

In Jabartī’s biography of the Shādhilī wali ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-‘Afīfī (d. 1172/1758)¹ he describes the activities that he witnessed at the mawlid held for him:

Then they created a festival and holiday for him every year, calling to it people from lands East and West. They pitched many tents and pavilions and butchers and coffee shops. And a great world of people gathered, a great mixture, the elites and the common people, the peasants and craftsmen, peddlers of games, dancing girls, prostitutes, showmen with performing monkeys and snake charmers. They filled the desert and the gardens. They defile the tombs and set fires on them. They dump filth, urinate and defecate, fornicating, and playing and dancing, beating on drums and playing whistles day and night. The jurists and scholars join in this setting up tents for themselves as well. And they become an example for the highest princes and merchants and the general public, without speaking against it. Indeed, they believe that this is an act of piety (qurba, lit: proximity) and worship. And if it weren’t so, the ‘ulamā’ would have renounced it, rather than participating. God is responsible for all of them.

The presence of such scathing critiques of the festivities so central to Sufi practice by Egypt’s most important eighteenth century historian is taken as evidence of a rift between the scholars of the law, the fuqahā’ and the Sufis, or fuqarā’.³ This view of a rift between sharī‘a and taṣawwuf

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¹ He was also initiated into the Bakriyya, but became the head of his own derivative branch of the Shādhiliyya, the ‘Afīfiyya.
seems to be supported by critiques of certain practices associated with Sufism from within the ranks of the religious elite themselves. Others critique those who feign devotion in order to lodge in the Sufi monastery and benefit from the proceeds of the waqf. By contrast, instruction in endowed institutions appears to be structured around the mastery of accepted doctrines of fiqh. It was typical for the space in a madrasa to be divided into separate sections for three or four schools of Islamic jurisprudence. Based on this apparent tension between practice associated with Sufism, and the letter of the law, Gellner proposes a theory of two conflicting tiers of religious culture in Egypt. The first is the Great Tradition, which is urban and scholarly, while the other includes Shiism and Sufism, which are rural and based on charismatic authority. Similarly, Trimingham observes a general “enmity legalists have always borne toward Sufism,” Just as he views Sufism as “a reaction against the external rationalization of Islam in law and systematic theology.”

However, even in Jabarti’s critical description of the mawlid, he emphasizes repeatedly that all different segments of society attended, even the ‘ulamā’ who (he seems to feel) should have known better, suggesting that such practices were by no means simply a rural or lower class phenomenon. This is also supported by studies showing that much of the total literary output in

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4 Jabarti quotes a poem from al-Hijāza about the excesses of Sufi worship: “Every madman among these Sufis is considered a saint by the ignorant people. Even their scholars venerate such men and take them for their lords in place of the Almighty. They forget God; they say that a certain human being grants relief from trouble. When such a man dies, they make his tomb a shrine and throng to visit it—Arabs and non-Arabs alike. Some kiss the gravestone; others kiss thethreshold of the door or the dust. Thus do pagans treat their idols, seeking to draw near them! For they are infected with fornication, perjury and tyranny; with oppression, stealing and looting,” in Ajā'ib vol. 1, 28-29 as cited in Moreh, “al-Jabarti’s Attitude,” 60. Further critiques can be found in Ajā'ib 1:147, 220, and 2:106-107, 248, 3:43-44, 78 and 80.
5 Such as in Subkī’s Mu’īd al-ni‘ām as cited in Makdisi, Colleges, 177-179.
6 Artīn Bāshā describes the studies at al-Azhar as having been historically divided between the four schools of fiqh, each of which had its head shaykh, responsible for all those teaching and learning the principles of that madhhab or school. Ya’kub Artin, L' instruction publique en Égypte (Paris : E. Leroux, 1890), 39.
8 Trimingham, Sufi Orders, 1.
the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was in various genres of Sufi literature. Heyworth-Dunne speculates that by the end of the eighteenth century in Egypt, nearly all scholars were Sufis, and nearly all khulafā’ in the Sufi milieu were scholars. Still, the division between fuqahā’ and fuqarā’ is often treated as the most basic division in religious culture in Egypt in this period.

This chapter will add to existing studies that challenge this generally accepted division in Egyptian religious culture using a collection of ījāzāt, which are documents used for recording the transmission of knowledge from one teacher to another through multiple generations. Such transmissions are recorded in isnād, the academic counterpart of the silsila discussed in the previous chapter. The discussion will focus on an ījāza of Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā al-Iskandarī al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 1162/1748). This ījāza is particularly useful because it is so extensive that it comes to be used for reference by later generations of scholars. In fact, according to the biographical collection of Kitānī, Ṣabbāgh appears to be best known for this collection of asānīd (chains of transmission). “He has collected in [his book] many narrations from among the asanīd [chains of transmission] for books of ḥadīth and tafsīr and readings of the Qur’ān, and enchained hadīth and works of fiqh [jurisprudence] and taṣawwuf [Sufism] and prayers and lines for the transmission of the ṭuruq al-qawm [the Sufi brotherhoods], including the handshake, holding hands, use of the rosary, inculcation of dhikr and being dressed in the robes of the brotherhood, among others.” Ṣabbāgh is also linked to the Wafā’iyya, as he was a disciple of a shaykh whose primary affiliation appears to have been to the Wafā’ī brotherhood. Finally, many of the

10 J. Heyworth-Dunne, An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt (London: Luzac & Co., 1938): 10-11. According to this analysis, Sufi poetry was the main literary output at this time.
11 Enchained hadīth are reports transmitted with an action, as is discussed in greater detail below.
key discursive features of the *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh that are highlighted here can be generalized to the other eighteenth century catalogue *ijāzāt* in the sample available through the library of al-Azhar University in Cairo, and the manuscript collection of the Egyptian National Library.

Analysis of this collection of *ijāzāt* shows that Sufism was integrated into the total curriculum of a scholar of this period in a variety of ways. First, works focusing on the practice, history and theology of Sufism were studied along with what Ṣabbāgh refers to as the *shar‘ī* sciences,¹³ that is, those sciences that supported the derivation of legal decisions. Furthermore, there is not a clear distinction between teachers of these two kinds of religious knowledge. Accomplished scholars seemed to have expertise in both *taşawwuf* and *al-‘ulūm al-shar‘iyya*, and certify students in both types of learning. Most importantly, a discursive analysis of the *isnād* as text-rituals suggests that many transmissions in the *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh that appear to be intended for the verification of authentic transmission of reports, or the accurate mastery of conceptual material, in fact express physical proximity to the sanctified bodies of the *awliyā‘*. It will be argued that the value of such text-rituals is rooted in the concept of religious authority as *walāya*. Specifically, certain types of transmissions in the field of *ḥadīth* studies are valued because they attest to the recipient’s proximity (*qurba* or *walāya*) to the sources of divine guidance and blessing through *ṣuḥba* and *baraka*. This shows that the ways of knowing discussed in the previous chapter were not limited to mastery of Sufism, but were seen as the basis for all religious knowledge and authority in eighteenth century Egypt. This suggests that the division of the religious elite into *fuqahā‘* (jurists) and *fuqarā‘* (mystics) in this period is best seen as one of emphasis and not of absolute category.

¹³ Ṣabbāgh uses the term *al-‘ulūm al-shar‘iyya* to refer to “*tawḥīd* (theology), *tafsīr* (exegesis), *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, and [its] injunctions (*farā‘id*) among others” in “*Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh*,” 15.
Characteristics, varieties and functions of *ijāzāt*

According to Makdisi, the subjects that were taught in the mosque, and later in the *madrasa*, *ribāṭ zāwiya* and *khanqāh*\(^{14}\) included *tafsīr* (exegesis), *qirā’a* (variant readings of the Qur’ān), *ḥadīth* (the sayings, decisions and behaviors of the Prophet and his companions), *uṣūl al-fiqh*, (legal theory and methodology), *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *uṣūl al-dīn* (the foundations of the faith, including theological creeds).\(^{15}\) What these sciences had in common was their fundamental importance to the derivation of *sharī‘a* law-as-*fiqh*, or Islamic jurisprudence. For this reason they are hereafter referred to as the *sharī‘* sciences. These sciences have traditionally been distinguished from the study of Sufi philosophy (*‘ilm al-taṣawwuf*) just as they have been distinguished from the “rational” sciences\(^{16}\) as well as the occult sciences.\(^{17}\) By the eighteenth century an accomplished scholar was expected to have mastered a distinguishable canon of texts in these *sharī‘* sciences, all of which supported in one way or another his ability to engage in discourses producing and applying human “understanding” (*fiqh*) of God’s *sharī‘a*. Hereafter, *ijāzāt* in which such works figure most prominently are referred to as “legalist” *ijāzat*, to distinguish them from the ‘*ahd*, that is, certificates issued to initiate new members into the administrative hierarchy of the Sufi Brotherhoods, discussed in the previous chapter.

\(^{14}\) The term *madrasa* simply means a place of study, whereas *ribāṭ zāwiya* and *khanqāh* are all different names for Sufi lodges. These different places are discussed in detail below in chapter 3.

\(^{15}\) Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges*, 79. This group of sciences is also referred to simply as the “Islamic sciences”. Ancillary sciences included Arabic language, grammar, lexicography, morphology, metrics, rhyme, prosody, tribal history and genealogy. The *ribāṭ* from early on taught Sufism through the study of *ḥadīth*, and eventually, by the sixteenth century have combined the study of Sufism with law. Ibid., 10.

\(^{16}\) Sometimes called “foreign” sciences, including logic, philosophy, mathematics and the natural sciences, especially medicine and physics were taught separately in libraries and hospitals.

\(^{17}\) Occult sciences included alchemy, or transforming matter into gold (*kimiya*), creating talismans and charms (*limiya*), communicating with other planets, realms of spirits and *jinn* (*himiya*), imagination (*simiya*), and the art of magic potions (*nimia*). In the eighteenth century, these were considered to be an acceptable subject of inquiry in the Islamic sciences. Not only did respected scholars write on these topics, but sometimes they would be involved in practicing them. Services such as the production of charms were generally learned outside of the academic context through apprenticeship. See Heyworth-Dunne, *History of Education in Modern Egypt*, 12-23.
The term *ijāza* was initially a shortened version of the term *ijāzat al-samāʾa* “certification of audition,” or *samāʾāt*, the earliest form of *ijāza*.18 Samāʾāt initially took the form of a brief written notice appended to, or in the cover of a book as a record of those who had given and attended auditions of the material in the book. Although these were used by attendees to an audition to assert their having heard the work, they also served to guarantee the manuscript itself as a version of the text accepted by the leading authorities in the generations that used it.19

Samāʾāt are also found in the margins of Sufi texts up to the modern period as notes in the margins or inside the pages of the very copy of the manuscript that has been studied or read.20 Samaʾāt were valued by teachers for the *post humus* prestige they would gain by the future accomplishments of very young attendees of an audition. Samaʾāt are thus unique historical documents, identifying at once the material object of the manuscript in reference to multiple generations of teachers and students, and these to each other. An example is in figure 2.1, a page from a collection of *isnād* (chains of transmission) by the shaykh al-Sharunbābilī. On that page are three separate *ijāzāt al-samāʾa*, written in the hands of three different individuals who studied the text.21

The legalist *ijāzāt* that will be the focus of this analysis are “text independent,”22 because they were produced as free-standing documents, rather than being written into the copy of the work to which they refer, as were the samaʾāt. They are similar to a contemporary academic

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20 For an example, see Pierre McKay’s analysis of one such *ijāza*. Ibid., 1-81.
21 For more on samāʾ and qirāʾa see Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges*, 140-152.
diploma\textsuperscript{23} in that they grant a general credential rather than the reading of single work. The most common form of text independent \textit{i}j\text{"a}za is the \textit{i}j\text{"a}za ‘\textit{\text{"a}mma} (general certification), such as that in figure 2.2.\textsuperscript{24} In the general \textit{i}j\text{"a}za, a teacher grants the recipient the right to transmit to future students all of the works for which the teacher himself has received certification from his teachers.\textsuperscript{25} General \textit{i}j\text{"a}z\text{"a}t are often written in the hand of the recipient, and are validated by the personal seal of the teacher granting the certificate. Most of the eighteenth and nineteenth century general \textit{i}j\text{"a}z\text{"a}t in the holdings of Egyptian libraries appear to focus on works in the \textit{shar\text{"i}} sciences. However, historically \textit{i}j\text{"a}z\text{"a}t have also been granted for the mastery of poetry and the practice of medicine. Some in the \textit{shar\text{"i}} sciences give an explicit permission to teach (\textit{i}j\text{"a}z\text{"a}t al-\textit{tadr\text{"i}}s) or to issue legal rulings (\textit{i}j\text{"a}z\text{"a}t \textit{i}f\text{"a}a’).\textsuperscript{26}

General \textit{i}j\text{"a}z\text{"a}t, while similar in appearance to a modern diploma, differ significantly in their social function. First, they are a documentation of a personal rather than institutional relationship. That is, the \textit{i}j\text{"a}za is granted by an individual teacher rather than an institution. Because the general \textit{i}j\text{"a}za is a certification for the entire repertoire of the teacher and all of his teachers, the prestige of a given \textit{i}j\text{"a}za differs completely depending on who is granting it, rather than being linked to a standardized degree of achievement, analogous to today’s Bachelor, Master or Doctoral degrees. The value of a given \textit{i}j\text{"a}za is also contingent on the quality of the relationship between the grantor and the recipient. This is suggested by the common inclusion of

\textsuperscript{23} Makdisi suggests that the \textit{i}j\text{"a}za in the Islamic educational tradition was the precursor to the Western licentia docendi, and in turn the precursor to the modern diploma, in \textit{The Rise of Colleges}, 276.
\textsuperscript{24} Other examples from the Azhar library of this type include “\textit{Ij\text{"a}zat al-Sayyid Hu\text{\text{"u}}s\text{"u}y\text{"u}n Hil\text{"u}n} b. Mu\text{"u}hammad Sabghut Ullah al-Na\text{\text{"u}}shbandi min al-Sayyid Abdullah b. Masa’ud b. Khaffir Sirri al-I\text{"u}st\text{"u}bi” (Cairo: Azhar Manuscripts, \textit{Mu\text{"u}t\text{"u}lah\text{"u}l-Hadith} 391/33048); “\textit{Ij\text{"a}zat Sunbul al-Mah\text{"u}l\text{"u}f\text{"u} min Mu\text{"u}hammad b. Sa’ud b. Mu\text{"u}hammad Sunbul al-Ma\text{"u}h\text{"u}l\text{"u}f\text{"u},” (Cairo: Azhar Manuscripts, \textit{Ma\text{"u}m\text{"u}\text{"u}l-Maj\text{"u}m} 633/3468); “\textit{Ij\text{"a}zat min Is\text{"u}m\text{"u}\text{"u}l ‘U\text{"u}thm\text{"u}n al-An\text{"u}s\text{"u}r\text{"u} to Mu\text{"u}hammad b. Mu\text{"u}hammad b. H\text{"u}mid al-Makk\text{"u}\text{"u}”} (Cairo: D\text{"u}r al-Kutub Manuscripts \textit{Mu\text{"u}t\text{"u}lah\text{"u}l-Hadith} 438), and “\textit{i}j\text{"a}zat ‘Abd al-‘A\text{"u}z\text{"u}z b. ‘Abd al-Kha\text{"u}l\text{"u}q al-An\text{"u}s\text{"u}r\text{"u}” (Cairo : D\text{"u}r al-Kutub Manuscripts, \textit{Mu\text{"u}t\text{"u}lah\text{"u}l-Hadith} 440).
\textsuperscript{25} Zabidi, in his \textit{Mu\text{"u}\text{"u}m\text{"u}\text{"u}} uses the term \textit{i}j\text{"a}za h\text{"u}f\text{"u}la to refer to this type of certification. Reichmuth, \textit{Zabidi}.
\textsuperscript{26} Idriz. “\textit{Ij\text{"a}zah},” 92. See also ‘Abd al-Az\text{"u}z al-Ahv\text{"u}n\text{"u}, “Kutub Bar\text{"u}mij al-‘U\text{"u}lm\text{"u}\text{"u} fi-Andal\text{"u}l\text{"u},” in Majallat Ma’had al-Makh\text{"u}t\text{"u}t\text{"u}t\text{"u}t al-‘Arabiyya 1/1 (1955): 91-120, via http://ww\text{"u}w.islamicmanuscripts.info/reference/index.html accessed March 1, 2013.
a description of the situation in which the *ijāza* was granted. Usually it is framed as a response to a request by the recipient with the phrase “*sa’alnī fa ajaztu hu*” (he asked me [for it] so I gave him my permission). Second, it differs from a diploma in that the granting of an *ijāza* does not require that the grantor examine the recipient in the works included. Details in the texts of eighteenth century *ijāzāt* regarding the specifics of when and where study took place make it clear that it was not uncommon for a recipient to receive a general *ijāza* allowing them to transmit hundreds of works after only studying a fraction of one of the works in the list. This suggests that general *ijāzāt* attest more to the personal confidence of the grantor in the potential of the recipient than to the recipient’s performance in any standard examination process. In this sense, the general *ijāza* is more analogous to a letter of recommendation than to a modern diploma. That the *ijāza* often attests to future potential can also been seen in the formula of closing the text of the *ijāza* with some general advice from the grantor to the recipient. In the sample considered here, it is almost always simply that he be pious and obedient to God. In some cases the teacher puts a condition in his permission with the formula: “*Ijaztu h bi sharṭ...*” that is, “I certified him on the condition that he be pious and obedient.” Another formula is “I hope for him” that he be pious. The inclusion of such conditions further indicates that the document is not issued as recognition of academic accomplishment, but as a form of permission, based on a recognition of the apparent acceptability of the personal qualities of the recipient. In some cases, the only personal characteristic required from a recipient was an acceptable genealogy, as some *ijāzāt* were issued to the unborn offspring of an accomplished scholar. For this reason, in what follows *ijāza* will sometimes be rendered as “blessing,” and the above condition as “I give him my blessing on the condition that he be pious.”
A second type of text-independent *ijāza*, hereafter referred to as a “catalogue *ijaza*,” is a sort of autobibliography,\(^{27}\) sometimes called a *fihris*\(^{28}\) (a term which can be translated as both catalogue or bibliography) or a *mu’jam*.\(^{29}\) In such *ijāzāt*, the scholar composes an entire book listing as many as hundreds of works studied in a variety of disciplines.\(^{30}\) Because the catalogue *ijāza* represents a good section of the student’s total curriculum, it is more analogous to a modern academic transcript than to a diploma. Some catalogue *ijāza* manuscripts exist as a few pages in a *majmū‘a* (a notebook containing several, often unrelated writings), but in eighteenth century Egypt, the catalogue *ijāzā* becomes a genre of its own, published as a bound volume meant to be circulated, studied and transmitted as a whole.\(^{31}\) The transmission of such works resulted in the production of catalogue *ijāzāt* in which other catalogues are nested, such as in the *ijāza* given to the Shaykh al-Barāwī, which includes the full text of several smaller catalogue *ijāzāt*, one of which was granted to the teacher (Talmasānī) of the teacher (Kankashī) of the recipient’s teacher (Malāwī).\(^{32}\) Thus a whole section of *isnād* in Barāwī’s *ijāza* actually belongs to a teacher three generations removed from the author. Typically, the handwriting is simple, with tight lines, on a non-decorative page (as in figure 2.3). In such collections, works of *ḥadīth* have a particularly prominent place, but transmissions of works in other Islamic sciences and even in non-religious fields are included. In the catalogue *ijāza*, it is typical to abbreviate a large collection of less distinguished transmissions of the same material by certain formulae, including the phrase

\(^{27}\) Schmidtke “Forms and Functions of ‘Licenses to Transmit,’” 97.

\(^{28}\) Kitānī refers to the document catalogued in the al-Azhar University library as “Ijāzat al-shaykh al-Iskandārī al-Ṣabbāgh” as the *fihris* of Ṣabbāgh.

\(^{29}\) Some authors use the terms *ijāza* and *mu’jam* interchangeably, but generally speaking, a *mu’jam* would be arranged by the names of teachers, rather than by subjects taught. See Ahwānī, ‘Kutub Barāmij al-`Ulamā’ fil-Andalūs’


\(^{31}\) The analysis of such works is undertaken as part of the science of *takhrīj*, or the analysis of textual variants and ways of transmission. Reichmuth, *Zabidi*, 51.

\(^{32}\) “Ijāzat al-Malawī al-Kabīr lil- shaykh al-Barāwī” (Cairo : Azhar Manuscripts, *Muṣṭalaḥ* 398/14482)
“akhadhtuhu ‘an ‘iddat ashyākh, minhum...” (I studied this with several shaykhs, among them is...) or, “arwī ‘an jamā’a minhum...” (I relate this on the authority of a group [of scholars], among them is...)  

It is typical for the document itself to be penned by the recipient of the ījāza and not the teacher. This is evidenced by the emphasis placed on an ījāza written in the hand of the teacher with the phrase “he certified me by his own hand.” The fact that it is worthy of mention that a teacher wrote an ījāza in his own hand suggests that it was a rare honor. Schmitke sees this habit as evidence that the goal of the production of the ījāza was more to honor the teacher and his accomplishments than to attest to the credentials of the student receiving it. A common element to all of these types of ījāzāt, and which distinguishes it from any analogous Western document of achievement, are the isnād, or chains of transmission.

Chains of transmission

The collection and study of isnād (singular, sanad) is a component of many genres of historical writing in the Islamic tradition, besides certificates of transmission. The word sanad means a “support” and in the context of these documents, they are supports for a given piece of information, for a person or for a written document. The isnād in the ījāza of Ṣabbāgh take the form of chains of transmission of authority from scholar to scholar, and from generation to generation, as in the following example taken from the catalogue ījāza:

Ben Shahan al-Khitlani about Farbiri about Imam Bukhari, peace be upon him, between me and Bukhari from this way,

A sound chain requires not only that the name of each transmitter of a given piece of information be mentioned, but that each transmitter be a person of demonstrated character and moral standing such that he is unlikely to be a fabricator. This requirement led to the science of 'ilm al-rijāl, or “knowing the men”\(^\text{37}\) who are transmitting, and the literary genre of the biographical lexicon. Works in this field were also used to check whether it was chronologically and geographically possible for the two men (or women in some cases) in each link to have met each other and exchanged the information in question.

Verifying transmission is thus the original and apparent function of recording isnād. Generations of scholars have commented on its importance, and their views are included in the

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\(^{36}\) “Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 6-7.

\(^{37}\) Siddiqi, Ḥadīth Literature, 138.
text of some *ijāzāt* in the form of aphorisms similar to those that decorate the text of the ‘*ahd*. A common theme is the function of the *isnād* in protecting well-intentioned scholars from learning and transmitting incorrect information. Ṣabbāgh quotes the Imām al-Shāfi‘ī for the analogy, “collecting knowledge without *isnād* is like collecting wood not knowing that there is a snake in it.”

He emphasizes its importance as a means of verifying scriptural support of arguments regarding issues of contestation (*ikhtilāf*): “the *sanad* is a weapon of the believer, and without a weapon how will you fight?”

At the same time, “support” for opinions maintains doctrinal consistency or consensus, as in the statement: “*isnād* is part of the faith, without it, everyone would say what he likes.”

Despite the emphasis on the role of the *isnād* as a tool for verification and accurate transmission of a conceptual, verbal material (what is “said”), many transmissions that include *isnād* cannot be explained as fulfilling this purpose. Their value can only be understood with reference to prevailing axiomatic conceptions of the nature of sanctity (*walāya*).

**Walāya in legalist *ijāzāt***

The *ijāzāt* provide ample evidence that studies and practices associated with the veneration of the bodies of the *awliyā‘* discussed in the previous chapter were a fundamental element of the training of any religious scholar. Works of mystical theology, as well as Sufi prayers (*kutub al-qawm*) and initiation into the brotherhoods (*tariqat al-qawm*) are included in the *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh and others. Similarly, works on mystical practice and theology are listed next to works of *fiqh*. An entire section of the *ijāza* of Ṣubbāgh is devoted to works in *taṣawwuf*.

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38 “*Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh*,” 2.
39 Ibid., 2
40 Ibid., 2
41 Ibid., 6.
It would be possible to argue that such works are included in a normal pedagogy, without it necessarily following that the student was practicing *tasawwuf*, or a member of a brotherhood. However, transmissions for these works closely mirror the lines of esoteric initiation into the formalized organizations that base their practice on these texts (the *ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya*). For example, Ṣabbāgh receives the *Ḥikam* (wisdom literature, or aphorisms) of the early Shādhilī *khalīfa* b. ‘Aṭā’ Allāh Iskandarī (d. 709/1309) through the same line through which Zabīdī mentions having taken the Shādhilī *silṣila* of *ṣuhba* (figure 2.4) in his ‘*Iqd al jawāhir al-thamīn*, (figure 2.5). Thus, the same line of *shuyūkh* who passed on the Shādhilī *ṭarīqa* to Zabīdī through companionship and emulation, also passed on the narration or reading of the work of Iskandarī. The *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh is meant to record his academic achievement as an Azharī, while the ‘*Iqd* of Zabīdī is meant to record his initiation into the practices associated with the brotherhood. This suggests that the texts of *tasawwuf* described in the *ijāza* were not just studied in their abstraction out of idle curiosity, but are indications of his having undertaken an integrated process of esoteric initiation.

In the chains of transmission for works in all fields of the *sharʿī* sciences, prominent teachers are referred to with titles attesting to their knowledge of mysteries (*maʿārif*) and their sanctity or *walāya*. The text of the catalogue *ijāza* of Malawī includes the work of ‘*Awārif al-*maʿārif*’ by Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawārdī (d. 632/1234) which he studies with a scholar who he identifies as *al-ʿārif* (one having knowledge of mysteries), and who he states passed his secrets onto him. Such works are as common components in catalogue *ijāzāt* as are popular works of

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42 Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī was the third *khalīfa* of the Shādhilī brotherhood, who systematized its doctrines and recorded the biographies of its founder, and the first *khalīfa*, Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī He wrote the first Shādhilī treatise on *dhikr*, called *The Key to Success (Miḥṭāḥ al-Falāḥ)*.

43 Zabīdī, ‘*Iqd al jawāhir al-thamīn*, 90.

44 “idle” being, of course the etymology of “scholarly”.

45 An interesting question would by which preceded the other: initiation or study. This question is, of course, impossible to answer with the existing sources.

tafsīr and fiqh, suggesting that they were a standard part of the curriculum of any student seeking to establish himself as a religious authority, or ‘ālim. Honorifics reserved for holders of mystical knowledge, including al-ʻārif and al-quṭb (a position in the hierarchy of the awliyā’) are tagged onto names of scholars in a variety of fields. Formulaic blessings following the names of some transmitters amount to a recognition of their status as awliyā’. An example is Şabbāgh’s use of the phrase “qaddis allāh sirruh” (God bless his secret), after mentioning the name of his teacher in Mālikī fiqh.47 This is a blessing typically tagged onto a name as recognition of walāya. Honorifics (alqāb) that indicate the ṭarīqa affiliation of a given individual are as prevalent as those attesting to their geographic origins or the school of sunnī fiqh in which they were trained. One ijāza refers to its recipient as “Aḥmad Nuwayrjād Ash’arī in creed, Mālikī by school, Khalwatī by brotherhood.”48 Similarly, a teacher is referred to as “Shāfi’ī in terms of his school of jurisprudence and Rifā’ī in terms of his brotherhood.”49

Thus, the catalogue ijāzāt serve as a record of the importance of the knowledge associated with tašawwuf in the curriculum of an advanced scholar or ‘ālim. Parallel salāsil in the ‘ahd suggest the overlap of these scholarly studies with initiation into a formalized brotherhood. Furthermore, the plenitude of honorific and nisba attest to the dual role of many scholars as both masters of the sharʿi sciences and sanctified bodies, that is, awliyā’. In what follows, the influence of walāya in scholarly culture will be show to run even deeper than these parallels. Conceptions of walāya can be read in the very organization of religious authority, forming the basis for ideas about where authority resides, and how it is transmitted, structuring the most fundamental institutions in Islamic education. It will be argued that the majority of

49 “Shāfi’ī madh-hab” wa rifāʿi ṭarīqat” from “Ijāzat al-Shaykh Zayn al-Dīn Ābd al-Rahmān” (Cairo: Azhar Manuscripts, Mūjāmiʿa): 145.
transmissions recorded the *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh are better understood as text-rituals similar to the recording of *salāsil* in Zabīdī’s *‘Iqd*, discussed in the previous chapter, than as verifying accurate mastery of conceptual or verbal content. As such, they express the privileging of physical closeness to sanctified bodies over conceptual understanding for the transmission both of embodied knowledge (*sunna* or *ṭarīqa*) and the mysterious physical force of *baraka*.

**Ḥadīth**

On first viewing the catalogue *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh, it is clear that much of the information recorded in it does not serve the primary function of attesting to the mastery of intellectual material. This is particularly true of transmissions of *ḥadīth*, which make up the vast majority of the *isnād* in the collection. In the eighteenth century, *ḥadīth* and mysticism were commonly studied together.\(^{50}\) Voll argues that this is a new trend in the eighteenth century, based on the fact that Muḥammad al-Bābilī, the teacher of ʿAbd Allāh b. Sālim al-巴šrī was not affiliated with a *ṭarīqa* whereas Bašrī and his students clearly link the two religious functions. However, the connection between *ḥadīth* study and *ṭašawwuf* appears to have an historical precedent. Dickinson argues that the collection of *isnād* in the field of *ḥadīth* had long since ceased to serve its original function, which was to verify the *matn* or text of a given report by attesting to the soundness of each individual or relationship in the chain by which it was transmitted.\(^{51}\) The sense of this shift in the purpose of the study of *ḥadīth* is expressed in the *ijāza* of an eighteenth century Iranian scholar who views the importance of *isnād* in his day as having long since become more devotional than educational. According to him, *isnād* are not necessary to confirm the veracity


of reports, the isnād of which “are so well known that they need not be recorded, and cannot be disputed.”

Rather, the recording of isnād in the field of ḥadīth functioned as a text-ritual akin to Zabīdī’s salāsil ahl al-tawhīd described in the previous chapter. The isnād for transmission of ḥadīth in the ijāza of Ṣabbāgh are more closely related in their epistemology to the handshake than to the early chains for verification of ḥadīth. That is, these isnād, as they exist in the institution of the ijāza, serve the primary purpose of conveying a variety of modes of proximity (qurba or walāya). The concept of the isnād as a means of proximity is indicated in the introduction to the ijāza of Ṣabbāgh. He quotes Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭūsī as having said that the “isnād bring us closer to God.” He cites another authority as having said that “the isnād in religion are one of the ways that lead to our master [the Prophet].” In the ijāza of Ṣabbāgh, ḥadīth transmissions are used to manifest multiple kinds of qurba to the sources of mysterious knowledge. First, transmissions categorized as “enchained” ahadīth (ahadīth musalsala) suggest a kind of qurba in the quality of the relationship to the shaykh, by implying the relationship of ṣuḥba or constant companionship understood to be necessary for the inculcation of his bodily practice. Second, some transmissions attest to qurba as physical intimacy between the grantor and recipient of the ḥadīth, and thereby the possibility of the transmission of baraka. Transmissions in Ṣabbāgh’s collection prized for elevated isnād convey chronological qurba, by a sense of time measured in lifespans. Finally, certain transmissions are included to contribute to


53 ʿAbū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī (d. 413/1022), spent most of his career in Baghdād, but played an important role in making al-Najaf an important Shī‘ī center. Ṣabbāgh refers to him as the Imām al-Ṭūsī, as he served as head of the Athnā ʿashariyya, or Twelver Shī‘ī scholars.

54 “Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 1.
the quality or authority of the collection as a whole. Through the logic of *tawātur*, the collection of multiple, superficial relationships contribute by sheer number to the certainty and therefore, the overall authority of the recipient. As with the *salāsil*, the process of writing or memorizing the text of the *isnād* was a ritual understood to fulfill a spiritual function in and of itself.

**Qurba in enchained *ḥadīth***

The bulk of a student’s learning in the field of *ḥadīth* was through the “Sound” (*Ṣaḥīḥ*) collections,⁵⁵ which were transmitted as a whole. The chains of transmission for these works went only back to the author of the collection, with those of Bukhārī and Muslim being favored. However, some *ḥadīth* are transmitted individually, purveying a special kind of *qurba* (proximity). Such *ḥadīth*, are labeled in the catalogue *ijāzā* of Šabbāgh and others as *musalsal* (enchained). This is a well-known genre of *ḥadīth*, which Shahrazūrī, (d. 643/1245), included in his introduction to the study of *ḥadīth*. He defines *ḥadīth* *musalsala* as transmissions characterized by the “common adherence [of each transmitter in the chain] one after another, to a single state or condition.”⁵⁶ That is, the state or action of the transmitter was repeated by each individual in the chain as they “took” (*akhadha*) the *ḥadīth*. In the following example, the student describes his teacher’s acquisition of a *ḥadīth* transmitted while cutting the nails on Friday.

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**Notes**

⁵⁵ The “Sound Six” collections of *ahadīth* are viewed as a canon, in that between the six all sound *ahadīth* are assumed to have preserved. These include the favored collections of Bukhārī (d. 256/870) and Muslim (d. 261/875), along with Abu Dawūd (d. 261/875), Ibn Maja (d. 273/886), al-Tirmīdhī (d. 279/892) and al-Nasā’ī (d. 303/915).

The shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥadithīnī, the Imām in the mosque of the saint possessed of intuitive knowledge (‘ārif) Sīdī Aḥmad al-Zāhid told us of the ḥadīth al-musalsal with cutting the nails on Friday, by recitation while cutting his nails on Friday. He said, the shaykh, the learned and esteemed Imām Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-‘Ajamī told me, by recitation while he was cutting his nails on Friday, he said, the shaykh, the learned and esteemed Imām Ibrahīm al-Laqānī told me, by recitation while he was cutting his nails on Friday, he said, the shaykh, the learned and esteemed Imām the Shaykh Sālim al-Sanhūrī told me, by recitation while he was cutting his nails on Friday, on the authority of his shaykh, and so on with a sanad that continues to Anas b. Mālik, may God be pleased with him, with each of them saying I saw my shaykh cutting his nails on Friday on the authority of Ānis b. Mālik who said I saw the Prophet, God’s praises and protection upon him, cutting his nails on Friday, the end.

This particular ḥadīth involves only an action, but many of the aḥadīth of this type also include a phrase spoken, along with a description of the transmitter’s state while uttering it, such as in the ḥadīth al-subḥa (the ḥadīth of the rosary), in which each student asks, “why do you have the rosary in your hand” and each teacher responds, “this is something sacred that we learned to do in the beginning and we will not quit it until the end.” The aḥadīth al-musalsala stand out in the ijāza of Şabbāgh because they are among the very few in an extensive collection of isnād that are recorded all the way back to the Prophet. Most other ḥadīth that he studied were transmitted as a group, in one of the sound collections, as in the Šahīḥ of al-Bukhārī.

There is no apparent legal content to these aḥadīth that is not already present in the sound collections, each of which Şabbāgh has studied, according to his ijāza. For this reason, such transmissions may be dismissed as evidence of a senile or irrational intellectual tradition reproduced without reflection. However, if we begin from the assumption that such aḥadīth were considered to play an important role as a text-ritual, they provide useful insight into the concept of authority and the appropriate mechanisms for its transmission shared by Şabbāgh and his contemporaries. Şabbāgh probably understood these aḥadīth to represent an historical truth. For

58 “Ijāzat al-Şabbāgh,” 16.
the purpose of this study, questions of the historicity of these reports are immaterial. Reading such carefully preserved interaction as text-rituals allows it to be used to derive an historical view of sanctity and religious authority.

By evoking an image of being in the company of the master during private moments such as grooming, as with cutting the nails, or solitary prayer, as with the rosary, the aḥadīth musalsal of cutting the nails implies a moment of intimacy with the body of the shaykh giving the ḥadīth. The meticulous recording of this and similar interactions enshrines it as a moment of ritual importance despite the absence of any conceptual or verbal content. Other enchained aḥadīth include the transmission of acts of friendship and affection, such as holding hands, an embrace or a smile.59 The preservation of these transmissions is evidence that great importance was placed on qurba as physical intimacy with the teaching shaykh as a basis for religious authority in Ṣabbāgh’s scholarly milieu.

Every catalogue ijāza in this sample contains a particular enchained ḥadīth called “al-silsila bil-awwaliyya” meaning “the chain of firsts.”60 In it, each link in the chain mentions that the ḥadīth was the first one taught to a given student by a given teacher. This ḥadīth records a ritual that initates a one-on one teacher-student relationship, of suḥba or fellowship, as described in chapter one. In contrast to public lectures, in which a given student’s attendance may or may not be noted, the teacher who is conferring the ḥadīth bil-awwaliyya selects a particular ḥadīth to transmit in honor of the beginning of his period of study with that particular student. Again, the existence of the “chain of firsts” in a given collection does not guarantee that a relationship of fellowship actually existed between each of the links in the chain, but the painstaking records of such transmissions attest to the importance of this one-on-one relationship in defining the total

59 Shahrazūrī, Science of the Ḥadīth, 197.
60 Voll, “ʿAbdallah ibn Salim al-Basī.”
religious authority of a student of the shar‘î sciences. Zabīdī records many individuals in his Mu‘jam (his collection of biographies of contacts) only for having taken from him al-hadīth al-musalsal bil-awwaliyya.61

In this hadīth, as in other musalsalāt, the relationship between the words in the hadīth of the rosary, and the action that accompanies it are symmetrical. That is, the words pertain to the action taking place in each transmission. This symmetry in the hadīth points toward the role of these reports as verbal transmission of praxis, describing the actions of the messenger that accompanied the message of the Qur‘ān. Just as the actions of the Prophet are seen as an embodied interpretation of the Qur‘ān, each shaykh who is heir to that praxis is the vessel for that embodied tradition. Enchained aḥadīth like that of the rosary are transmissions of both the verbal description of the practice and, simultaneously, the embodied version of that practice. This is precisely the view of embodied knowledge described by Suhrawārdī in his explanation of the need for a teacher, and the need to emulate his every action as precisely as possible.62

The importance of mysticism for the organization of authority is explicit in the inclusion of initiation into a ṭarīqa as a typical enchained hadīth in the repertoire of the catalogue ijāza. In the following example, the tradition of initiation by being dressed in the khirqa (robe) of the order is called “the hadīth of being dressed in the robes of the brotherhood”:

وأما حديث لبس الخرقة فقد البستها من يد استاذي سيدي عبد الله البصري وقد البستها له العلامة محمد بن سليمان المغربي وهو ليسها عن شيخه أبي عثمان الجرايري... وهو عن الإمام حسن البصري وهو من يد الإمام الأوحد على ابن أبي طالب كرم الله وجهه ورضي الله عنه وهو ليسها من يد المصطفى صلى الله عليه وسلم.63

As for the hadīth of wearing the khirqa [robes of the brotherhood], I was dressed in them by my master ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī, and he was dressed in them by the esteemed Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Maghribī. He was dressed in them by [the authority of] his shaykh Abū ‘Uthmān al-Jarā‘īrī ... And he by [the authority of] the Imām Ḥasan

61 Reichmuth, Zabīdī.
62 In Suhrawardī, A Sufi Rule for Novices, 41-42, as discussed in chapter one.
63 “Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 14 (the ellipsis indicate where twenty five names are excluded from the chain for the sake of brevity).
al-Baṣrī, and he by the hand of the only Imām ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may God bless his face and be pleased with him, and he wore it from the hand of the chosen one, peace and blessings be upon him.

The enchained *ḥadīth* have a very similar purpose to being dressed in the *khirqa*. They are the basis of a religious authority based on the location of an individual in a complex of genealogies, not just of learning, but of companionship and quasi-familial closeness. Thus, *ḥadīth* studies, which has typically been seen as the archetypical transmitted science and the bedrock of Sunni jurisprudence, functions here also as a means of asserting the physical connection to the founders of the faith and to God Himself usually associated with Islamic mysticism.

**Chronological qurba: the “blessing” (baraka) of elevated isnād**

Ṣabbāgh does not always explain why he chose to include one teacher’s *sanad* over that of another, except that the teacher whose *sanad* is included is “*min ajlihim*”, meaning, “one of the best of them.”\(^64\) While the rest are omitted “for the sake of brevity.” He clearly viewed his teacher ‘Abd Allāh b. Sālim al-Baṣrī (d. 1134/1722)\(^65\) as the most important in the aspect of his religious life that the *ijāza* is meant to manifest. The *isnād* that Ṣabbāgh attributes to Baṣrī are greater in number than *isnād* originating with other teachers (representing about 60% of the total *isnād* in the work). They also tower over the other citations in the care that is given to their recording. They are more formal in format, including every transmitter and going all the way back to the author of the work, as can be seen in figure 2.6 (Ṣabbāgh’s most elevated chain to Ṣahīḥ al-Bukhārī. They also appear more prestigious for the same reason. However, the years that Ṣabbāgh studies with Baṣrī were only two (from 1126-7/1714-15). Also, most of the works

\(^{64}\) Ibid., 10.

\(^{65}\) Baṣrī lived in Mecca in the early eighteenth century, and though he was not widely published, he was an extremely popular teacher. The biographer Murādī lists him in the biographies of at least thirty individuals. See Voll, “ʿAbdallah ibn Salim al-Basri,” 358.
that he reports having studied with Baṣrī were studied with several other teachers, as indicated by
the phrase, “I took it from [studied it with] several teachers, among them are…” Furthermore,
Ṣabhāgh in some cases mentions that he only studied a fraction of the works for which he
mentions receiving Baṣrī’s blessing (ijāza). For example, though he studied only the first quarter
of a certain work of theology with the famous teacher, he received an ijāza for the rest of it as
well as for another related work.  Ṣabhāgh also distinguishes his study of a work of tafsīr with
another teacher, Muḥammad Zaytūna al-Tūnisī (al-baṣīr bi-qalbiḥī), “darāyatan,” meaning
“for understanding.” This suggests that many of the transmissions recorded by Ṣabhāgh have as
their goal something other than understanding.

Understanding why Baṣrī is his most prominently featured teacher gives insight into the
purpose of transmissions that do not promote “understanding,” and into the culture of religious
authority in which it was produced. One factor that gave the audition of a given ḥadīth value was
the “elevation” of the isnād collected by the recitor. “Elevated” or “high” isnād, are those by
which the ḥadīth has been transmitted through the least number of people. Baṣrī had
distinguished himself by his extensive knowledge of the so-called “highest” isnād available in
the study of ḥadīth. He published a book on the topic entitled “Aids in Understanding the
Elevation of isnād.” Thus, the reason to sit with ʿAbd Allāh al-Baṣrī in Mecca was not to get a
clear meaning of the content, but to collect the certifications of his close connection to prominent
authors, and to the Prophet himself. Baṣrī was not the only muḥaddith to make a career out of the

collection of the high chains of transmission. Most of the isnād that Ṣabhāgh took from Baṣrī

66 This phrase is used several times in “Ijāzat al-Ṣabhāgh,” such as on pages 4, 7, 9, 10, 11
(twice), 12,15, 16, 19, 34 and 37.
67 The work is entitled Maʿālim al-tanzīl by al-Ḥusnī b. Masʿūd al-Baghwī “riwāyatan” from ʿAbdullah b. Sālim
al-Baṣrī (Ibid., 4). He also studied fractions of al-Wasīl by Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Wāḥidī,
and the tafsīr of al-Rāzī with the same teacher in Mecca.
68 Ibid., 4.
come through his teacher, the Egyptian shaykh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Bābilī (d. 1078/1668), who was known as the most elevated Egyptian traditionist of the seventeenth century. He was trained in Shāfī‘ī fiqh but was best known because of the book of his transmissions published by his student al-Maghribī.70

Thanks to the chains that he acquired during his time with Baṣrī, Ṣabbāgh could boast his location in a generation just following a venerated master from long ago. This logic can be seen in Ṣabbāgh’s comment on one of his transmissions for the Sahih hadith of Bukhārī:

فبيني و بين البخاري من هذا الطريق عشرة والله الحمد والمنه فايدة أعلا أسانيد الحافظ بن حجر أن بينه وبين البخاري سبعة تقديم السين وأعلا أسانيد الإمام السيوطي أن بينه وبين البخاري ثمانية٦٧

So by this chain there are ten between Bukhārī and me, God be praised for this benefit. By the highest chains of al-Ḥāfiẓ b. Ḥajar,72 between him and Bukhārī are seven [steps in the chain], and by the highest chains of Suyūṭī,73 between him and al-Bukhārī are eight.

The measurement of time in lifespans assimilated by Ṣabbāgh has an early provenance, as the early Muslims were classified by their proximity to the Prophet in generations saḥāba, ṭābīʿūn, ṭābiʿ ṭābiʿūn, etc.74 This explains the theme of miraculously long lives.75 Furthermore, because of his acquisition of the high isnād that Baṣrī taught, Ṣabbāgh becomes for later generations what Suyūṭī was to him. One student notes after recording a particularly elevated sanad, “there is between me and Ṣabbāgh only three links, and that is as close as any of our oldest shuyūkh.”76 In this sense, the collection contained in the catalogue ijāza of Ṣabbāgh can be understood as a

70 Reichmuth, Zabīdī, 51.
72 al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī (d. 852/1448)
73 Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 849/1445)
74 Siddiqi, Hadith Literature.
75 Bashir, Sufi bodies, 5.
76 Kattānī, Fihris al-fahāris, 2:262 (entry 653).
showcase for the best chains that he has collected, rather than as an accurate picture of his cognitive learning.

This closeness, in turn, is understood by Ṣabbāgh as evidence of his blessing. His discourse describing the high isnād as a divine gift granted only to some individuals, distinguishing them among their peers, echoes statements about walāya as a blessing granted from God, discussed in the previous chapter. He writes: “God gives the short chains of transmission (‘ulūw al-isnād) to whoever he wishes.”77 Thus, while the transmitted knowledge itself can be acquired through the hard work and perseverance it takes to put it to memory, the most elevated isnād, like walāya itself, carry the prestige of a manifestation of God’s grace.

Like salāsil in the Sufi milieu, the collection of asānīd is often described as having as its purpose tabarruk (blessing). This is the same term that devotees use to describe the promise of fortune and blessing which draws believers to worship at the tombs of saints.78 The recipient of an eighteenth century Iranian ijāza explains the devotional purpose of the ijāza as a continuation of the tradition of the earlier scholars who did it “seeking good fortune and blessing.”79 In his treatise Luqat al-Marjān, Zabīdī includes a ḥadīth bil-awnaliyya from a non-human (jinn) companion of the Prophet, in order to take blessing (tabarruk) from it.80 It is in this sense that Dickenson can meaningfully call the ḥadīth “a special kind of relic,” in that they “bring individuals into a closer relationship with the sacred power of the Prophet.”81

78 A phenomenon best described by Hoffman in Sufism, Mystics, and Saints.
79 Schmidtke, “Forms and Functions of Licenses to Transmit,” 104.
80 Reichmuth, Zabīdī, 94.
This highness of isnād, and the closeness to God that it affords are sometimes represented as more important than the understanding of the content of a given hadīth. For example, one ijāza quotes Ṭūsī\textsuperscript{82} as having said:

وَقَالَ الْإِمَامُ الطَّوْسِيُّ،ْ قَرْبُ الْإسْانِيِّدِ قَرْبُ إِلَيْهِ الَّذِيْنَا سَبِّحَاهُمْ وَتَعلَّمَهُمْ وَإِذَا حَصَلَ الضِّبْطُ بَيْنَهَا فِي الرُّوَايَةِ، فَلا يُضِرُّ نَقْصُ الْمَعْرَفَةِ وَالْدِّرَائِيَةِ، وَلَا يَقْدَحُ ذَلِكَ فِي الْمَأْخُوْذِ عَنْهُ قَرْبُ حَامِلِ تَفْقِهٍ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ.\textsuperscript{83}

The closeness of the asānīd is closeness to God, Praised and Almighty. If precision is achieved in the narration [of the isnād], then what is lacking in knowledge or understanding [of the transmitter] does no harm, and does not impair what is taken [on his authority], proximity being that which brings understanding [even] to one more knowledgeable.

It is in this context that it is possible to understand how Ṣabbāgh could write proudly of one of his auditions: “and I was the smallest among them, in both age and understanding.”\textsuperscript{84} This detail expresses the value that he places on being present as a child with an aged master. What Ṣabbāgh did not gain from this audition in understanding, he made up for by placing himself chronologically closer to the source of the authority of the teacher. His pride in his tender age and lack of knowledge can be understood in the peculiar chronology of generations, in which time is measured by the elastic yardstick of human lifetimes rather than by years.

The interest in highness of isnād seems to have extended beyond hadīth studies to other genres of learning, developing into a general pedagogical principle. MacKay finds evidence for the same phenomenon centuries earlier in the literary genre. In his analysis of the samāʿāt (certificates of audition) collected in an early literary manuscript, he observes that one of the

\textsuperscript{82} Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī (d. 413/1022), spent most of his career in Baghdād, but played an important role in making al-Najaf an important Shīʿī center. Ṣabbāgh refers to him as the Imām al-Ṭūsī, as he served as head of the Athnā ʿashariyya, or Twelver Shīʿī scholars.

\textsuperscript{83} “Ijāzat ʿAbd al-Karīm b. ʿAḥmad al-Sharābāṭī” (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, 1586 Taṣawwuf Ṭalaʿāt 692 Majāmīʿ Ṭalaʿāt).

\textsuperscript{84} “Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 15.
scholars who had given auditions of this text, named Abū al-Mu‘mar, appeared to be increasingly sought after for *ijāzāt* later in his life, to the point that the majority of the *ijāzāt* he awarded were given shortly before his death, when old age would likely have made him less effective as a teacher of content.⁸⁵ On the other side of the spectrum, children as young as two years old were given an *ijāza* for audition, although they would have clearly been too young to grasp the meaning of the text. This phenomenon of elderly readers and infantile attendees suggests that the ultimate goal of this type of audition was to place oneself in the most elevated, that is, the shortest *sanad*.⁸⁶

*Tawātur*

Besides the *qurba* of closeness in generation as a source of *baraka*, common phrases point to the view that coming into contact with a great teacher is a blessing, however superficial the relationship. This is expressed in one *ijāza* as: “he took something from the ocean of his knowledge”⁸⁷ Like Zabīdī’s *isnād* in the ‘Iqd, Šabbāgh’s collection of *isnād* projects his authority in part through the sheer number of chains of transmission included in his *ijāza*. He often lists multiple transmissions for the same work. The catalogue *ijāza* as a genre, whether in the study of the *shar‘ī* sciences, as in the *ijāza* of Šabbāgh, or in *taṣawwuf*, as in Zabīdī’s ‘Iqd can also be seen as attesting to the value that scholars placed on the sheer number of chains collected. That attaining the same knowledge through multiple chains made it more reliable is familiar from the epistemological paradigm of *ḥadīth* studies. Hallaq describes this concept of knowing though repetition in *ḥadīth* criticism, in terms of ideas about probability and certainty among scholars of *ḥadīth*:

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⁸⁶ MacKay finds that individuals who received the *Muqāmāt* as small children can also be found among the names in lists of later auditions given by younger authorities. He sees this as further evidence that earlier auditions were attended solely to achieve a short *sanad*, while they actually learned the text at later auditions as adults (Ibid., 25).
⁸⁷ استخرج من بحار علومه
When a person hears a hadith narrated by one transmitter, he is presumed to have gained only probable knowledge of its contents, and thus of its authenticity. To reach conclusive knowledge, the hadith must be heard by this person a sufficient number of times, and each time it must be narrated by a different transmitter. Four or fewer instances of hearing such a hadith were deemed insufficient to constitute a tawatur transmission, since, the jurists argued, the qadi in a court of law must deliberate on the testimony of four witnesses (as well as investigate their moral rectitude) before he renders his verdict... it is the moment at which a person realizes that he is completely certain of the contents of a reported hadith which determines the number of transmissions required for that particular instance of transmission, not the other way round; the number may be decided only when immediate and conclusive knowledge has been reached.88

While Hallaq’s discussion focuses on a cognitive experience of certainty, interactions with relics and shrines in the Sufi milieu involved a similar logic of familiarity through repetition. Like regular visits to touch a shrine or relic, each interaction with a teacher-walī was an opportunity to come in contact with the baraka associated with great scholars. Quite separate from the amount that was learned through each of these interactions was the additional value attached to the quality of the collection as a whole, the total range of teachers with whom the student had come in contact. This can be understood as an expression of a total process of drawing closer to the sources of divine guidance and blessing.

By reading these transmissions as text-rituals, a similar pedagogy of proximity to that described in the previous chapter comes into focus. Like in Zabīdī’s manual, the ijāza of Ṣabbāgh highlights those transmissions that express physical intimacy with the body of the shaykh or a one-on-one relationship. They also emphasize chronological closeness to important figures measured in lifespans (‘ulu al-sanad), as well as the cumulative benefit of contact. Because of the presence of the awliyā’ as teachers, and works in ‘ilm al-taṣawwuf as a part of the

total curriculum, it is reasonable to conclude that these practices were rooted, whether explicitly or implicitly in the same mystical epistemology. That is, such practices can be read as the realization in *habitus* of a concept of *walāya*, by which proximity to the bodies of holy people translates into religious authority.

**Ṣuḥba in the study of fiqh**

While the bulk of the transmissions in the *ijāza* of Ṣabbāgh are of *hadith* that functioned more as relics, there are also indications of the context for conceptual teaching and learning. In a few *isnād* at the beginning of his *ijāza*, Ṣabbāgh mentions having studied Mālikī *fiqh* with the shaykh Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Fayyūmī (d. 1137/1724), who was then rector of al-Azhar University in Cairo. According to his biography published by the Egyptian *Dār al-Iftā’*, Fayyūmī was known for his work in *hadith*, linguistics and morphology, and for his reputation as a talented and dedicated teacher.89 Many of the *isnād* for works Ṣabbāgh mentions having studied with Fayyūmī are truncated, such as his transmission for Malik’s *Muwaṭṭa*. The *sanad* through Fayyūmī, rather than ending at the author himself, only reaches back five generations, while others are cluttered with overlapping teachers and credentials (figure 2.7).90 Some of Ṣabbāgh’s transmissions through Fayyūmī are indistinct, mentioning years of study of *fiqh* and ‘aqā’id without mentioning any particular works, much less including *isnād*. Where the sections of the *ijāza* that attest to Ṣabbāgh’s accomplishments in the field of *hadith* express a swift linear progression back in time through multiple centuries, the section describing his study in the field

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89 Fayyūmī studied *Ḥadīth* with Yahyā al-Shahāwī, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Wāfī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Aḥūrī (Ṣabbāgh also studied with him), Ibrāhīm al-Barmāwī (the second Rector of al-Azhar), and Muḥammad al-Sharunbābī (a prodigious collector of ṭūrūq). His students include Muḥammad b. ‘Isā Yūsūf al-Damiyātī al-Ṣḥāfi’ī, Ṣālih ‘Alī al-Fayyūmī al-Mālikī (he was the head of the *riwāq* for the students from al-Fayyūm at al-Azhar), and one of his fellows (كلاً وَلَازَمَهُ فِي كُلِّ دِرْسِهِ حَتَّى ظَهَرَتْ نُجَابَتَهُ وَنَبَاهَهُ) was ‘Alī b. A. b. Makram Allāh al-Ṣaʿīdī al-Mālikī (Aḥmad al-Dardīr studied *fiqh* with him). Jabarti *Ajāʿīb* 1, 283.

of fiqh expresses a collection of overlapping horizontal relationships. Thus, the transmissions passed on to Şabbâgh from Fayyûmî grant him neither a shorter distance in generations from the Prophet (‘ulû’ al-sanad), nor do they attest to a physical connection to the Prophet or a prominent wali through an unbroken chain of personal contact, as in the enchained hadîth.

However, Şabbâgh’s description of his studies with Fayyûmî express another form of closeness emphasized in Zabîdî’s ‘Iqd: the proximity of suhba, or constant companionship. The most well-known examination of suhba as a mechanism for the disciplined study of the sharî sciences is that of Makdisi,91 who argues that a continuous theme across the many varieties of teachers, suhba is the vehicle for the most advanced levels of study.92 To him, companionship is a fundamental component of Islamic learning that dates back to the time of the Prophet, in that the early authorities on the faith were ranked into classes based on their proximity to him. Those who knew the Prophet in his lifetime, and were able to directly witness and emulate his sunna (habits, decisions and sayings) were labeled sâhib (companions), whereas those in following generations were tâbi’un (followers).93 There is no way to trace the historical development of suhba in the sharî sciences from this limited collection of certificates, and surely the term suhba has meant different things in different generations of scholars in different geographical locations.

The sort of companionship described by Suhrawârdî, in which a murîd is expected to emulate as

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91 He translates suhba as “fellowship”, making an analogy to graduate fellows at modern universities. This work is most controversial for having claimed that the origin of many elements of Western academic institutions came from the organization of learning in classical Islamic scholarly culture. The question of the relationship between Islamic and European institutions of learning has been taken up more recently by Christopher Beckwith in Warriors of the Cloisters: the Central Asian Origins of Science in the Medieval World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012). 92 Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, 167. According to him, it was only in the close relationship of suhba that students were allowed to learn about matters of debate in substantive rulings (khilaf). Students at the higher levels competed to make their own arguments, and developed commentaries (ta’lîqa) based on the lectures of their teachers. Thus, higher education, according to Makdisi, is marked not only by the subject matter (khilaf, or the application of fiqh theory to issues on which there was no communal consensus), but by the close relationship of suhba between the master and his disciple. The Rise of Colleges 114. He views suhba as the institution that explains how this “haphazard” system of education was able to produce such prolific and erudite scholars in the early period, before the emergence of more formalized institutions of learning (ibid, 128). 93 Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, 129.
closely as possible every practice of his master, is only one. But the ijāza of Ṣabbāgh gives some insight into how companionship was viewed in the period under consideration. Specifically, Ṣabbāgh’s notes about his relationship with Fayyūmī suggest that something akin to the ethic of constant companionship described by Suhrawardī was also considered to be an important component of the study of fiqh.

Certain details suggest that Ṣabbāgh enjoyed a particularly close relationship to Fayyūmī. Ṣabbāgh singles out his certification of one transmission from Fayyūmī as having been granted in the teacher’s own writing:

وقد أجازني كذلك اجازة عامة كتبها لي بخطه من اجازة شيخ الإسلام محمد الخراشي حرفًا بحرف سنة

And he also certified me with a general ijāza in his handwriting from the ijāza of Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad al-Kharāshī letter by letter in the year [eleven hundred and] twenty-three [1711].

Ṣabbāgh refers to their relationship as lāzima, a synonym of suhba also meaning constant companionship:

فقد لازمته اللازمة الطويلة في الجامع الأزهر المعمور

I was his constant companion (lāzintuḥu) for a long time at the Azhar mosque, which was built in remembrance of God.

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94 Trimingham views the adherence and careful emulation of a master described by Suhrawardī as having a comparatively late provenance, in what he class the tāʿīfa stage (coinciding with the Ottoman period, fifteenth century). He argues that it was not until this period that the emulation of the master came to be valued.
95 “Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 15.
96 Muḥammad al-Kharāshī (d. 1101/1690) was the first shaykh of al-Azhar. Khurāshī claimed the same sanad that appeared multiple times through Bābilī: Ibrāhīm al-Laqānī from Sālim al-Sanhūrī from al-Najam al-Ghaytī, from Zakariyya al-Anṣārī from al-Hāfiz b. Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqīlānī, with the rest of the sanad to al-Bukhārī, as well as through Ajhūrī. According to Dār al-İftā’. He became the first person to carry the title of shaykh of al-Azhar in 1090/1679. Fayyūmī studied the Risāla of Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Zayd al-Qayrawānī with him.
98 Makdisi defines the fellow as both an advanced student who had completed his basic course in the sharʿi sciences, and as a constant companion of his master. Other terms used to denote the same relationship include lāzama and ihtabaʿa (The Rise of Colleges, 167).
Şabbâgh’s companionship of Fayyûmî included living with him in his home: “dwelling with him, in order to learn from him, and converse with him. How we hope for his reward, God willing, by his gifts and noble generosity.” Furthermore, his studies with Fayyûmî were considerably more rigorous. For the legal sciences, Şabbâgh mentions having gone over several works completely as many as twenty five to thirty times with Fayyûmî:

I studied with him the Mukhtaṣir of Khalîl around twenty five times completely, and [the summary of] the Risâla [of Shâfi‘î] by the erudite Tatây around thirty times. the commentary on ‘Abd al-Bâqî ‘Alî five times. I studied the commentary of ‘Ashmâwî as well, by audition and reading, between his hands, dwelling with him, in order to learn from him, and converse with him. How we hope for his reward, God willing, by His gifts and noble generosity.

Şabbâgh’s reverence of his teacher as a walî is expressed earlier in the text when he invokes the blessing “God bless his secret,” a common phrase following the name of a walî, acknowledging his esoteric knowledge. Besides being his teacher of fiqh, was Fayyûmî was also his guide in a parallel and simultaneous training in tasawwuf? From the documentary evidence available, there is no conclusive answer to this question. His biography published by the Dār al-Iftâ makes no mention of Fayyûmî having practiced tasawwuf, having any tariqa affiliation, nor being known for the publication of any works on tasawwuf. Yet Şabbâgh identifies Fayyûmî as being affiliated with the Wafā‘î brotherhood:

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99 Ibid., 3.
100 Ibid., 3.
101 Probably the Mukhtaṣir of the Mâlikî scholar Khalîl b. Ishâq b. Mâsâ al-Jundî (d. 767/1366)
...My shaykh and my teacher of merit, the erudite, deceased Shaykh Ibrāhīm b. al-Shaykh Mūsā al-Fayyūmī, Minshāwī in origin, Wafā’ī in brotherhood, May God have mercy on him.

Ṣabbāgh may not only have been one of Fayyūmī’s favored students in Mālikī fiqh, but also simultaneously benefitted from him in a shaykh-murīd relationship of the sort described by Zabīdī in his ‘Iqd. If so, this would be another element of Zabīdī’s pedagogy of proximity was carried into the study of the shar‘ī sciences: that physical intimacy of being with the shaykh during private moments outside the study circle may have been seen as an important part of learning the moral correctness that he embodied in his personal habits, behaviors and gestures.

Makdisi argues that the logic of the so-called “foreign” sciences104 formed the basis for the scholastic method that determined the very way of organizing knowledge in the shar‘ī sciences. That is, dialectic, articulated in the Islamic tradition as jadal (disputation) and riyāsa (the concept of a “leading” scholar), was the basis for the organization of Islamic law and legal study.105 Even when these ancillary sciences were not themselves the object of study, the epistemology of philosophy still played a part in the curriculum by informing the pedagogical principles that organized the study of the shar‘ī sciences. Whatever the status of the so-called foreign sciences among scholars of fiqh, the important point for this study is Makdisi’s point that it is possible for beliefs about the nature of knowledge and authority to continue to be reproduced.

103 “Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 3.
104 Makdisi argues that although the foreign sciences continued to form the basis for pedagogical practices, they were marginalized over time until they were eventually excluded almost completely from the curriculum of the madrasa. This view has been disputed by many scholars including Sonja Brentjes, “Orthodoxy,” Ancient Sciences, Power, and the Madrasa (“college”) in Ayyubid and Early Mamluk Damascus: Its Historical Descriptions and Historiographical Interpretation (Berlin: Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, 1997), but is taken up strongly by others, see for example, Toby Huff, The Rise of Early Modern Science: Islam, China and the West (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
through cultures of practice, even by those who oppose those beliefs in principle. Ancient philosophy continued to inform Islamic scholarly culture as doxa underpinning the way that scholarly relationships were understood. Just so, mysticism as an epistemology organized relationships between scholars into a pedagogy of proximity similar to that made explicit in al-taṣawwuf al-falsafī.

Sabbāgh describes the relationship of being a student of Fayyūmī as being “between his hands.” This was a common turn of phrase evoking the complex and integrated combination of relationships not only of teaching, but also of nurture and obedience, discussed in the previous chapter. Proceeding from the view of Bourdieu, that certain embodied beliefs, which have been referred to in the previous chapter as doxa are taught and learned without ever being articulated, it has been argued here that a view of knowledge as sunna, ṭarīqa, or habitus located in the sanctified bodies of the awliyā’ is observed not only in the field of taṣawwuf, but also in institutions for the study of fiqh. There is no conclusive evidence that Fayyūmī’s relationship to Sabbāgh was that of a khalīfa to his initiate. What does seem clear is that to Sabbāgh, proximity to sanctified bodies was such an important part of the process of learning in the sharî sciences that he interacted with scholars like Fayyūmī, who designated themselves as fuqahā’, as if they were sanctified bodies.

Conclusion

The practice of taṣawwuf, and the type of authority such practices confer, are sometimes seen as belonging to a popular type of Islam, as opposed to that of the “Great Tradition,” the latter being the product of a complex set of analytical methods for verifying authentic transmission of the founding texts of the faith and extrapolating these into a diverse but unified legal and moral

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By extension of this theory of a divide between popular mysticism and a scholarly orthodoxy, the tolerance shown by elite scholars at major institutions such as al-Azhar University in Cairo toward mystical practices has sometimes been explained as a strategy for appeasing the less-educated majority of the population.107

It will be useful to conclude by returning to the biography of the shaykh al-‘Afīfī, who was honored by the questionable festivities described on the first page of this chapter. According to Jabartī’s biography of ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al’Afīfī (d. 1172/1758) he was a companion (lāzimahu) of Ṣabbāgh, author of the ijāza, and studied with Murtadhā al-Zabīdī.108 ‘Afīfī was also initiated into the Khalwatiyya by Muṣṭafā Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bakrī and into the Shādhiliyya by Aḥmad al-Tawwātī.109 Despite his companionship of these religious elites he is described by Jabartī as having been a great ascetic who recoiled from the visits of princes in his honor, preferring seclusion, and ziyāra (visitation) of shrines. He gained a popular following during his lifetime, and after his death, his children built a shrine for him for the purpose of ziyāra, which many of the leading ‘ulamā’ and awliyā’ and muḥaddithīn visited from all over the country, until finally, the infamous mawsīm (festival) was established for him.110 This could be considered a short line of ṣuḥba (figure 2.8), beginning with the ascetic wali ‘Afīfī, taught by Ṣabbāgh, who was best remembered for his collection of isnād in ḥadīth from the shaykh al-Baṣrī, and continuing to the teacher of whom he was the companion, the shaykh al-Fayyūmī, a specialist in Mālikī fiqh and rector of al-Azhar. That this chain of companionship includes the “popular” dervish, a muḥaddith and a Mālikī who rose to the position of rector of al-Azhar suggests the

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107 As, for example, in Rudolf Peters’ fascinating analysis of a “fundamentalist” activity at al-Azhar in 1711 in “The Battered Dervishes of Bāb Zueila” in Eighteenth Century Renewal and Reform in Islam Nehemiah Levitzion and John O. Voll, eds. (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1987): 101
108 Jabarti, Ajā’ib, 2: 364-5.
109 Also, De Jong, Ṭuruq, 25.
110 Jabarti, Ajā’ib, 2: 364-5.
degree to which *walāya* was integrated into the scholarly culture of elites in this period. This supports the evidence in the chains of transmission in the catalogue *ijāzāt* that a mystical epistemology by which, by which authority is cultivated not only through cognitive mastery of the rules of *fiqh*, but also through *walāya*, that is, proximity to the sources of divine blessing and guidance. For this reason, students like Ṣabbāgh strived to cultivate physical proximity to the sanctified bodies of their teachers, even as they learned texts from Islam’s Great Tradition of *ḥadīth* and legal reasoning.
Figure 2.1: The *ijāza* of Sharnbābīlī

"The *ijāza* of Sharunbābīlī" It is not dated, but was certainly written before the year 1102, since it mentions his grandfather who died in that year, as the present head of al-Azhar.
“The ijāza of ʿAhmad al-Qumāsh,” 1292/1875

[after the opening prayer] This brother of guidance and success, the ward of earnestness and achievement...Shaykh ʿAbd al-Rahmān Khalaf, asked that I give him ijāza [my blessing, permission, certification] in what I have correct understanding, and in what I have been given permission to narrate. Among these are … For that reason, fulfilling his demand, and in compliance with his desire and his wish, I said: I give you that ijāza on the condition that you be circumspect and open-minded, and I advise you to fear God almighty… and blessings on our master Muḥammad and on his holy and blessed family and companions. This was spoke by the lips and written by the pen of ʿAtiyya al-Qumāsh, son of the deceased Ḥājj Ibrahīm al-Qumāsh al-Damīyāṭī al-Shādili al-As‘ārī, may God forgive them both and all of the Muslim men and all of the Muslim women and all of the believing men and all of the believing women. Amen, amen. On the tenth day of jumāda al-ākhīra, in the year 1292 [July 4, 1875] since the prophetic migration, prayers to those who did it. Purest greetings. [seal]
Figure 2.3: A catalogue *ijāza* with a ḥadīth musalsal bil-awwaliyya

From “*Ijāzat al-Malawī al-Kabīr lil- shaykh al-Barāwī*” (Cairo: Azhar Manuscripts, Muṣṭalah 398/14482)

As for the ḥadīth by the chain of firsts, the narration is on the authority of several shaykhs, among them is my master ʿAbd Allāh b. Sālim al-Bāṣrī, and it was the first ḥadīth I heard from him, in his house in noble Mecca, and it is the first ḥadīth that he heard from his shaykh al-Bābilî, and him on the authority of al-Shahāb Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Salmī on the authority of al-Jamāl Yūsuf, son of the shaykh al-Īslām Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī on the authority of al-Jamāl Ibrāhīm b. ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī on the authority of Shihāb Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Maqdisī on the authority of al-Ṣadad Muḥammad…
Figure 2.4: Zabīdī’s line of ṣuhba in the Shādhilī brotherhood.\textsuperscript{111}

[It is through] companionship of al-Sayyid ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. ʿAqīl
just as he was the companion of al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aslam
ʿAbd Allāh b. Sālim al-Baṣrī
Shams al-Dīn al-Bābilī
Sālim al-Sanhūrī
al-Najm al-Ghayṭī
Shaykh al-Islām Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī
al-ʿIzz ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. al-Furāt
al-Tāj ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Subkī
ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Kāfī al-Subkī
Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. ʿUmar al-Mursī

Just as he was the companion of the imām of the ṭariqa.

As for the *Ḥikam* of Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Aṭṭā Ullah (God bless him), I took it from many, praise and gratitude to God, and I was granted *ijāza* in it and its commentary by:

‘Abd Allāh b. Sālim al-Bāṣrī

his shaykh al-Bābilī

‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf al-Mināwī and the Shaykh Sālim al-Sanhūrī

al-Najm al-Ghayṭī

Shaykh al-Islām Zakarīyya al-Anṣārī

Abū ‘Abd al-Rahīm b. al-Furāt

al-Tāj ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Alī al-Subkī

Taqī ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Kāfī al-Subkī (his father)

The *imām* and author, God have mercy on him.
**Figure 2.6**: Ṣabbāgh’s most elevated chain to the *Sahīh* of al-Bukhārī

\[ '\text{Abd Allāh b. Sālim al-Baṣrī} \]
\[ | \]
\[ Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥasan al-Kurānī \]
\[ | \]
\[ '\text{Abd al-Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥamrī} \]
\[ | \]
\[ Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nahrawānī \]
\[ | \]
\[ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Nahrawānī (his father) \]
\[ | \]
\[ al-Ḥāfīẓ Nūr al-Dīn Abū al-Fatūḥ al-Ṭā‘ūsī \]
\[ | \]
\[ Abū Yūsuf al-Harāwī \]
\[ | \]
\[ Muḥammad b. Shādhyakht al-Farghānī \]
\[ | \]
\[ Abū Luqmān Yaḥyā b. ‘Ammār b. ‘Aqīl b. Shāhān al-Khatlānī \]
\[ | \]
\[ Farbarī \]
\[ | \]
Bukhārī (God be pleased with him)

\[ ^{112} \text{“Ijāzat al-Ṣabbāgh,” 6-7.} \]
**Figure 2.7:** Ṣabbāgh’s *sanad* for the theological creed of al-Ajhūrī

Ṣabbāgh

Ibrāhīm al-Fayyūmī  Muḥammad al-Zarqānī  Ahmād al-Nafrāwī

Muḥammad (known as) Ṣabāḥ al-Khayr

\[\text{Ibrāhīm al-Laqānī}\]

‘Abd al-Bāqī b. al-Zarqānī

\[\text{al-Ajhūrī (the author)}\]

(The *sanad* include multiple teachers whose credentials overlap)

Ṣabbāgh’s *sanad* for the *Muwattā* of Mālik (the entire work, by narration, *riwāya*).

Ibrāhīm al-Fayyūmī

\[\text{al-Qurshī}\]

The great Imām al-Burhān al-Laqānī

\[\text{Abū al-Najā Sālim al-Sanhūrī}\]

(the *sanad* is truncated, rather than ending at the author of the work)
Figure 2.8: Reconstructed line of *ṣuḥba* for ‘Afīfī:

‘Abd al-Wahhāb al’Affī (d. 1172/1758),

ascetic mystic

Companion (*lāzimahu*) of

Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā al-Iskandarī al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 1162/1748),

best known for his collection of transmissions in the field of *ḥadīth*

Companion (*lāzimtu hu lāzim*’un) of

Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Fayyūmī (d. 1137/1724),

jurist of the Mālikī school, rector of al-Azhar.
Chapter 3

Proximity as schema of leadership: Abū al-Anwār’s authority through personal ties

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt (d. 1228/1813) was the nineteenth khalīfa of the Wafā’ī brotherhood. His biography by Muḥammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī, in his Bayt al-Sādāt al-Wafā’īyya, is alternately complimentary and critical. Bakrī reproduces Jabartī’s biography of the shaykh almost to the word, beginning with a description of Abū al-Anwār as possessing the personal traits he states are necessary for a good shaykh. These include his good conduct (sulūk) in terms of generosity, decency and leadership, and manners (ādāb). He also emphasizes Abū al-Anwār’s respect and love for the older generation, his kindness (hamīda), and his avoidance of things that are not chivalrous. He describes him as studious in religion and letters (ādāb) and choosing to keep the company of exceptional people and sit with them for discussions, as well as his efforts to acquire books on every subject (fann) with love, and to collect them in the service of religion. Finally, Bakrī points to Abū al-Anwār’s personal charisma by emphasizing that he was well-loved and popular. At the same time, Jabartī describes Abū al-Anwār as increasingly vain and materialistic over the course of his life. The biography chronicles Abū al-Anwār’s deeds as a walī and faqīh, as a manager of a brotherhood and of extensive real estate, and as a mediator in private and political affairs. The rest of this study will use his somewhat checkered career as a case study to reveal how the practice of cultivating authority through rituals of

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1 The duality present in Jabartī’s entry may be due in part to its joint authorship. According to Reichmuth, Jabartī relied upon the work of Abū al-Anwār’s companion Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (according to the Fihris of the historian Kattānī) for some entries in his chronicle. The combination of Zabīdī’s praise and Jabartī’s criticism may have lent the entry this duality. Bakrī’s biography retains both modes of description with only slight adjustments.

2 Bakrī, Wafā’īyya, 14.
devotion translated into principles by which authority was formalized into administrative responsibility at the turn of the nineteenth century.

3.1: Portrait of Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt b. Wafā’

Throughout his career, Abū al-Anwār asserted his authority with reference to a variety of different kinds of personal ties, all of which are familiar from the conceptions of authority-as-

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3 From the Description de l’Égypte, 8 (état modern, II) 116 planche E.
walāya expressed in Zabīdī’s ‘Iqd. Genealogical ties like those in the isnād discussed in chapters one and two confirm his place among the living generation of the awliyā’, the carriers of the embodied tradition passed down from the Prophet, by establishing his connection to that tradition through a line of close personal relationships reaching back through time. These included biological genealogy (nasab), genealogies of esoteric initiation (salāsil) and his place in a line of inheritors of a specific post such as the post of khalīfa or shaykh al-sajjāda, that is, head of the brotherhood. Like in the ideal shaykh-murīd relationship described by Zabīdī, a common principle in these ties is that they are personal, rather than institutionalized. That is, the authority of an individual is not based upon his affiliation with, or certification from, a particular institution or organization, but upon the network of personal relationships that he has developed. His credential is directly related to the total credentials of his forefathers, his teachers, his students, and by the degree of intimacy that he enjoys in those associations. Another common element is that the quality of these relationships is one of qurba or physical intimacy. These ties are “practical” in that they lack ideological content. Other personal ties that conferred authority were horizontal, meaning that they were relationships forged between individuals of the same generation or of a similar social standing. These included broader family relationships, as well as the practice of companionship (ṣuhba), and gestures of patronage and service. Such horizontal ties also formed the basis for asserting the right to posts requiring religious authority, though they were not formally articulated as such.

By considering the very specific web of relationships that formed the basis for Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt’s authority, this chapter will argue that despite efforts to present ties between

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4 Paulo Pinto divides these relationships into vertical and horizontal ties in “Sufism and the Political Economy of Morality.”
5 As Hoffman puts it, “The Orders are not to be regarded as sects, for their proliferation is owing to the array of teachers, not differences in doctrine” Sufism, Mystics, and Saints, 123.
authorities of the previous generations and their representatives in the present as natural, such that successors appear to be passive recipients of this authority, ties to the past required ongoing assertion in the face of claims by other contenders. Although entitlement to positions of authority were articulated in terms of genealogical links reaching back through generations, the posts that accrue based on these ascriptions are in fact highly contingent upon horizontal relationships. In the case of Abū al-Anwār, the horizontal link of marriage was pivotal in his struggle to assert his right to the position of shaykh al-sajjāda. In his bid for the position of naqīb al-ashrāf, his good ties to the Ottoman Sultan competed with the horizontal relationships of service to the local military elite cultivated by ‘Umar Makram. Finally, ties of trust and friendship to Muḥammad ‘Alī established by Aḥmad al-Maḥrūqī through companionship and gift-giving allowed a merchant to win the post of superintendent of the shrine of al-Ḥusayn from the Wafāʾī bayt after his death. As will be seen through this narrative, in an environment of contestation, personal ties are characterized by uncertainty. For this reason, all personal ties, even genealogical ones, must be constantly maintained and asserted.

Further, it is argued that the language used to describe the personal ties that formed the fabric of elite culture resonates strongly with the language used to describe ritual practices that have been described above as embodying certain of the principles articulated in mystical philosophy. A consideration of the common household culture shared by religious and military elites suggests that principles of authority expressed in mystical philosophy informed shared schema of leadership in which proximity through personal ties is the basis for the assertion of authority. It is argued that the resonance between household culture and the practice of authority in the Sufi milieu lends an aura of sanctity to the prerogatives and hierarchies enjoyed by the

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6 This is the terminology of Pinto, “Political Economy of Morality.”
military leadership and other elites. Finally, it is argued that despite the dramatic social changes undertaken by Muḥammad ‘Alī and his successors, the principle of leadership through personal ties of service continues to hold sway well into the nineteenth century. This continuity in principles of authority, or the schema of leadership is a piece of the explanation for the cooperation of the religious elite in his modernization efforts.

**Genealogical ties: birth and education**

The term *Wafā‘ī* can refer to those in the lineage of biological genealogy or *nasab,* of descent from Muḥammad Wafā‘ī, or to those tied into the brotherhood through spiritual initiation, such as the shaykh al-Fayyūmī from the previous chapter. These probably overlapped more completely in the Wafā‘īyya than in other brotherhoods, as its elite membership was restricted to blood relatives and, unlike most in Egypt at this time, the Wafā‘īyya refrained from the use of public events for recruiting. Biological genealogy was also the basis of the claim to authority of nobility as *ashrāf,* descendants of the Prophet. Biological relationships may appear to be the least constructed and most objectively real kind of tie. Indeed, those with a noble genealogy had the most to gain by the appearance that *nasab* “unambiguously designates a man’s biological ancestry.” However, claiming authority over the Wafā‘ī tradition required the active establishment of dominance over the biological lineage. Having the good fortune of being born into a family of *ashrāf,* and all it promised in terms of access to the hands of masters able to place their companions to the esteemed Wafā‘ī *silsila,* it seems clear that Abū al-Anwār

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8 This was equally true of the Bakriyya. See Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule.*
9 Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership,* 98.
benefitted from an ascribed status that freed him from the need to prove himself worthy of his titles. It is unlikely that he would have denied this, as genealogical ties served as the idiom for articulating absolute entitlement to posts of responsibility and honor. However, disputes over such entitlements belie a reality that is much more complex and relative. Even genealogical ties that appear to be natural or indisputable, such as biological genealogy, were in fact actively asserted and contested by Abū al-Anwār and his contemporaries.

The first value imposed on biological genealogy is the dominance of the male line over the female line. That is, the biological line, as in the genealogies of all ashrāf, can only be carried through the male to his offspring. Efforts to assert dominance over the Wafāʿī lineage surface in the record of Abū al-Anwār’s paternal biological genealogy in the biographical collection of Muḥammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī.10 His unexceptional paternal genealogy is excluded entirely from Jabartī’s biography. Bakrī, on the other hand, defends Abū al-Anwār’s pedigree in two extensive footnotes running parallel to the main text of the entry. Together, they read as an awkward extended apology for a genealogy that cannot be altogether excluded from consideration. The first footnote refutes claims that Abū al-Anwār’s father was a converted Christian. According to Bakrī, some people claimed that Tāj al-ʿĀrīfīn was a Christian convert because he was called by the title khwāja. He explains that, while this title came to refer to non-Muslims (in the twentieth century when Bakrī is writing) the term was used in the seventeenth century to refer to any successful merchant. He goes so far as to demonstrate that this usage was common by citing several instances from ʿAlī Mubārak’s Khiṭat in which the term is used to refer to a well-established Muslim merchant. In the second footnote, Bakrī claims sharīf descent for Abū al-

10 Although the Wafāʿīyya and the Bakriyya were competitive during the lifetime of Abū al-Anwār, by Muḥammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī’s lifetime, the Wafāʿīyya had been absorbed into the Bakriyya brotherhood. For this reason, his collection of their biographies appears to have been for the purpose of extolling the members of the Wafāʿī house, and by extension, those descendants affiliated with the Bakriyya.
Anwār by his paternal lineage (figure 3.3). Bakrī mentions in this extensive footnote that Tāj al-‘Ārifīn is sharīf, though not of the Wafā’ line. His mention that a distant grandfather distinguished himself as a shaykh sufficiently to be buried in the Kurdī Zāwiya in al-Ḥusayniyya, serves only to highlight the fact that none of the forefathers of Abū al-Anwār through the male line can boast a significant academic or mystical credential. The footnote about Tāj al-‘Ārifīn is as long as many of the biographies in the collection including several lines of poetry, information about teachers and students, and his genealogy back five generations to another shaykh in the zāwiya of al-Kurdī. Still, the footnote damns Abū al-Anwār’s male line with its faint praise. Though Bakrī would never state as much in his biography, the elevation of Tāj al-‘Arifīn as an important member of the Wafā’iyya was due to the horizontal tie of marriage into the family, and all that this implied for the proximity of quasi-familial trust and loyalty.

By contrast, Abū al-Anwār’s strongest credential is the line by which he was initiated into the mystical tradition, called the silsila or “line of esoteric initiation.” As described in the previous two chapters, an individual seeking religious authority during the time in which Abū al-Anwār lived would have collected multiple, mutually reinforcing silāsil from multiple teachers. However, only one such chain would have been printed on an initiate’s ‘ahd as a sign of his initiation into the brotherhood. The silsila typically begins with the present day khalīfa, and expresses his authority as a line of teachers reaching back to either the founding saint, the Prophet or God Himself. The most prestigious line is preferred, often including Zayn al-‘Ābidīn,

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11 Bakrī, Wafā’iyya, 4-7
13 Like the term bay’a, ‘ahd and ‘iqd also carry the meanings of “pledge,” “contract” or “covenant.” As such, these documents served as proof of an individual’s blessing (in the sense of permission) from his shaykh to take on such administrative roles. Such documents usually took the form of a scroll that could be carried in a canister, slung over the shoulder. Possession of such a document allowed individuals exemption from military service and corvée labor and allowed them to travel more freely (until 1290/1873) than the rest of the population. De Jong, Ṭuruq, 46.
al-Ḥusayn and ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. Some then end with the angel Jibrīl and his transmission from God, while others continue back to Adam though a procession of prophets including Ismāʿīl and his father, Ibrāhīm.  

Although Abū al-Anwār accumulated several ījāzāt attesting to his place in multiple chains of authority from prominent scholars of his day, Bakrī includes in the biography of Abū al-Anwār only the line of his initiation into the Wafāʾī order, by his maternal uncle, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Ishrāq (figure 3.4), who was the head of the Wafāʾī brotherhood at the time, through links back to the founder of the brotherhood, Muḥammad Wafāʾ Abū al-Tadānī (d. 765/1363). Bakrī also presents a longer the silsila separately from the individual biographies, labeling it “sisilat al-ṭarīqa” the line of esoteric initiation of the brotherhood, which passes through generations of male initiates to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī. The unified silsila attests to close relationships between the links, and attests not only the transmission of some of his immediate teacher’s knowledge of the sciences (ʿilm), but also the transmission of the baraka of the Prophet and his awliyāʾ, and of the embodied knowledge of his akhlāq or morally correct habits in both sacred rituals and mundane day-to-day activities.

Again, although the presentation of the line as a unity gives the impression that it is a factual record of relationships between teacher and student, a more complex reality, in which each scholar had multiple teachers and students, has been actively suppressed and dominated by the values of shortness (ʿulū al-sanad, as discussed in chapter two) and considerations of the prestige of individual members in the chain. The final result is that the unified representation of transmission of the brotherhood closely mirrors the succession of leadership of the brotherhood.

15 Bakrī. Wafāʾīyya, 12.
(khilāfa), with some variation: four of the khulafā’ are not included in the silsila, because the khalīfa that followed them was also granted ijāza directly from an earlier one. The silsila is not a record of the transmission of a body of knowledge. Although it conveys the transmission of a teaching credential based on knowledge, these relationships were not dogmatic, in that differences between the theological beliefs of shaykh and murīd did occur. McGregor has demonstrated that the theology of the Wafā’ī shaykhs shifted through generations, and diverged significantly from its Shādhilī origins. It was the sanctified body of the shaykh, more than any particular concept or ideology that provided for the continuity and cohesion of the brotherhood.

Female ties and the shaykh al-sajjāda 1176/1762 and 1182/1768

The contentious nature of genealogical ties is best seen in Abū al-Anwār’s efforts to take control of the brotherhood. In chapter one, it was argued that one of the roles of the shaykh expressed symbolically in Zabīdī’s ‘Iqd was to serve as or khalīfa, or “proxy” on earth to God and his prophet. The shaykh-as-khalīfa acted as both representative of God on earth, and the means for achieving proximity to Him. Until the end of the seventeenth century, the more zāhir meaning of khalīfa in the Wafā’īyya was to designate the successor, or administrative representative of Muḥammad Wafā’, the founder of the brotherhood, such that a line of successive heads of the brotherhood can be imagined as running parallel to both the nasab and the silsila (figure 3.5). At the turn of the eighteenth century, the term shaykh al-sajjāda appears

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16 McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 51.
17 The term khalīfa is also commonly applied to deputies of the living head of the brotherhood organization. Having received an ijāza (or ‘ahd) from the head of the brotherhood granting him responsibility over tariqa activities in a local chapter of the brotherhood, a lower ranking khalīfa may be charged to initiate new members (ikhwān, literally, brothers), to supervise ritual gatherings (ḥadāra) in the zāwiya, and to collect tribute (hidāya) and send them to the sect’s headquarters.
to have gained currency over the term khalīfa among the Wafā‘īs.\(^{18}\) The origin of the term being that the head of the brotherhood is the inheritor of the prayer rug (sajjāda) of the founder. Besides the Wafā‘īyya, the term was used only to refer to the heads of the Ināniyya, the Khuḍayriyya and the Bakriyya.\(^ {19}\) What these brotherhoods shared was that their mystical authority was based not only on their silsila (chain of esoteric initiation), but on their status as the four main families of Egyptian ashrāf, that is, those claiming descent from the Prophet’s family, or “house” (bayt). As a collective, the heads of these brotherhoods were referred to as arbāb al-sajājīd (the lords of the prayer rugs).\(^ {20}\)

Succession to the post of shaykh al-sajjāda was an issue of ongoing contestation, involving the assertion of competing sources of authority and entitlement. Even in the Wafā‘ī brotherhood, in which the succession of khulafā’, should be based upon ascribed biological ties, it does not strictly follow the paternal genealogy. When the shaykh al-sajjāda Abū al-Hādī died without a son in 1176/1762, there was no longer an unbroken male line from Muḥammad Wafā‘.\(^ {21}\) Abū al-Anwār attempted to proclaim himself shaykh al-sajjāda. Like the other contender to the position, Abū al-Imdād, his claim was based upon descent from the Wafā‘ī line through his mother. Abū al-Anwār’s mother was Sayyida Ṣafīya, daughter of the fourteenth Wafā‘ī khalīfa (see figure 3.2), Abū al-Irshād Yūsuf. Abū al-Imdād’s mother was Sayyida Umm al-Mufākhir, daughter of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Khāliq, the fifteenth khalīfa. The assertion of authority

\(^{18}\) De Jong, Ṭuruq, 11.

\(^{19}\) Jabarti uses neither shaykh al-sajjāda nor mashyakha to refer to the newer ṭuruq in Egypt (those that had not had centralized authority in Egypt before the Ottoman period). Leaders of more recently established ṭuruq are referred to as khalīfa, shaykh ṭā’īfa, shaykh sādā, and shaykh fuqarā’. De Jong, Ṭuruq, 18.

\(^{20}\) The Shaykh al-Sajjāda al-Wafā‘īyya, and the other arbāb had the distinction in the nineteenth century of maintaining their independence from a centralized ṭuruq administration, while other less prestigious groups came gradually under the administration’s authority. This meant that, where the heads of minor brotherhoods came to be appointed by the centralized ṭuruq administration, the appointment of the arbāb continued to be recognized directly by the khedive. De Jong, Ṭuruq, 77.

\(^{21}\) “وانتروضت بعنه سلسلة أولاد الظهور” Bakrī, Wafā‘īyya, 13.
with reference to the genealogy of the mother was not a practice peculiar to the Wafāʾiyya. Other charismatic individuals seeking to justify their authority on biological grounds had at other times asserted the validity of a *nasab* that did not conform in every link to the gender principle. The Bakriyya, whose rules of succession, like those of the Wafāʾiyya, are based primarily on biological genealogy, also passed through the female line in the previous century. In the end, Abū al-Anwār was opposed by Sīdī Ḥamad, the son of Ismāʿīl Bey al-Makani who thought that Abū al-Imdād should take the position, being of the same generation as the previous khalīfa. According to his biography, Abū al-Imdād was also preferred over Abū al-Anwār because his lavish lifestyle and wealth gave him a kind of dignity and authority. Bakrī describes the expensive furnishings and size of his house as “like the houses of princes.” The importance of the female line is also indicated by the fact that after winning the khilāfa, Abū al-Imdād consolidated his position by marrying the mother of the deceased shaykh, Muhammad Abū al-Hādī and bringing her to live in a house adjacent to his.

After the death of Abū al-Imdād in 1182/1768, Abū al-Anwār was initiated as khalīfa with little contest, gaining first the approval of a group of prominent shuyūkh, including Ḥamad al-Bakrī as well as all of the prominent Wafāʾis, followed by the approval of the governor ‘Alī Bey, and finally with other prominent individuals (ʿayān) with whom Abū al-Imdād had contractual agreements, in order to confirm the continuity of commitment to the new head of the

22 De Jong, Ṭuruq. The Bakriyya have also defined the meaning of their biological genealogy by actively asserting their status as ashrāf as descendants of Abū Bakr. This is contrary to the prevailing view in modern Egypt that only the descendants of ‘Alī are ashrāf. Muḥammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī (d. 1351/1932) takes up this issue in his collection of biographies. He defends his family’s status as ashrāf by asserting that the limitation of the title of “sharīf” to the descendants of ‘Alī is a late innovation, and that the companions of the prophet applied the term to anyone descended from Quraysh. See Bakrī. Bayt al-Ṣiddiq 101.

23 The beys historically had some say in succession, and this became increasingly formalized in the eighteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, the official recognition of a new head of the main brotherhoods had to be vested by the wāli. After gaining such official approval, his lines of transmission were verified by the qāḍī al-qudāt, and only then could his new position be registered in the court records. DeJong, Ṭuruq, 11.

brotherhood. The succession of Abū al-Iqbāl after Abū al-Anwār’s death was not contested. He also collected prominent members of the Wafa’iyya to accompany him to the citadel where Katkhuda Bey formally recognized his new status.

Vicissitudes of the post of naqīb al-ashrāf from the death of Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ṣaghīr (1208/1793) until the death of Abū al-Anwār (1228/1813)

Abū al-Anwār also used his genealogical ties to assert his right to the post of naqīb al-ashrāf, or chief of the nobility. The term ashrāf refers to those who are able to trace their genealogy through the male line back to the family of the Prophet, usually through ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and his sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, the grandsons of the Prophet. In this period, the term ashrāf is interchangeable with the terms sāda, or noble people. A cult of nobility surrounded this genealogy, by which privileges and honors were afforded those who could trace their descent from the Prophet. It was common for allowances to be granted to those identified as bona fide ashrāf. From the beginning of the Ottoman period, a naqīb (chief) of the ashrāf was appointed to manage the affairs of this elite, mediating their disputes, distributing stipends and verifying their genealogies. The latter was done by consulting genealogical records such as the register of stipends and the records of awqāf. The post also carried certain financial responsibility, as the naqīb was charged with distributing stipends owing to the ashrāf. It could also be a source of revenue, as the naqīb had the right to take ten percent of debts paid with the help of his mediation.

25 In some regions and periods there was a distinction between the ashrāf who were descendants of Ḥasan and the sāda who were descendants of the younger son, Ḥusayn. Winter, Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 185.
27 De Jong, Ṭuruq, 12.
Like the genealogical ties discussed above, the status of *sharīf* only appears to be passive and natural. In fact, dominance over this status is contentious and actively asserted. In the broader Ottoman context, the status of being *sharīf* (noble, by virtue of being descended from the family of the Prophet) was used by local elites to assert their local authority against the authority of the state, as the special status of the *ashrāf* gave them greater authority in resisting the state.\(^{28}\) For this reason, the practice of “false ennoblement” on the part of elites intensified during periods of increased centralization.\(^{29}\) The use of *sharīf* descent became an important means of resistance to increased state intervention in local affairs, leading to over-representation of elites among the *ashrāf*.\(^{30}\) From the beginning of Ottoman administration in Egypt, appointment of the *naqīb al-ashrāf* of Cairo was undertaken directly by the Porte. At first, rather than appointing a local *naqīb*, the position would be filled by someone sent from Istanbul, and was mainly an administrative post that did not carry much prestige or power.\(^{31}\) The importance of the office increased when it came to be occupied by members of local notable families\(^{32}\) in the Sufi milieu. It was associated with the shaykhs of the Qādiriyya,\(^{33}\) later the shaykhs of the Wafā’iyya and Bakriyya held it.

The military governors appear to have had a significantly more robust role in the appointment of the *naqīb al-ashrāf* than in the question of succession to the position of *shaykh al-sajjāda*. Despite the fact that the post clearly implies a certain genealogical pedigree, the

\(^{28}\) Canbakal, “Provincial Notables,” 40-41.
\(^{29}\) The practice of creating spurious genealogies in order to legitimize posts and privileges in the present was not restricted to the *ashrāf*. See, for example, P. M. Holt, “The Exalted Lineage of Riḍwān Bey: Some Observations on a Seventeenth-Century Mamluk Genealogy,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, 22 (1959): 221–230.
\(^{32}\) Canbakal, “Provincial Notables,” 42.
military governors made many only partially successful attempts to use the post as a means of rewarding the supporters of their policies, and punishing their detractors. Just as the horizontal relationship of marriage was sometimes used to assert dominance over the Wafā‘ī nasab, horizontal relationships with military governors based upon exchanges of patronage and service were instrumental in the contest for the post of naqīb al-ashrāf with the result that the post was passed between two contesting but equally plausible patronage networks. On the one hand, the religious elite asserted the primary importance of genealogical ties to the post. On the other hand, the military governors repeatedly attempted to grant this post to their trusted companions, despite the weak ties of those companions to the elites of the Sufi milieu. Just as relationships of service to a wali in the context of suḥba conferred religious authority, providing the service of interceding on behalf of the military governors was understood to be a sufficient manifestation of religious authority to justify their appointment.

When Muḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī the elder died in 1196/1782, he left the niqāba to his son, also named Muḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī, making him the fourth in a succession of heads of the Bakriyya to hold it. At the time, Abū al-Anwār contested the appointment, claiming to have a marsūm (decree from the Sultan) granting him the post. In Jabartī’s narrative, Abū al-Anwār’s unpopularity trumped any decree, even from Istanbul. When word of his attempt to take the post spread, he was confronted by a group of ashrāf who gathered at the al-Ḥusayn shrine. Jabartī records the group’s sentiment as “We don’t want him as naqīb, nor as our judge.” In Jabartī’s account of the controversy over this post, the arbāb al-sajajīd, or the heads of the

34 Ahmad Ismā‘īl succeeded Muḥammad Abū al-Hādī b. Wafā‘ in 1176/1762 or 1763. Jabartī reports that he abdicated in favor of Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Bakrī, but the reason is unclear. Ajā‘ib 1:316, and DeJong, Ṭuruq, 220.
35 That the effectiveness of a marsūm from the Sultan was becoming effective may have also been a sign of the times.
sharifian brotherhoods are coextensive with the elite *ashrāf*. In this way, it appears that although a man with a recognized noble lineage could enjoy the benefits of such a status, the representatives, or public voice of the *ashrāf* were the *arbāb*. In the contest of 1196/1782, these *ashrāf* successfully asserted their preference for Muḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī (the son), and he maintained his appointment.

When Bakrī al-Ṣaghīr died in 1207/1793, Murād Bey (d. 1215/1801) appointed Sayyid ‘Umar Makram al-Asyūṭī as his replacement, as a reward for his role in the negotiations that led to Murād’s return from exile, along with Ibrāhīm Bey. The appointment of ‘Umar Makram was unprecedented, as he did not come from a family of any distinction, and his own sharifian origins were not clear. Rather, Jabartī’s narrative suggests that Makram gained an aura of religious authority because of his effective intercession (*shafā‘a*) in service to the governors. He also managed to earn the respect of the *ashrāf* largely through his personal charisma. This can be seen in the fact that he remained in the post for six years, and when he left it in 1212/1798, it appears to have been in protest to the presence of Bonaparte, perceived as a principled stand, rather than a disgrace. The *niqāba* was then returned to the Bakrī family by Bonaparte, who awarded it to Khalīl al-Bakrī. After the departure of the French from Egypt in 1216/1801, Makram arrived in triumph with the vizier Yūsuf Bāshā, and Khalīl al-Bakrī was removed from the post and was shamed for having consorting with the enemy.

Makram’s acceptability to the *arbāb* and other elite *ashrāf* as seen in the length of his tenure can be contrasted to the individual who managed to briefly seize the post in the climate of

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38 Khalīl al-Bakrī had been shaykh al-sajjāda al-Bakriyya since 1793/1208. He was given the post in recognition of his family’s having held it in earlier generations. He was also appointed to the new *diwān* established by Bonaparte, along with various other religious elites. See De Jong *Tuṣrūq*, 7.
39 Khalīl al-Bakrī was far from the only religious authority who cooperated with the French commander. In general, the religious elite played on the border between resistance and compliance to the occupiers, as will be discussed in detail in the coming chapter.
political turmoil that followed the departure of the French. A Turkish merchant by the name of Yūsuf Efendī, managed to briefly secure himself in the post in 1216/1801 by presenting a marsūm from the Sultān appointing him to the niqāba. Though he was appointed naqīb by the Ottoman Sultān, he was unable to remain in the post under pressure from the ashrāf, and was forced out after only a few months in office. This suggests that an outsider without the prized genealogical ties cannot last long in the office of naqīb without gaining the confidence of the arbab, as Makram seems to have done. Though Yūsuf Efendī attempted to cultivate horizontal ties, he was not able to inspire the confidence of other elites. When the vizier returned to Istanbul, leaving Egypt in the hands of the Ottoman governor Muḥammad Khusraw Bāshā, he reinstated Makram to the post of naqīb.

Where Abū al-Anwār was able to assert his authority in terms of biological links to an elite Sufi family (despite the questionable lineage through the male line) but lacked the ties of service and trust to the local governors, Makram established his religious credentials through his successful intercession. The narrative of Makram’s rise and descent into obscurity shows the tension between these different kinds of personal ties. After his reappointment, he fared well in this post. As Jabartī put it, “his stock rose,” and he was able to rise to prominence by bringing together the arbab, the religious elite and others in support of Muḥammad ʿAlī’s appointment to governor in place of Khurshīd Bāshā, then wali of Egypt in June of 1219/1805. However,

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41 Though Yūsuf Efendī was not a member of one of the big Sufi families in Cairo, he was linked into the Sufi milieu as a member of a Turkish brotherhood. Jabartī claims that even with marsūm in hand, he was only able to pass as a contender to the niqāba because he had earlier been appointed by a Turkish brotherhood to the position of head of the Turkish riwāq in al-Azhar. This also was short-lived, as he was thrown out of the position by the members of this brotherhood when he was caught embezzling funds from the waqf. Even more damning is the account of his failed attempt to assassinate his replacement in that position, another Turkish Sufi, Sayyid Ḥusayn Efendī. Jabartī, ‘Ajāʾib, 6:324-5. See also Colin Imber et al., Frontiers of Ottoman Studies (London; New York: I.B.Tauris, 2005): 198.
42 The Arabic is shafā’a, which is also an important concept in the cult of saints, as will be discussed in the next chapter.
without typical ties to the sources of *walāya*, his reputation and service alone could not save him from being quickly deposed when he became critical of the same patron who had promoted him. Makram opposed the policies of Muḥammad ‘Alī in the year 1223/1809, when the Bāshā decreed that *waqf* lands would be taxed along with the *usya* lands. Many *shuyūkh* stood against this initiative, which not only contradicted the definition of *waqf* land as tax-free, but also would injure them financially by retracting the tax-free status they had enjoyed as *multazimīn* and superintendents of the country’s *awqāf*. While all of the *shuyūkh* were given a veiled threat by the *dīwān* Efendī sent by Muḥammad ‘Alī to negotiate with them, it was Makram who absorbed the greatest punishment for this stand.

According to Jabartī, jealousy had turned many of the elite *ashrāf* against Makram, foremost among them being Abū al-Anwār, who was still vying for the post of *naqīb*, along with the shaykhs Maḥdī, Duwākhīlī and Sharqāwī, then rector of al-Azhar. Abū al-Anwār demanded the post belonged to the *shaykh al-sajjāda al-Wafā‘iyya* because two heads before him, Abū al-Hādī and Abū al-Imdād had held it. Abū al-Anwār and several other *shuyūkh* conspired to back down and blame the incident on Makram, claiming that he invented a rumor about taxation to cause trouble. In order to push Makram out, Abū al-Anwār attacked his credibility by drafting a letter listing complaints against his leadership, and having the heads of the brotherhoods sign and stamp it with their personal seals. In it, he accused ‘Umar Makram of having entered a group of Copts into the file of the *ashrāf* by forging the lineage of some *bona fide* members, and of

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44 *Usya* lands originated as lands taken over after and financed by a *multazim* after having consistently proven insufficiently productive to meet their tax obligations. By the eighteenth century, lands classified as *usya* had a tax-free status. Cuno, *The Pasha’s Peasants*, 36-7.


46 In Jabartī’s account he says that Abū al-Hādī only held the position for a few days, but Bakrī omits this statement. He also mentions that Abū al-Imdād had handed it off to the shaykh al-Bakrī.

47 Jabartī speculates that the drafting of the letter was instigated by Muḥammad ‘Alī, because Makram had criticized his tax policies.
removing the title from its rightful owners. They also accused him of raising fitna or discord by spreading word of Muḥammad ‘Alī’s intention to change the tax status of the awqāf, along with a variety of other charges. Jabartī suggests that the charges were not founded in fact, since the shaykh al-Ṭahtāwī refused to sign the petition as the other shaykhs had done, claiming that to do so would be false testimony. Resisting the majority came at a high price, as it led to Ṭahtāwī losing his position as chief muftī. Soon thereafter, Makram was forced into exile in Damiyāṭ (Damietta) in 1224/1809, and out of the position of qaṣīb. The principles suggested by the career of Abū al-Anwār. Muḥammad ‘Alī then granted the position to Abū al-Anwār, in compliance with the marsūm he claimed to possess.

Because of what appear to be successive principled stands, Makram is seen by some as a popular hero, displaying courage in standing against power, and acting based on a genuine urge to protect what is just. Makram was at times rewarded and at times punished for his activities. Another possible reading of the situation is that he, like all members of the religious elite, can be seen maneuvering between the impulse to seek privileges and rewards that could be earned by maintaining a conformist posture vis-à-vis the secular authorities, and the prestige and influence that could also be won by taking a moral stand against injustice on the part of the leaders, a tension that will be elaborated in the following chapter. It also underscores the uncertainty of recognition of authority in this milieu. All personal ties, even genealogical ones, are relative to those of other contenders, and thus must be constantly maintained and asserted, through service (khadamāt) as well as through pedigree. At his death, Abū al-Anwār had attempted to pass the

48 Bakrī, Wafāʾīyah, 25.
49 Bakrī leaves the story of al-Tahtāwī’s refusal to sign out of his nearly word for word reproduction of Jabartī’s narrative, probably because it cast doubt on the behavior of the esteemed shuyūkh who did sign the petition.
post on to his closest male descendant,\(^{51}\) his nephew Ḥamd Abū al-Iqbāl (d. 1273/1856) who was to succeed him as head of the Wafāʾiyya.\(^{52}\) While Abū al-Iqbāl was acknowledged as the new šaykh al-sajjāda al-Wafāʾiyya, the Wafāʾī brotherhood was stripped of the post by Muḥammad ‘Alī, and it was awarded instead to Sayyid Muḥammad al-Duwāhilī,\(^{53}\) and eventually was returned to the Bakriyya at the appointment of Muḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī in 1231/1816, and remained mostly hereditary through the nineteenth century.

**Redistribution after Abu al-Anwar’s death (1228/1813)**

Besides the post of naqīb al-ashrāf, Abū al-Anwār was unable to pass the post of superintendence of the al-Ḥusayn shrine to Abū al-Iqbāl. Instead, he was stripped of the superintendence of the al-Ḥusayn shrine by Muḥammad ‘Alī Bāshā, who granted it instead to his loyal client and friend, Ḥmad b. Ḥmad al-Maḥruqī. The details of the loss of the superintendence of the al-Ḥusayn shrine also reveals the importance of horizontal ties outside the Sufi milieu. Like Makram, who was Abū al-Anwār’s challenger for the post of naqīb, Maḥruqī’s claim to the sharīf genealogy was not clearly established. There is also no evidence that he had developed the prized genealogies that defined the religious elite, either in the study of sharī ʿī sciences or in esoteric practices associated with taṣawwuf. Rather, he was descended from several generations of successful Egyptian merchants. His grandfather held the post of rūznamjī, the clerk in charge of recording receipts and disbursements of the treasury. His father acted as head of the Egyptian merchants and artisans (shāhbandar tujjār), a post which Maḥruqī, the son,

\(^{51}\) Abū al-Anwār’s only son, Muḥammad, died young.

\(^{52}\) Bakrī, *Wafāʾiyya*, 25.

\(^{53}\) It is argued in chapter five that the loss of posts after the death of Abū al-Anwār was primarily due to his failure to project the image of generosity expected of the arbāb through the performance of khadamāt.
took over after the death of the father.\textsuperscript{54} From Jabartī’s account, Maḥrūqī’s prestige seems to have been based upon his ability to develop relationships of trust and patronage with elites from different social groups.

Jabartī’s description suggests that the value placed upon brotherhood of companionship (\textit{suhba}) described in previous chapters was by no means restricted to the religious elite. Jabartī’s description of Maḥrūqī’s relationship of \textit{suhba} with an Egyptian \textit{sharīf} and merchant echoes descriptions of the relationship of teacher and student in the Sufi and scholarly milieu. Jabartī uses the terms \textit{suhba} and \textit{lāzima} to refer to Maḥrūqī’s relationship with Sayyid Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Salām, who he met in the year 1212/1798. He states that due to their insistence on being together for nearly every moment and movement, they began to resemble each other in their gestures and speech and choice of words to such a degree that the two became not only like brothers, but twins.\textsuperscript{55} The pedagogical principle that companionship leads naturally to the absorption of the habits, gestures and speech of the other is expressed here as a truism. Jabartī’s description of their closeness upon Maḥrūqī’s move into the grand house of ‘Abd al-Salām emphasizes the intimacy of cohabitation and physical closeness in language that falls just short of indicating a romantic relationship between the men. He calls their friendship an \textit{ittiḥād} (union), and attests to expressions of \textit{raghba} (desire) and \textit{ḥubb} (love) exchanged between the men, recalling the sometimes erotic metaphors used to describe the intensity of closeness between companions in the Sufi milieu. When ‘Abd al-Salām’s brother died, ‘Abd al-Salām inherited all of his brother’s assets, posts and enterprises, a new set of responsibilities that he shared with Maḥrūqī. Through this connection, Maḥrūqī became a companion (\textit{ittahada bi}) of Muḥammad Aghā al-Bārūdī, Murād Bey and other amirs. Although Maḥrūqī had a claim to the

\textsuperscript{54} Marsot, \textit{Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali}, 77.
\textsuperscript{55} واتحّد بالسيد أحمد بن عبد السلام وسافر معه إلى الحجاز وأحبه وامتزج به امتزاجا كليا بحيث صارا كأئمة اثنين أو روح حلت بينين in Jabartī, “\textit{Ajāʿib}, 6:511.
post of shahbandar al-tujjār, head of the Egyptian merchants and artisans through the link of nasab (his father had held the post before him), Jabartī states that he became “secure” (istaqarra) in the post with the mediation (wāṣīta) of Muḥammad Aghā al-Bārūdī, to such a degree that “his every order was followed.”

Jabartī’s description of Maḥrūqī’s rise to prominence also underscores the fact that in quasi-family relationships between non-blood household members, hierarchies are not well defined, nor extremely stable, required constant assertion through gestures of service and gifts. Besides the support of this friendship, Jabartī describes how Maḥrūqī managed to cultivate horizontal relationships of trust with the princes, as well as with foreign merchants through the giving of gifts or tribute (hidāya). Jabartī mentions the extravagant wedding celebration that Maḥrūqī threw for his son, and the invitation of guests from among the princes and merchants and other elites (al-‘ayān). The bonds of loyalty cemented between Maḥrūqī and Muḥammad ‘Alī are also described as being based on the exchange of gifts (hidāyāt and inʿamāt), companionship (ṣuḥba), visits (ziyāra), and traveling together. The relationship was further consolidated when Maḥrūqī sided with the Bāshā in certain key moments of political turmoil and danger. By the time of Abū al-Anwār’s death in 1228/1813, the friendship between Maḥrūqī and ‘Abd al-Salām had developed into a nexus of relationships between merchant, sharīf and military governor, through which resources and posts flowed. The authority conferred by Maḥrūqī’s relationship of companionship and trust with Moḥammad ‘Alī Bāshā was finally able to compete with that conferred by the Wafāʾi silsila. Upon Abū al-Anwār’s death, Maḥrūqī was awarded the post of superintendent of the al-Ḥusayn shrine.

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56 Ibid., 6:511.
59 Ibid., 6: 514.
Household ties and reform

A diverse collection of informal horizontal ties is expressed in Abū al-Anwār’s provisions for the disposal of the wealth and posts that he had accrued during his lifetime suggesting a much more complex picture of his bayt or household than the limited genealogical definition expressed through the contents of Bakrī’s Bayt al-sādāt al-Wafāʾiyya. Bakrī defines the bayt by its most accomplished men, along with those less accomplished but who still perform the vital function of being links in the chains genealogical chains, whether nasab or silsila, that bind them to the origins of the family’s sanctity,\(^60\) while excluding notable females. One of these is ‘Alī Wafāʾ’s daughter Ḥusnāʾ (d. 888/1483) whose accomplishments exceeded those of her brothers, including acting as the first director of the Sultan Ināl Ribāṭ.\(^61\) At any given time, the bayt was also a collection of horizontal ties of trust and mutual benefit to the head of the Wafāʾiyya.\(^62\) These relationships are described in analogy to family relationships because they are based on bonds of loyalty, and a sense of brotherhood.\(^63\) Holt calls these patronage groups “clans” despite

\(^{60}\) This unity is particularly important in families of ashraf since it was generally accepted that members of the prophet’s bayt, capable of shaf’a, or intercession (McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 15). Muḥammad Wafāʾ defines this connection not by neology but by muḥibba or love: “By the power of our lord, I am the beloved of God. Whoever loves me loved God; whoever is my friend is a friend of God”. McGregor, “The Wafāʾiyya of Cairo,” 68.


\(^{62}\) Though these horizontal ties were grounded in the physical structure of the dār or manzil, (as will be discussed in the following chapter) they are not coextensive. This distinction is clear in the discussion of Abū al-Imdād’s assertion that he should be khalifā before Abū al-Anwār. He claimed this right for several reasons, one of which was that his ancestor was “from the household (bayt) of royalty, and his house (manzilahum) was like the houses (manāzil) of princes in size and elegance, and the sitting areas, and what they grow of fruit and date trees...” Bakrī, Wafāʾiyya, 13. Similarly, when writing of Abū al-Anwār, he mentions the princes that “frequented his house (dār)” Ibid., 15, and when he constructed a new house near the Ḥusayn mosque as a way of staking his claim to the superintendent nizāra of the shrine, this structure is referred to as a dār. He also built a manzil in the area known as Birkat al-Fil, though it is also referred to as bayt. Ibid., 19. The largest sitting room in the home as well as its attached garden were established by the khalifā Abū al-Takhsīṣ and are called by the feminine kunya, Um al-Mufākhir meaning “mother of festivities,” Bakrī, Wafāʾiyya, 19. Another hall with a fountain that was renovated by Abū al-Anwār was also given a feminine name, al-Anwāriyya in honor of him. Ibid., 20. The house he built in 1226/1811 is also called dār. Ibid., 25.

\(^{63}\) Such quasi-family ties are observed in a study of the twentieth century Khalwatiyya. Followers of the shaykh did not define themselves as Khalwāṭ, but as abnāʾ (children) of the shaykh, or as his asḥāb (companions). They distinguished themselves from non-Sufis by their mahabbat al-shaykh (love of the shaykh), mulāzimat al-shaykh (attachment to the shaykh), or service to the shaykh (khidmat al-Shaykh). Individuals cultivating this paternal
the fact that not all members are blood related. Reeves perhaps more accurately calls this complex of different forms of brotherhood, ideally with some biological or marriage-based relationships as their foundation, family-based coalitions. Like the mamlik household described by Hathaway, the bayt can be conceived as an “entourage” composed of blood relatives, as well as devotees, slaves, servants, guards, and clients. In this sense, the household at any given time is the sum of a limited male genealogical lineage, and horizontal relationships of the present. Abū al-Anwār showed consideration for individuals linked by a broad range of horizontal ties of trust and mutual benefit beyond his blood relatives. Some of these ties were forged through female family members Abū al-Anwār’s will provides a sum for the mamlik Dhū al-Fuqār, who was tied to the bayt through a quasi-kinship between his wife and that of Abū al-Anwār. The two women were related through khushdāsha, because before their marriages, they had both been owned by Ismā’īl Bey, and had spent a time together in his household. Because the mamlik Dhū al-Fuqār was married to the khushdāsha of Abū al-Anwār’s wife, Abū al-Anwār entrusted him with protecting her interests after his death. Abū al-Anwār also gifted Dhū al-Fuqār 500 riyāl. This sum should be understood as a kind of inheritance for Dhū al-Fuqār himself, as a relation of Abū al-Anwār, rather than as a sum intended for paying the expenses of his wife. The evidence of this is that as she was also granted a separate and significantly larger relationship with the shaykh include not only his deputies (khulafā’) who were his closest companions, and other members of the tariqa who had pledged their allegiance (bay’a) to him. The shaykh also enjoyed this relationship with certain devotees, or admirers (muhibbīn) who followed him, and may also participate in his public sessions of dhikr, but did adhere completely to the ritual discipline required of initiated members. Chih, “What is a Sufi Order?” 27-8.
inheritance for her own use.\textsuperscript{68} Abū al-Anwār also allocated shares of the household fortune to other non-relative elites, including Sīdī Muḥammad Abū Dafiyya, because of his services and companionship (\textit{nazīr khidmatihi wa taqyīdihi wa malāzimihi lahu}).\textsuperscript{69} Finally, Abū al-Anwār reportedly left in his will that some dirhams be inherited to each of an unnamed group of his clients (\textit{itbāʾihi}), thereby acknowledging their inclusion in his household.

Sabra argues that the importance of the household as a unit of social organization among Sufi families was on the rise in the eighteenth century parallel to a similar development in mamlux political culture.\textsuperscript{70} Indeed, households had grown to be the central unit of political organization in eighteenth century Egypt. Different factions competing for control of the country’s resources were typically organized into households composed of trusted individuals from different social groups including scribes, scholars, soldiers and merchants, all seeking to ingratiate themselves with the head of the household. Just as being between the hands of the \textit{awliyā’}, God’s elect, is to approach the purveyors of His blessing to their communities, so proximity to the heads of elite households (\textit{al-khāṣṣ}) was treated as the source of benefit by clients of military households.

This was also a point of continuity between the eighteenth century mamlux households, and the “modernizing” government of Muḥammad ‘Alī and his successors through the nineteenth century. Efforts to modernize were limited to those administrative techniques that promised to increase rural surplus, and military capacity. In the first decades of his reign, these included bringing the \textit{awqāf} under central control in 1809, instituting standard and direct taxation through

\textsuperscript{68} Bakrī, \textit{Wafāʾiyya}, 25.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., 26.
kharaj system in 1813, and centralizing the management of agricultural production by 1816. In 1820, he began the development of a modern military. He began to introduce new educational institutions for training specialists in 1824. These changes were undertaken without the sense that this should change the view of the person of the commanding authority as the sole owner of this increased surplus, as a patriarch in his home. Like the mamluk heads of military households from whom he managed to wrest control of the country, Muḥammad ‘Alī was referred to as “the Great benefactor (walī al-niʿam), the source of Truth (ʿayn al-ṣawāb).”

Even amid efforts to develop a clearly defined bureaucratic hierarchy, dividing the country into bureaucratic units by geography and function, the view of these areas and their managers as parts of the household of the Bāshā remained. “Egypt’s soldiers were known as Muḥammad ‘Alī’s ‘property’; officials were ‘his’ employees (khadamāt saʿadatihi); even the government offices and departments, he said, belonged to him. Officials had no right to remuneration for their services, not even to government pensions which were considered to be ‘gifts’ from the ruler.” This proprietary view of government, also translated into a paternal and absolute authority for the governor, similar to the parental responsibility with the corresponding expectation of obedience described in mystical theology. Muḥammad ‘Alī was not only commander of the military, but also was in charge of the fixing of prices and taxes, and could arrest and hold people without charge. His authority ended where functions he delegated to his clients began, or where the force of competing factions was able to wrest control from him.

The importance of the resonance between the language of authority in areas of activity that come later to be separated into religious and secular is that personal ties of trust and service

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71 Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 27.
72 Ibid., 27.
73 Ibid., 29.
that would be defined as nepotistic in a modern administrative context come to be seen in distinctly positive terms, as conforming to a divine will and order, and therefore as morally right. As Jabartī states in refutation of French propaganda promising égalité for all Egyptians, “God has made some superior to others as testified by the dwellers in the heavens and on earth.”

Abū al-Anwār worked to assert his place as the natural inheritor of the Wafāʾī household by demonstrating that he was brought to that place by the divine will, which organized people in the world in hierarchies of relation to each other reflective of a hidden order. By the same logic, the ascendance of the heads of military households viewed themselves as charged by God with the dispensation of the resources under their control. Through the reforms of the nineteenth century, the idea that authority God-given, and manifested in personal ties of physical intimacy expressed as the household, persists parallel to the importation of administration techniques associated with modernity.

The persistence of these sanctified principles of leadership may have been one of the reasons why the religious elite who enjoyed dense personal ties to elites in other spheres did not actively view these institutional reforms as a threat to their status. Just as household culture persisted parallel to modern institutions, so the cultivation of personal ties in the Wafāʾīyya persisted even as nineteenth century representatives of the brotherhood participated in new institutions. The Wafāʾī Shaykh al-Sajjāda ʿAbd al-Khāliq al-Sādāt Abū al-Futuḥāt (b. 1268/1847) participated in social changes taking place in this period, while still enhancing his status by cultivating “traditional” ties. Like his ancestors, he studied with the prominent shuyūkh at al-Azhar, including the Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Saqā who was the khaṭīb (preacher) in the mosque. He also studied with Shaykh Muḥṣafā al-Mablaṭ and others, until he went on ḥajj with his father

in 1280/1863. He also took on the posts of his ancestors. Although the awqāf had been nationalized years earlier by Muḥammad ‘Alī Bāshā, Ismā‘īl Bāshā passed on to him all of the posts and awqāf that had belonged to his father when he became shaykh al-sajjāda al-Wafā‘iyya in 1281/1864. Also, like his great uncle Abū al-Anwār, he initiated his tenure as khalīfa with a trip to the ancestral zāwiya to go through the customary ritual of seclusion.⁷⁵

At the same time, Abū al-Futuḥāt took advantage of the new kind of education offered at the government schools. Besides his studies at al-Azhar, he also attended al-Alson, a government school overseen by Rifā‘a Rāfi‘ al-Tāhṭāwī.⁷⁶ There he learned Turkish, calligraphy and arithmetic. His participation in both types of education simultaneously problematizes the view that these parallel systems of education represented a clash between tradition and modernity. Furthermore, the new schools did not appear to marginalize Abū al-Futuḥāt politically or economically as a member of the pre-reform elite. Besides the longstanding Wafā‘ī posts mentioned above, he was also appointed to newly created posts in newly created government bodies. In 1281/1864 he was appointed as a member of the Majlis al-Aḥkām,⁷⁷ a new legal body created to involve the khedive more deeply in judicial decisions. He was also appointed as a member of the Majlis Shūrā al-Qawānīn wal-Jam‘īya.⁷⁸ His willingness to participate in new government bodies problematizes the “accommodationist / rejectionist”⁷⁹ dichotomy, which pits “reformers” attempting to replace exiting institutions with Western one, and a “traditional”

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⁷⁵ Bakrī, Wafā‘iyya, 10.
⁷⁶ Ibid., 9.
⁷⁷ This judicial body was among several institutions linking the political authority more closely to the judicial process. Analogous to a Supreme Court, this majlis reviewed severe sentences issued by the qāḍī, such as those for which the crime was capital punishment. The ruling of the majlis had to be approved, in turn by the Khedive. Khalid Fahmy, “Justice, Law and Pain in Khedival Egypt,” in Standing Trial: Law and the Person in the Modern Middle East, ed. Baudouin Dupret (London: I.B.Tauris, 2004): 92.
⁷⁸ Bakrī, Wafā‘iyya, 10.
⁷⁹ David Gutelius uses this dichotomy to characterize the approach of historians seeking to explaining social change in Morocco in his “Sufi Networks and Social Contexts for Scholarship” in The Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa, ed. Scott S. Reese (Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2004): 36.
group, defending their entrenched interests against change, the foil to the nationalist ambitions of reformers.

**Conclusion**

The Wafā’ī *shuyūkh* were in many ways the quintessential entrenched elite. By virtue of his location in the Wafā’ lineage, Abū al-Anwār viewed himself as *quṭb*, literally the center or pinnacle of the faith around whom the world revolves.\(^8^0\) This view is supported by Bakrī’s collection of the family’s biographies, which expresses clearly the view that authority should go to the passive inheritors of natural genealogical ties to the sources of divine knowledge and blessing. Because biographies are designed to assert the absolute entitlement of elites such as Abū al-Anwār to their positions of authority, they give the false impression that authority was absolutely entrenched in noble lineages, with the corresponding belief in the impossibility of usurpation by (potentially more worthy) outsiders, with all it implies for the restriction of social mobility and personal freedom. This chapter has shown that the comparative value of competing genealogical ties was not obvious, even to the owners of those ties. Rather, in the contest for posts and privileges, various genealogical ties were subject to ongoing contestation, and had to be actively asserted by elites. In such contests, horizontal ties of trust built through gestures of patronage and service were often decisive in the predominance of one lineage over another at a given point in time.

The descriptions in Jabartī’s *Ajā’ib* of the practices by which authority outside the Sufi milieu was cultivated resonated strongly with the descriptions of the ideal shaykh-*murīd* relationship described by Zabīdī. It is not important whether the origin of these principles is to be

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\(^8^0\) Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, as cited in Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 200.
found in the heritage of the mystical epistemology articulated in *al-taşawwuf al-falsafī* or in the tradition of mamluk social organization. Either way, the resonance suggests certain shared principles about the nature of authority, a shared schema of leadership among Egyptian elites at this time. This overlap between God’s hidden order, and the socio-political order served to sanctify hierarchies based on personal ties as not merely normative, but reflective of God’s plan. That is, the reality of the *status quo* comes to be seen as reflecting the Reality (*ḥaqīqa*) that is God’s hidden order or intention, giving moral force to hierarchies of entitlement.
3.2: Ties of relation to Sayyida Şafīya

Abū al-Irshād Yūsuf (d. 1113/1701) fourteenth khalīfa

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Ishrāq b. Wafā’
(teacher of Abū al-Anwār)

Al-Sayyid Aḥmad b. al-Shaykh Mūsā Abū al-Iṣqbāl (d. 1273) (20th khalīfa)

Sayyida Şafīya (marries ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-‘Ārifīn, d. 1166)

Aḥmad Abū al-Naṣr (d. 1280)

Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Khāliq
(Abū al-Futuḥāt), last khalīfa

Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt (d. 1228)
(19th khalīfa)

Abū al-Tashīl Yūsuf

his only son died young
3.3: Abū al-Anwār’s paternal genealogy

His father ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abū al-Raḍwān b. Tāj al-ʿĀrifīn… d. 1166 [1753]

His father was Sayyid Muḥammad Tāj al-ʿĀrifīn b. ʿAlī …d. 1125 [1713]

His father is the scholar Shaykh ʿAlī b. Muḥammad… d. 1082 [1672]

His father is Shaykh Muhammad… d. 1061 [1651]

His father is Sayyid Nūr al-Dīn … he died during the lifetime of his father in the year 911 [1506]

His father is Sayyid Nāṣr al-Dīn b. Ḥāmid… d. 932 [1526]
3.4: The line of esoteric initiation (*silsilat al-ṭariqa*) for Abū al-Anwar al-Sādāt:

(In reverse chronological order)

Sīdī ‘Abd al-Khāliq Efendi al-Sādāt from his father

Sayyid Abū al-Naṣr from his father

Sayyid Abū al-Iqbāl from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Anwār from his maternal uncle

Abū al-Ishrāq Muḥammad from his paternal uncle

Sayyid Abū al-Khayr ‘Abd al-Khāliq from his brother

Abū al-Irshād from his father

Abū al-Takhṣīṣ ‘Abd al-Wahhāb from the son of his uncle

Abū al-Luṭf Yaḥyā from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Akrām ‘Abd al-Fatāḥ from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Mukāram Ibrāhīm from his father

Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad al-Fīl al-Abyaḍ from his father

Abū al-Mukāram Ibrāhīm from his father

Abū al-Faḍl Muhibb al-Dīn Muḥammad (al-majdhūb) from his father
Abū al-Murâḥim Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Siyādāt Yaḥyā from his brother

Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad from his father

Shihāb al-Dīn from his brother

Abū al-Hassan ‘Alī Wafā’ from his father

Abū al-Tadānī Muḥammad Wafā’

After Muḥammad Abū al-Tadānī, founder of the ṭarīqa, the line extends back through the Shādhilī khulafā:

Dāʿūd b. Bākhilā (733/1332)

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allah al-Iskandarī (709/1309)

Mursī (686/1287)

Shādhilī (685/1258)

Ibn Mashīsh (622/1225)

[Missing links]

Al-Junayd (297/909)

Al-Sarī al-Saqāṭī (c. 253/867)

Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī (200/815)

‘Alī al-Riḍā (203/818)
Mūsā al-Kāzīm (183/799, the seventh imām)

Ja’far al-Sadīq (148/765, 6th Shi’ī imām)

Muhammad Bāqīr (117/735), 5th imam

Zayn al-‘Abadīn (94/712, 4th imām)

Imām al-Husayn (61/681, 3rd imam)

Alī b. Abū Ṭālib (40/661)

The line passes through several Shī’ī Imāms to ‘Alī.
3.5: The Wafâ’ī khulafā’

Muḥammad Wafâ’ ʿAbū al-Tadānī (d. 765/1363) (founder of the brotherhood)

Alī Wafâ’ (d. 807/1405) 1st *khalīfa*

Aḥmad Shihāb al-Dīn (814/1412) 2nd *khalīfa*

Sīdī Muḥammad Abū al-Fatḥ (d. 852/1448) 3rd *khalīfa*

Al-Sayyid Abū al-Siyādāt Yahya b. Wafâ’ (d. 857/1453) 4th *khalīfa*, son of ʿAlī Wafâ’

Shams al-Dīn Sīdī Abū al-Murāḥim (d. 867/1462) 5th *khalīfa*

Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Sayyid Abū al-Faḍl al- Majdhūb (d. 888/1483) 6th *khalīfa*

Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Abū al-Makrām (d. 908/1502) 7th *khalīfa*

Al-Sayyid Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl al-Kabīr (d. 942/1536) 8th *khalīfa*

Al-Ustād al-Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn Abū al-Makrām b. Wafâ’ (d. 966/1558) 9th *khalīfa*

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl b. Wafâ’ (d. 1008/1599) 10th *khalīfa*, following his father

Zayn al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Fitāḥ Abū al-Akrām b. Wafâ’ (d. 1054/1644) 11th *khalīfa*

Al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Yaḥya Abū al-Luṭf b. Wafâ’ (d. 1067/1655) 12th *khalīfa*

Al-Sayyid Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Wahāb Abū al-Takhṣīṣ b. Wafâ’ (d. 1098/1687) 13th *khalīfa*

Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf (b. ʿAbd al-Wahāb) Abū al-Irshād b. Wafâ’ (d. 1113/1701) 14th *khalīfa*
Al-Ustadh Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Khāliq Abū al-Khayr b. Wafā’ (1161/1748) 15th khalīfa

Al-Ustādh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Ishrāq b. Wafā’ (d. 1171/1758) 16th khalīfa.

Al-Ustādh Sīdī Majad al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Hādī b. Wafā’ (d. 1176/1762) 17th khalīfa

Al-Sayyid Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad Abū al-Imdād (d. 1182/1768) 18th khalīfa.

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt (1228/1813) 19th khalīfa.

Al-Sayyid Aḥmad (b. al-Shaykh Mūsa) Abū al-Iqbāl (d. 1273/1856) 20th khalīfa

Sayyid Aḥmad Abū al-Nāṣr (d. 1280/1864) 21st khalīfa

Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Khāliq al-Sādāt Abū al-Futuḥāt (d. 1324/1907) 22nd khalīfa
3.6: Murtaḍā al-Zabīḍī’s silsilat al-ṭarīqa al-Wafāʾiyya (in reverse chronological order):

Muḥammad Abū al-Hādī from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Ishrāq Muḥammad from his paternal uncle

Sayyid Abū al-Khayr ‘Abd al-Khāliq from his brother

Abū al-Irshād from his cousin

Abū al-Luṭf Yahya from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Akrām ‘Abd al-Fatāḥ from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad from his paternal uncle

Abū al-Mukāram Ibrāhīm from his father

Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad al-Fīl al-Abyaḍ from his father

Abū al-Mukāram Ibrāhīm from his father

Abū al-Faḍl Muḥibb al-Dīn Muḥammad (al-majdhūb) from his father

Abū al-Murāḥim Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad from his father

Abū al-Faḍl ‘Abd al-Raḥmān known as “al-Nīl” from his paternal uncle

Sīdī ‘Alī Wafā’ šāhib al-ṭarīqa

It is several links shorter than that of Abū al-Anwār who also gave Zabīḍī an ijāza when he was head of the brotherhood.
3.7: Biological Genealogy of Ḥmad ʿAbd al-Khāliq, Abū al-Futuḥāt (b. 1268)

Bakrī also includes a biological genealogy, a direct chain from parent to child originating with the founder, for Ḥmad ʿAbd al-Khāliq al-Sādāt, known as Abū al-Futuḥāt, who was the last Wafāʾi khalīfa before it was absorbed by the Bakriyya in 1906. 81

1. Ḥmad is son of Ḥmad Abū Nāṣr (d. 1280)
2. Son of al-Sayyid Abū al-Iqābāl (d. 1273)
3. son of al-Sayyid Abū al-Tashīl Yūsuf
4. son of al-Sayyida Ṣafīya,*
5. daughter of of Abū al-Irshād Yūsuf (d. 1112)
6. son of al-Sayyid Abū al-Takhšīṣ ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, (d. 1098),
7. son of al-Sayyid Abū al-Asʿād Yūsuf (d. 1051)
8. son of al-Sayyid ʿĀṭāʾ ʿAbd al-Rāziq (d. 905)
9. son of Sayyid Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū Faḍl al-Kabīr (d. 942, 8th khalīfa)
10. son of Burhān al-Dīn Abū al-Mukāram (d. 908)
11. son of Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Muḥibb al-dīn al-Majdhub (d. 888)
12. son of al-Sayyid Abū al-Murāḥim Muḥammad (d. 867)
13. son of al-Sayyid Abū al-Faḍl ʿAbd al-Rahmān, the famous, (d. 813)
14. son of al-Ustādh al-Kabīr Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās (d. 814)
15. son of the great Quṭb Abū al-Tadānī Muḥammad Wafāʾ (d. 765)

* female link.

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Chapter 4

Miraculous and mundane intercession: *walāya* in times of crisis

Besides the sense of proximity or friendship *walāya* also carried the sense of a position of responsibility, as in a legal guardian, or governor. The dual meaning of the term captures the dual role of these individuals in the Sufi cosmology: they were simultaneously the close or intimate “friends” of God, and at the same time responsible for participating in the governance of their communities. This chapter will consider the way in which the *awliyā’* acted in the political realm. In the hagiography of Muḥammad Wafā’, founder of the Wafā’iyya, Abū al-Fatḥ (d. 852/1448) relates the story that in a year when the Nile did not rise. The people, fearing draught and famine, asked the walī for “his supplication,” or intercession (*shafā’a*). Muḥammad Wafā’ went to the river, prayed and then repeatedly called out “Wafā’” causing the river to swell to its full capacity overnight. This story is also commonly believed to be the origin of the family name Wafā’. It is also one of a collection of accounts of what are commonly referred to as *karamāt*. This term is often rendered as “miracles” because, like their counterparts in Christian traditions, some *karamāt* (like Muḥammad Wafā’s rising of the Nile) are supernatural. Kugle puts forth a more literal translation of the term *karamāt* as “acts of noble generosity.” Because supernatural *karamāt* do not conform to our idea of empiricism, *karamāt* in general are often

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1 These meanings related to jurisdiction are reflected in common understandings of the use of the word as it appears in the *Sūrat al-Kahf* (18:44). In this parable of a rich man who loses everything, God says “the jurisdiction [*walāya*] in this province belongs to God.” Al-Ṭāhir, Al-Qur’an, 254.
2 Both the meaning of friendship, and the meaning of responsibility or guardianship are expressed in *Sūrat al-Anfāl* (8:72): “Those who accepted the faith and set out of their homes, and fought in the way of God wealth and soul, and those who gave them shelter and helped them are friends [*awliyā’*] of one another. You are not responsible [*mā lakumu min walāyatihim*] for protecting those who embraced the faith but did not leave their homes, until they do so.” McGregor, “The Wafā’iyya of Cairo,” 68.
3 Kugle, *Sufis and Saints’ Bodies*, 76.
ignored as “waste matter” and are assumed to provide nothing that can support any particular narrative of historical truth. Kugle argues that whether or not they are factual, stories of karamāt give important historical information about belief systems because they are representative of the things society cherishes most. Thinking of karamāt as noble generosity creates the possibility of reading the supernatural accounts of the deeds of the awliyā’, as well as the more mundane stories about their lives that are also recorded as evidence of their genuine walāya, to better understand changing constructions of religious authority. In this chapter, karamāt will be used to give insight into how walāya was understood to be manifested through shafā’a or intercession in worldly affairs.

Muḥammad Wafā’s act was the source of an authority that Trimingham would label “charismatic” authority, following the tripartite classification of Weber. Trimingham further observes that brotherhoods follow a cycle from charismatic origins rooted in the karamāt of the walī to routinized organization. Similarly, in his study of the Shādhiliyya in Egypt, Gilsenan describes the “rationalization” of walāya as a progression from a walī with a small group of disciples, to an increasing number of lay followers, and eventually transitioning into an initiatory organization, or ṭarīqa. This view of a progression in karamāt from charismatic to routine places charisma temporally at the beginning point in the life of any brotherhood (ṭarīqa) or subsidiary group (ṭāʾifa).

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4 Bashir, Sufi Bodies, 2.
5 Kugle, Sufis and Saints’ Bodies, 76.
7 Michael Gilsenan, Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt.
8 In Egypt, his (or her) legacy would become not only spiritual, but administrative, in that the khulafā’ are responsible not only for carrying on the teachings and practice of the founder, but also for managing any endowments and properties left behind by the saint, as will be discussed in the final two chapters. Reeves, The Hidden Government, 58.
Rather than locating charismatic *karamāt* in time in relation to the brotherhood organization, this chapter will attempt to orient them in their broader historical and social context. Specifically, it will argue that charismatic *karamāt* are temporally rooted in times of crisis, following Turner’s definition of crisis as any situation in which a previous order is upset or disrupted, leading to the need for direction toward a reconfiguration, or resolution. This can include even the most minor and natural crises of transition from one state to another, what Sells refers to as “boundary moments,”⁹ such as initiation into the community of adults (adolescence or marriage) or into a Sufi brotherhood, as well as being born or dying. In the story in which Muḥammad Wafā’ made the Nile rise, the crisis was communal, as the drought threatened to destroy a significant quantity of the population. Historical change by which social relationships understood to be natural begin to shift, are redefined or disintegrate completely may also be experienced as crisis. What is common to these crises is the crumbling of existing structures, a changing of the state of things, and the need for new definitions and identities. Turner calls this state of chaotic transition *liminality*.¹⁰ Crisis thus includes any situation in which there is the possibility of radically different responses to new or ambivalent situation, none of which is clearly normative within existing frameworks. To Turner, it is no coincidence that such situations are marked in most societies by rituals such as weddings, ritual circumcisions or baptism that ground the experience of the individual in a universal (spiritual) framework. Turner understands these as addressing the sense of fragmentation and chaos created by this experience of transition or liminality.

Dramatic interventions in times of crisis, such as causing the Nile to rise, are a dominant trope in Islamic hagiography. The interruptions of *karamāt* into the expected and natural are

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understood to be the most apparent (ｚāhir) manifestations of the place of the walī as representative on earth of God’s universal order (cosmos). These acts interrupt the “normal” in the apparent world (in that the Nile doesn’t normally flood in response to a command by a person) in order to assert what is normative, in the sense of cosmic justice (‘adl): God floods the banks of the Nile each year for the sustenance of the people. Such interruptions in the normal in order to assert a cosmic normative are the archetypical “charismatic” karamāt. Victor Turner’s definition of crisis and liminality can be used to suggest that the historical circumstances of crisis create the possibility and indeed necessity for charismatic action.¹¹ The walī in the context of crisis, assumes “a statusless status, external to the secular social structure, which gives him the right to criticize all structure-bound personae in terms of a moral order binding on all, and also to mediate between all segments or components of the structured system.”¹²

This chapter will show that, like Muḥammad Wafā’s miraculous intervention in the context of an environmental crisis, Abū al-Anwār and other awliyā’ were often called upon to intervene in times of fragmentation or rapid change in the social order to mediate and judge the courses of moral action. The awliyā’ seem to act based on an entirely subjective sense of justice, as they do not justify their actions through legal precedent or argument. This is not seen as emerging from fallible human sensibility, but as based upon an embodied experience of Truth, by which the right path became apparent even in the absence of legal reasoning. By virtue of their proximity to the sources of divine guidance and blessing, the awliyā’ were understood to be able to resolve issues in which the normative is not understood to be clear to normal people. From a mystical view of moral authority, such decisions are subjective but not arbitrary. The ability to bring justice through shafā’a is rooted in Abū al-Anwār’s experience of al-ḥaqīqa

¹² Ibid., 117.
through the unique matrix of sanctified personal ties described above. The sense of a mysterious “ethical perception”\textsuperscript{13} may have been a very real experience for the awliyā’ themselves. Years of emulation and companionship making plausible “practical mastery, which makes possible both an objectively intelligible practice and an objectively enchanted experience of that practice.”\textsuperscript{14}

Like the intercession of his ancestor to prevent draught, Abū al-Anwār’s attempts to intervene to bring the Truth to bear on situations of crisis are also referred to as *shafā’a* (intercession). Using events from his hagiography, it will be argued that, although Abū al-Anwār was never associated with any supernatural *karamāt*, his ability to embody and assert the moral good in a situation of chaos was understood as a *zāhir* manifestation of his *walāya*. When the *wali*’s good judgment prevailed, it served to confirm his connection to the sources of divine insight, and his eternal and privileged location in a hidden cosmos or order, leading at times to an enhanced social status. Abū al-Anwār is a particularly interesting case, because he had a reputation for pragmatism, and was criticized by Jabartī for his unscrupulous cooperation with the political leadership for material gain.\textsuperscript{15} His is also an interesting hagiography, because he lived through a series of political, economic and environmental crises. This chapter will consider the *shafā’a* of Abū al-Anwār and other religious elites between disputing factions struggling for control of Egypt, during the hardships of draught and plague, through the terror of French occupation, and during the period of political uncertainty that followed their departure, as both miracles (*karamāt*) and machinations. It will be argued that although Abū al-Anwār benefitted richly from the patronage of the military elite, in times of crisis he also stood against the authority of successive military elites in the defense of what he articulated as a universal sense of justice. It follows that far from being easily divided into categories of rejectionist or

\textsuperscript{13} Trimingham, *Sufi Orders*, 2.
\textsuperscript{14} Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 4.
\textsuperscript{15} This is emphasized in Moreh, “Al-Jabarti’s Attitude Towards the ‘Ulama.’”
accommodationist to the shifting political order, members of the religious elite constantly played on the border between autonomy and compliance. Abū al-Anwār sometimes builds ties of trust by serving the military elite, and at other times intercedes, standing for what appears fair from his unique location of moral authority.

Charismatic karamāt, understood as the assertion of this embodied authority in a situation of crisis, was an ongoing phenomenon even in well-established elite brotherhoods like the Wafāʾiyya. Crises were moments ripe for contestation, in which even the most pragmatic awliyāʾ, such as Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt acted as agents of change in institutions that appeared before to be unshakable, eternal, natural or common-sensical, while viewing these assertions as representing a continuous, and indeed eternal, tradition. From this perspective, the support of the religious elite for Muḥammad ‘Alī is best viewed as a continuation, rather than a break with the customary practice of the awliyāʾ of cultivating ties to the military elite that allow them to perform what was understood as the vital stabilizing function of shafāʾa.

‘Alī Bey al-Kabīr and the death of the shaykh al-Ḫifnī (1181/1767)

In the hagiography of Muḥammad and ‘Alī Wafāʾ, disobedience of the walī in undertakings affecting the welfare of the community bring the harshest punishments, as can be seen in the incident of a man who attempted to promote himself as the head of a local zāwiya against the wishes of Muḥammad Wafāʾ. After gaining the position, “his belly ripped open and his bowels fell to the ground.”¹⁶ According to the story, Muḥammad Wafāʾ had prohibited the establishment of this zāwiya because he believed it would cause strife in the community of followers. Despite the brutality of the punishment, the intercession (shafāʾa) of the walī to thwart the self-aggrandizement of this individual and to protect the unity and tranquility of the community are

represented as a kind of miraculous generosity (karāma). A deadly intercession is also attributed to one of Abū al-Anwār’s most prominent teachers, the rector of al-Azhar, the shaykh al-Ḥifnī, as related in Jabartī’s hagiography.

The context for Ḥifnī’s shafā’a was an ongoing tension between the Ottoman authority and the Mamluk emirs on the one hand, and between warring factions of Mamluks on the other. By the eighteenth century, the shaykh al-balad, who was the Mamluk governor of the country, had become more powerful than the representative of Ottoman authority. In 1768, ‘Alī Bey al-Kabīr asserted an unprecedented independence from the Ottoman authority by deposing the governor put in charge of Egypt by Istanbul, refusing to pay tribute, and replacing the name of the Sultan with his own on currency and in the Friday prayers. This increase of the independence of the Mamluk military elite, was won at the cost of many military confrontations, and the right to claim the post was usually hard won through military standoffs between contenders. The awliyā’ are recorded as having at times become embroiled in these disputes. In a context of political uncertainty, the military elite appealed to the awliyā’ to mediate. Such politics led to the demise of the shaykh al-Ḥifnī.

In 1767/1181, a group of amirs asked Ḥifnī for his blessing in their efforts to raise an army against Sāliḥ Bey and ‘Alī Bey. According to Jabartī, the amirs were not seeking

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17 As early as the seventeenth century, certain amirs were able to exercise de facto control over the country, such as Radwān Bey from 1631 to 1656. See André Raymond, Cairo, trans. Willard Wood (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).
18 The shaykh al-balad was the de facto governor, or provisional ruler. Muḥammad Bey Cherkes was the first to carry the title of shaykh al-balad when he came to power in 1724. Official Ottoman documents refer to the term as a “devilish innovation” (Winter, Ottoman Society, 24), but grudgingly accepted the new title, and worked through the following centuries to have the final say in who carried it.
19 ‘Alī Bey al-Kabīr (d.1773) was the most prominent shaykh al-balad in the late eighteenth century. He rose to the position in 1760.
20 Jabartī is probably referring in this story to a feud between ‘Alī Bey and a group of Mamluks loyal to the murderer of ‘Alī’s former master Ibrāhīm Bey (d. 1755). ‘Alī Bey had managed to arrest and execute the murderer of his former master with the help his ally Sāliḥ Bey. These amirs succeeded in forcing ‘Alī Bey to flee Cairo for
popular support by appealing to the *wali*, but believed that the shaykh’s blessing of their endeavor would lead mysteriously to their success. When he denied them this, they poisoned him. In Jabartī’s narrative, the amirs managed to murder the shaykh, but they did not defeat him. After leaving the shaykh, their attempt against ‘Alī Bey failed. Jabartī’s viewed their defeat as a miraculous punishment for the poisoning of this righteous shaykh, akin to the dropping entrails of the unfortunate would-be shaykh in the *karamāt* of Muḥammad Wafā’. Jabartī identifies their demise as a manifestation of the hidden power of the *wali*. Although the shaykh was overcome by the military might of the amirs, the same military prowess was not sufficient to protect them from his posthumous wrath. Still, this story, for Jabartī emphasizes the necessity of *walāya* as a stabilizing force in times of crisis and flux. According to him, after the death of the shaykh al-Ḥifnī, chaos broke out: “Indeed, it is a clearly perceived fact that if there is no one among the men to speak the truth openly, enjoin the right, forbid the wrong, and establish guidance, the order of the world becomes corrupt and men’s hearts are filled with dissension.”21 This story shows that the *karamāt* of the shaykh are understood by Jabartī to have a tangible impact on the outcomes in the realm of politics. If we are to believe his representation of the rebellious amirs, they viewed the blessing of the *wali* as necessary for the success of their endeavor.

The fate of ‘Alī Bey al-Kabīr a few years later was no better. His attempts to wrest Syria from Ottoman sovereignty would be his undoing. In 1771, he was betrayed by his general Muḥammad Abū al-Dhahab who was supposed to be leading a campaign to take Syria for ‘Alī Bey. Instead, Abū al-Dhahab declared himself *shaykh al-balad* and marched back to seize control of Cairo, defeating the forces of ‘Alī Bey and taking his former master prisoner. Jabartī comments darkly on the communal hardship that results from leaders acting without the

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guidance of the *awliyā‘*: “‘Alī Bey came to power, and with no one to deter him, he too did as seemed best to him, and as a result affliction descended on Egypt, Syria and Hijaz, and spread to include the whole world and all countries. This is the open secret, which is an indubitable consequence of the inner (secret)—which consists of respect for the inheritors of prophesy, complete conformity (to them), making the foundations firm, setting up the guideposts of the right way and Islam, and strengthening the edifice of piety.”22 ‘Alī Bey died shortly thereafter, in 1773, and was soon followed in death by Abū al-Dhahab.

**Abū al-Anwār and the Ottoman seizures during the crisis of leadership in 1200/1786.**

Jabartī mentions many incidents in which religious authorities shamed members of the military elite into taking an action that appeared contrary to their interests despite the threat of violence.23 These were seen as *karāma* in the sense of being a manifestation of true *walāya*. In the case of Abū al-Anwār, one courageous stand led to a boost in prestige that was decisive in his career. The deaths of ‘Alī Bey and Abū al-Dhahab left the Mamluks of ‘Alī Bey, including Ismā‘īl, Murād and Ibrāhīm Bey, to struggle over succession. In 1200/1786, the crisis of leadership deepened, as several leading Beys succumbed to the plague, including Ismā‘īl Bey, who had been acting as *shaykh al-balad*. The Ottoman state, citing the potential for rebellious Beys to seize the resources of the dwindling military leadership, attempted to take over many of these abandoned properties. This was probably just a thinly veiled attempt to collect any cash or goods that might compensate for the tribute that was withheld by successive Mamluk factions asserting their autonomy from the nominal Ottoman authority.24

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22 Jabartī, as translated by Moreh in “Al-Jabartī’s Attitude Towards the ‘Ulamā‘,” 60.
23 Marsot, “The Political and Economic Functions of the Ulema,” 133.
Bāshā al-Jazā’īrlī was sent with an army to try to reestablish Ottoman control. When Jazā’īrlī attempted to confiscate the property of certain Mamluks, Abū al-Anwār resisted on principle. Bakrī recounts the confrontation in great detail, with a text taken almost completely from the account of Jabartī:

When Ḥasan Bāshā al-Jazā’īrlī came to Cairo at the turn of the century, and the Egyptian amirs left for Upper Egypt, [Jazā’īrlī] took their money and arrested their women and children, and ordered that they be taken to the market and sold as slaves, as property of the treasury. Then the shuyūkh got together and went to him, and the one who spoke for them is the person in this biography [Abū al-Anwār] and he said, “did the Sulṭān send you to establish justice and eliminate oppression, or to sell free mothers and children?”

[Jazā’īrlī] said: these are the slaves belonging to the treasury.

[Abū al-Anwār] said: this is not acceptable, and no one would say it is.

So [Jazā’īrlī] got very angry and asked for the secretary of the treasury and said “write the names of these and tell the Sulṭān about their resistance to his orders.”

Then Maḥmūd al-Banūfrī said “write what you will, but we will sign our names in our own hand” and [Jazā’īrlī] was confounded and stopped before completing what he’d intended.

Ibrāhīm Bey had put some money in safekeeping with Abū al-Anwār and Ḥasan Bāshā [Jazā’īrlī] knew that so he sent a soldier to demand from Abū al-Anwar Ibrāhīm Bey’s deposit, and he refused to pay saying “the depositor was not deceased, and I written the document myself, so I will not hand this over as long as its owner lives.” So the Bāshā became even more infuriated, and threatened violence.

“I have never seen among the Mamluks anyone who dares defy me as this man does. He is burning my heart!”

In this incident, Abū al-Anwār can be seen asserting his sense of justice, against the orders of a member of the military elite. He succeeded in mobilizing other elites in the area, forcing Jazā’īrlī to back down. Sayyid al-Bakrī had been faced with the same situation, with Jazā’īrlī demanding from him the deposit that Murād Bey had left with him in safekeeping. Bakrī, however, surrendered the money, overwhelmed by the expectation of obedience and the threat of force implicit in the command.

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After this confrontation, “people thought better of [Abū al-Anwār], and loved him more, and after that al-Sayyid Muḥammad Effendī al-Bakrī stepped down from his post as the superintendent of the al-Ḥusayn shrine in favor of Abū al-Anwār, and sent to him in a box the files of the waqf.”

Bakrī’s relinquishing the post was an acknowledgement of Abū al-Anwār’s superior conduct in the situation. The understanding between the two, according to Bakrī was that Abū al-Anwār would hand over superintendence of the al-Shāfi‘ī waqf. When he reneged on this agreement, and held on to both posts, Bakrī had no higher authority to which to appeal for satisfaction in the matter. Abū al-Anwār’s prestige, and by extension his walāya was at its peak, and there appeared to be no authority higher than him at that moment.

The return of Murād Bey 1205/1791

The case of ‘Sayyid ‘Umar Makram al-Asyūṭī demonstrates that shafā’a or intercession between elites in the context of crisis was viewed as a manifestation of religious authority, even for an individual of obscure origins and unexceptional religious training. In 1786, Ḥasan al-Jazā’īrlī promoted Ismā‘īl Bey the post of shaykh al-balad, causing Ibrāhīm and Murād to flee to Upper Egypt. Although Ḥasan Bāshā was recalled in 1201/1787, Murād remained in exile. It was only after Ismā‘īl Bey succumbed to the plague, in July of 1205/1791 that they were able to return. This was negotiated through ‘Umar Makram’s intercession on his behalf with the Ottoman governor.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Makram was not an ‘alim in the sense of being a leading shaykh at al-Azhar, though he had studied there, nor was he connected to any of the

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26 Ibid., 18. Transference of the post, apparently without a taqrīr from the governor or his chief justice, was accomplished when the shaykh al-Bakrī sent the deeds associated with the shrine to Abū al-Anwār.
27 Winter, Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 28.
elite Sufi households that typically performed such acts of intercession. Still, Makram was rewarded for this act of *shafāʿa* with a post of religious authority, that of *naqīb al-asrāf*, despite his questionable genealogy.

**Flood and plague, 1205/1790-1206/1791**

In addition to the difficulties caused by political instability, inhabitants of Egypt in the eighteenth century weathered a series of natural disasters. In 1205/1790, excessive flooding brought rats into the city, spreading fleas infested with plague. The plague that spread through the population in 1206/1791 was one of the worst and most extensively recorded. According to some estimates, at the peak of infestation, it claimed 1,500 lives per day.\(^29\) The overwhelming scope of the plague also caused administrative problems, in which certain functions were not being fulfilled, including the payment of salaries. Later in the same year, the Nile rose less, leading to draught, famine, inflation in grain prices,\(^30\) and the spread of disease among the livestock.\(^31\) The economic crisis worsened when the Mamluk amirs responded to the shortages in grain by seizing more than their customary portion of the crop. Mikhail argues that plague in Egypt was considered to be a natural part of a “cyclical pathology” that was replayed nearly every decade.\(^32\) Still, like other natural turning points, such as adolescence, natural catastrophe falls within Turner’s definition of crisis, in that it makes the previous state of order untenable, and requires some resolution or radical departure from that earlier order. The response of the general population to this upsetting of the existing economic order of production and taxation

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32 The movement from drought to inflation to famine to protest to revolt and finally to plague occurred on average every nine years. Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 217-18. Hunter similarly refers to crisis and consolidation in the administrative system in Egypt cyclical, proceeding from periods of centralization and stability to periods of disorder, characterized by “food shortages, inflation and riots to the capitol,” in *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 10.
was typical: they flocked to the physical spaces where the bodies of living and dead *awliyāʾ* reside, to ask for intervention in their affairs from the sources of divine justice. In 1791, hungry villagers gathered in al-Azhar, asking its most prominent ‘*ulamāʾ* to seek their intercession, not with God, but with the military rulers. The outcome the appeal of the people to the ‘*ulamāʾ* in this case was a resolution by which Murād Bey divided the villagers among the amirs, making the latter responsible for the upkeep of those assigned to him.33

The crisis of French occupation (1798-1801) Cultivating ties with a new military elite

Perhaps the most dramatic crisis in the lifetime of Abū al-Anwār was the arrival of the French in Egypt. Indeed, the brief period of French occupation is commonly accepted as a “watershed moment” in Egyptian history.34 It was a moment of communal crisis on several levels. First, because it caused a general state of terror. When Jabartī describes the arrival of the French, it is as “a swarm of locusts” causing terror among the inhabitants of al-‘Ajamī where they first landed on the eighteenth of *Muḥarram* 1213 (July 1, 1798).35 As word of the invasion spread, so did a sense of panic and impending crisis among the people. This would prove in later days to be well-founded. When the troops entered the city, they set fires and looted its buildings, and killed and raped some inhabitants.36 The crisis was also an ideological one. Attempts to achieve compliance with, and even support for the occupation were made through the distribution of propaganda by Bonaparte in advance of the arrival of the troops. Lengthy notices were distributed through the country with the intention of winning support for the invaders.37

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34 Rober Tignor “Introduction” to Jabartī, *Napoleon in Egypt*, 3.
36 Ibid., 35.
The main purpose of the notices was to command the Egyptians to contribute to the upkeep of the military. However, it also made claims about the nature of the invaders’ respect for Islam that Jabarti repeatedly calls lies. Jabarti’s lengthy critique of these notices reveals clashing beliefs about the nature of legitimate government and religious belief. The notices touted the noble intentions of Bonaparte and his men, who claimed to be working to restore to the Egyptian people their rights and free them from their oppressors, based on the belief that all people are equal in the eyes of God. Besides cursing the transparent efforts in the notice to persuade the Egyptians that the occupation was for their own good, he also rejects the revolution’s concept of égalité, stating that, “God has made some superior to others as testified by the dwellers in the heavens and on earth.”

The sense of crisis escalated as the French routed the Mamluk resistance at the so-called “Battle of the Pyramids” in Giza (1213/1798) with unsettling ease. After a short face-off with the French troops, Murâd and Ibrâhîm Bey fled to Upper Egypt and Syria respectively. Throngs of civilians had gathered on the West bank of the Nile to support the resistance with whatever weapons they could buy. Some civilians were organized by their affiliation with the Sufi brotherhoods as evidenced by their marching as groups under the banners with which they identified. After watching the defeat of the Mamluk troops in Giza, these civilians were also surprised by the subsequent bombardment of their location across the river by French artillery. The inability of the Mamluk warriors to prevail and to protect the masses of people unsettled those established understandings of the military government as the source of law and order that created a general sense of security. Jabarti describes the result of this unmooring of established understandings of security as a leading to a breakdown in the basic rules of social order, as a

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39 Ibid., 35.
state of chaos ensued with a complete halting of commerce, followed by looting, plundering and even the flaring up of longstanding blood feuds among people.\textsuperscript{40}

Rather than attempting to confront the perpetrators of crime directly, many religious elites, including Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt attempted to cultivate relationships of patronage similar to those that allowed them to act as counselors to the Mamluk and Ottoman military elites.\textsuperscript{41} Bonaparte, in turn, attempted to incorporate the influence of religious elites, including Abū al-Anwār, the shaykh al-Bakrī and the shaykh al-Azhar, ‘Abd Allah al-Sharqāwī,\textsuperscript{42} all of whom had held the kind of quasi-bureaucratic roles described in the previous chapter. Despite their inclusion in the governing process, Bonaparte’s interaction with the authority of the awliyā’ was significantly less obliging that that of the local governors. Before the arrival of the French, Abū al-Anwār and other awliyā’ were able to negotiate as independent arbiters, whose personal authority was a manifestation of karāma, as was seen above in the case of ‘Umar Makram’s intercession on behalf of Murād Bey. By contrast, Bonaparte refused to accept the independent intercession of the awliyā’\textsuperscript{43}. Instead, he attempted to incorporate these individuals into an abstract organization in the form of a dīwān. The dīwān was headed by ‘Abd Allah al-Sharqāwī,

\textsuperscript{40} Jabartī, \textit{Napoleon in Egypt}, 35.
\textsuperscript{41} ‘Umar Makram, by contrast, left his post and the city in protest of the occupation. Because of his refusal to court the French governors, he is sometimes touted as a popular hero. For example, in the wake of the Egyptian “revolution” that began in January 2011, The editor of the Middle East Institute Blog has dubbed ‘Umar Makram the “patron saint” of Tahrir square because of the location of the mosque that bears his name (est. 1948) and the statue of him (est. 2003), but also because of his status as a popular hero. Michael Collins Dunn, “‘Umar Makram the Patron Saint of Tahrir” http://mideasti.blogspot.com/2012/01/makram-patron-saint-of-tahrir-square.html, accessed march 19, 2013. This view is disputed in other sources, such as in Gabriel Baer, \textit{Fellah and Townsman in the Middle East: Studies in Social History} (London: Psychology Press, 1982): 242
\textsuperscript{42} ‘Abdallah al-Sharqāwī was shaykh al-Azhar, and a member of the Khalwatiyya. He was initiated into that brotherhood by Maḥmūd al-Kurdi, and became his khāliфа after his death. He was also trained by that shaykh al-Hifiṇ. Sharqāwī enjoyed the patronage of Ibrāhīm Bey (through the wāṣiṭa of Ibrāhīm’s wife ‘Adīla Hānim and a blind faqīha). Ibrāhīm Bey took over a mosque near the Jawhariyya madrasa. In order to make it into a riwāq for Sharqāwī and his students (Jabartī, 4:162 as translated by Hathaway in \textit{Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt}, 296).
\textsuperscript{43} The shuyūkh were also unsuccessful in seeking intercession for prisoners held from the first clashes with French troops (Jabartī, \textit{Napoleon in Egypt}, 45), and for guild merchants arrested when the new occupying force demanded money from them (Ibid., 46). After the Cairo riots, Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt attempted to mediate for the release of prisoners without success (Ibid., 97). However, Muṣṭafā al-Sāwī intervened successfully on behalf of two men arrested for speaking about a naval battle that embarrassed Bonaparte (Ibid., 50).
and included The shaykh al-Bakrī, Muṣṭafā al-Sāwī, Sulaymān al-Fayyūmī, Mūsā al-Sīrī, Muḥammad al-Mahdī, Muṣṭafā al-Damanhūrī, Aḥmad al-‘Arīshī, Yūsuf al-Shubrakhīrī, and Muḥammad al-Duwāhilī, among others. Jabartī notes that Abū al-Anwār was not included at first because he was unable to attend and be appointed at that time. The mission of the dīwān itself served to undermine the embodied and particular nature of the authority of walāya by standardizing procedures for the courts, and the issuance of title-deeds, as well as standardizing procedures for inheritance, and taxation. Similarly, the selection of a representative to stand at the head of the shuyūkh was accomplished through a secret ballot.

Members of the dīwān appear to have played uncomfortably on the border between submission and resistance to the military control of the French. Jabartī reports that all of the shuyūkh of the dīwān resisted Bonaparte’s request that they wear the French cockade (cocarde), a circular badge of red white and blue, the mark of support for the French revolution. Abū al-Anwār was the first to accept, in response to some threats. Eventually all of the shuyūkh of the dīwān wore it, though they quickly removed that symbol of French nationalism upon leaving his company. Abū al-Anwār also attempted to avoid participation in gestures of dominance by secretly cancelling the celebration of the mawlid of al-Ḥusayn while under occupation. According to Jabartī, Abū al-Anwār had hoped to delay its celebration until the Mamluks were able to force the French governors from the country.

According to Jabartī, the first dīwān failed to hold the interest of those involved beyond the first few months of its existence, after which time another was established with a different demographic. The maḥkamat al-qaḍāya (Court of cassation) was established in Rabi’ al-Thānī, 44

44 Ibid., 42.  
46 Ibid., 76.  
47 Ibid., 60.  
48 Ibid., 73.
1213 (October 1798), this time made up of six Copts and six Muslim merchants. Rather than acting as mediators between the rulers and the ruled, this dīwān was charged with bureaucratic functions that directly served the needs of the governors, specifically the rationalization of the system of property holding. All owners of property were required by law to bring written deeds proving their rightful ownership of their property, to be checked against an official registry and approved with a document of possession issued by the dīwān. Each of these stages involved a fee, and those who could not produce adequate documentation saw their property confiscated.\(^{49}\) Another major change undertaken by the dīwān was the levying of new taxes, including kulaf tax for support of the military.\(^{50}\)

The awliyā’ engaged in charismatic assertions of their authority against the indiscriminate financial havoc caused by these impersonal administrative tools. New tax collectors were appointed to collect the funds, and those suspected of withholding were punished severely.\(^{51}\) The clash between these new agents and methods, and the financial sensibilities of the highly personalized form of taxation which it was attempting to replace, can be seen in Jabartī’s account of the fate of the shaykh Muḥammad al-Masīrī. Masīrī came under fire for having covered for a purposeful error in accounting that had been perpetrated by his deputy (shaykh Abū Shuḥba) in order to decrease the taxes owed on some bags of silk arriving by the port in Alexandria. This dishonesty is assessed favorably by Jabartī as “a kindness” that ended in a more just (smaller) tax penalty for the parties involved. He calls the defense by Masīrī and Abū

\(^{49}\)Ibid., 68.

\(^{50}\)Other taxes mentioned include the tafārīd (individual taxes). Later, more taxes were levied on the announcement of a death, and inheritance (Ibid., 68-70). Jabartī also mentions new taxes on agricultural lands, gifts, (hibāt), sales (mabī’āt), pleas (da’āwa), disputes (munazā’āt and mushājarāt) and other forms of written witness (ishhādāt), as well as fees for the issuance of official birth certificates, travel permits, rents and leases.

\(^{51}\)Jabartī reports that Sayyid Muḥammad Kurayyim of Alexandria became involved in a situation in which import taxes were not properly recorded and paid. When he was unable to produce the sum of lost revenue, he was paraded through town on a donkey, strung up, shot and decapitated (Jabartī, *Napoleon in Egypt*, 54-9).
Shuḥba of the purposeful error in accounting as “the truth”\(^{52}\) because it was more just, in absolute terms, even though it was technically a misrepresentation of the goods being imported. This episode ended with Abū Shuḥba’s strange death by hiding in the cistern in his house. Another party to the dispute, Muḥammad Khurayyim was arrested by the French agents attempting to collect the unpaid fees, he was paraded through town on a donkey, strung up, shot and decapitated.\(^ {53}\)

In Jabartī’s account, the morally correct response of the awliyā’ to the crisis of invasion was not clear, and different religious elites acted differently. When a popular uprising against the French broke out, in which crudely armed Egyptians rioted, Abū al-Anwār supported the fighters “along with the majority of the shuyūkh\(^ {54}\) and the general population. Certain awliyā’ were instrumental in helping raise the so-called Cairo revolt, which began 11 Jamāda al-Ūlā 1213 (October 21, 1798). They spurred the public toward what they called jihād in response to the taxation of the French, which they called jizya, the tax required of non-Muslims under Muslim rule.\(^ {55}\)

That the complexes of al-Husayn and al-Azhar served as centers of a public ethic expressed through walāya and gave structure to a “fragmented body politic.”\(^ {56}\) is emphasized in the role of these mosques both in the beginning and end of the clashes. Unnamed individuals managed to gather a mob who went to the al-Azhar and al-Ḥusayn complexes, and vandalized the house of the qāḍī. Besides the importance of the leadership of the awliyā’ in this revolt, endowed spaces served as important locations for those seeking resolution of a crisis. When the

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\(^{52}\) Ibid., 57.

\(^{53}\) Ibid., 54-9.

\(^{54}\) Jabartī, *Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt*.

\(^{55}\) Jabartī, *Napoleon in Egypt*, 83. Mahrūqī is also mentioned as having stood against the French during the Cairo revolt. Baer speculates that this was due to his status as a companion of Murād and Ibrāhīm Bey in Baer, *Fellah and Townsman*, 242.

\(^{56}\) Kugle, *Sufi Bodies*, 52.
French troops attempted to strike at the revolt, they set their sights on al-Azhar, firing at the same location where the uprising had begun. That this was intended as an assault on this space, and the authority it symbolized was also clear in the manner in which these troops eventually entered the mosque. According to Jabartī, they defiled this location of non-military authority not only with their dirty shoes, but with excrement.57

Some of the religious elite joined the revolt, others, including Bakrī and Fayyūmī, warned the people not to revolt for fear of retribution. After the mob killed the French General Depuy, Bakrī surrendered himself along with Mahdī and Sirsī early in the course of the fighting, asking a French official to take him to Bonaparte as a means of expressing his non-solidarity with the rioting crowds.58 Other prominent awliyā’, including Sharqāwī and Abū al-Anwār remained with the mob and were later punished for their failure to quell the uprising. Later, in 1800/1214, ‘Umar Makram distinguished himself during one of his tenures as naqīb al-ashrāf, by leading the common people against the French.59

While Jabartī does not side with any particular role played by the awliyā’ in the revolts, he expresses clear disgust with the way that they are treated by the French leadership: “It is appropriate that the ‘ulamā’ be venerated” rather than imprisoned and punished for their part in the crisis.”60 Humiliations and compromises for the awliyā’ in this period were many. Abū al-Anwār was among those arrested, and was forced to pay a large fine. Others suffered more severely: some were executed for their part in the uprising. In the wake of defeat after the Cairo

57 Jabartī Napoleon in Egypt, 90-3. Jabartī seems most offended by this violation of the sanctity of these spaces, describing the French troops as nothing less than a Satanic manifestation (Ibid., 93, 96). The centrality of the al-Azhar and al-Ḥusayn complexes was expressed again, in 1215/1801. After the departure of Yūsuf Bāshā, the French fired again from the citadel, bombarding the Azhar mosque. Eventually, they broke down the gates of the mosque, killing thousands inside, and desecrating its interior.
58 Ibid., 85-87.
60 Jabartī, Napoleon in Egypt, 96.
riots, the *shuyūkh* attempted unsuccessfully to realign themselves with the victors out of fear of retribution by once again wearing the cockade.\(^{61}\)

After the failure of direct confrontation, Abū al-Anwār also attempted to use negotiation and mediation. When the Ottoman *wazīr* Yūsuf Bāshā\(^ {62}\) came from Istanbul in 1801/1216, Abū al-Anwār worked with him to try to negotiate the departure of the French in exchange for a sum of money.\(^ {63}\) In defeat, Yūsuf Bāshā left with his troops to Syria, and the French further punished those who had supported the rebels, arresting them and confiscating their property. Jabartī mentions that Murād Bey took this opportunity to turn the French completely against Abū al-Anwār, as he was still carrying a grudge from before Abū al-Anwār had fallen out of favor with the French.\(^ {64}\) The pragmatic attitude of Abū al-Anwār to the French, alternately resisting and accommodating, suggests that he did not perceive a clear political role in opposition to Western influence as such. If a Sufi movement defining itself in opposition to Western domination was active in Egypt at this time, Abū al-Anwār seems not to be interacting in any clear manner with this new political category.\(^ {65}\)

The departure of the French from Egypt in 1216/1801,\(^ {66}\) was in some ways as much of a crisis as their arrival. The period from 1801 to 1805 was one of political and military turbulence, as shifting coalitions of British, Mamluk and Ottoman commanders vied for control of the country through ongoing military confrontations financed by continued exploitation of the

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\(^{61}\) Ibid., 96.

\(^{62}\) Jabartī refers to him simply as “al-*wazīr*” Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt.


\(^{64}\) Abū al-Anwār spoke out against all of the amīrs for their manner of dealing with the French, and singled Murād Bey out for especially harsh criticism. Bakrī, *Wafāʾiyyah*, 23.

\(^{65}\) Similarly, Baer argues that the riots taking place were not “nationalist” in the sense of defending the ideals of a national community, but more akin to the kind of riots that happened earlier in the eighteenth century in response to hardships experienced due to poor administration of resources, or a lack of public order. This may also be supported by the fact that the Janissaries and other Turkish residents of Khan al-Khalīlī took part in the fighting in March 1800. See Baer, *Fellah and Townsmen*, 228.

\(^{66}\) French troops, along with some of their Egyptian clients left the areas of Qaṣr al-‘Aynī, Rūḍā and Gīzā, and vacated the Citadel on 4 *rabī’* al-awwal, 1216/15 July 1801. Jabartī ‘Aǰāʾ ib 5: 298-302.
resources of the general population, whether by taxation, or simply by looting. This power vacuum might seem in retrospect to have provided the perfect opening for the religious elite to seize control of the government of the country, if, indeed it was only the military strength of the mamluk governors that had previously prevented them from doing so. Indeed, scholars such as Marsot mourn the lost opportunity for these “natural leaders” of the people to take their position as such.\textsuperscript{67} Instead, Abū al-Anwār and other elites scrambled to reestablish good relations with the emerging military leadership. Jabartī reports that Abū al-Anwār submitted a complaint to the Ottoman wazīr Yūsuf Bāshā about what had happened, claiming to have been impoverished by the revolts, French retributions, and his efforts to negotiate on behalf of military leaders. Abū al-Anwār also worked at every turn to incur favor by inviting various grandees to his house.\textsuperscript{68} He managed to develop good relationships with those in favor under ‘Alī Aghā, such as Sharīf Efendī the daftardār (treasurer). Abū al-Anwār benefitted financially from the efforts of the rulers and their entourage to stabilize their position by compensating their supporters financially and punishing those who challenged their legitimacy.\textsuperscript{69} After the departure of the French, ‘Umar Makram was also able to establish good relations with the Ottoman governor, and other military leaders. He returned from his self-imposed exile in the company of the Ottoman governor and was reappointed as naqīb al-ashrāf in 1216/1802. The efforts of the religious elite to forge new ties of patronage and service with contenders to the position of governor suggests that they saw their role in politics as complimentary to, and not a potential replacement for, that of the military leadership.

\textsuperscript{67} Marsot, \textit{Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali}, 58.  
\textsuperscript{68} Bakrī, \textit{Wafā‘īyyah}, 24.  
\textsuperscript{69} For example, ‘Alī Aghā alternately gave feasts, and parades and cash to his supporters, and executed those who spoke against him. Jabartī ‘Ajā‘ib 5:332-334.
1219/1804 intercession on behalf of Sitt Nafīsa, continuity under Muḥammad ‘Alī

Unlike Bonaparte, Muḥammad ‘Alī appears to have acknowledged the shafā’a of the awliyā’ in the sense of accepting the authority of the religious elite as independent mediators. Just as Makram was able to act as an independent authority in the negotiations on behalf of Murād Bey, Muḥammad ‘Alī accepted the intercession of Abū al-Anwār in reaching a fair outcome in the case of Sitt Nafīsa, the politically active wife of Murād Bey. When she was arrested by Muḥammad ‘Alī in 1219/1804 for encouraging the rebellious amirs in Upper Egypt by promising to pay their salaries out of her own pocket, it was the second occasion of her arrest for similar charges. The first was in 1204/1798 when she was arrested by French troops under suspicion of aiding Murād Bey with supplies. In both cases, Abū al-Anwār and other leading members of the religious elite intervened, demanding to see the evidence under which Sitt Nafīsa was being held, asserting their capacity to divine the just outcome in disputes between elites. In both cases, the shuyūkh demanded evidence that would lead either to punishment or release of this influential individual. In the case of Muḥammad ‘Alī, the shuyūkh protested the arrest of the woman without evidence and demanded that she be taken to the house of Abū al-Anwār. Muḥammad ‘Alī conceded to their demand when they threatened to protest by leaving the city, and Sitt Nafīsa was released into the protection of Abū al-Anwār. Bonaparte, by contrast, refused to release her to the same shuyūkh when they went to investigate the evidence against her. Instead he insisted that he would release her only under direct pressure from the katkhūdā and the qāḍī.70

This can be read as an attempt to limit religious authority to its formalization in state statutes and institutions, by which the awliyā’ had no official position from which to claim the authority to intervene.

70 Jabartī, Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt, 183.
Muḥammad ‘Alī and Khurshīd Bāshā

Muḥammad ‘Alī is described by historians as having won support for himself as governor by his savvy maneuvering in the chaotic political landscape of competition between various would-be governors and their coalitions. One element of his political strategy that seems to stand out is that, where other military leaders who were contenders to the post focused on winning control through strictly military victories, Muḥammad ‘Alī was able to outmaneuver both Khurshīd and Khusraw Bāshā by building coalitions. First with the mamluks, through a relationship with Ibrāhīm Bey, and with the merchants though his dealings with Maḥrūqī, the shahbandar tujjār, then with the Turkish governor. All the while he attempted to build ties of trust with the religious elites. Because of the state of continual military contest, when funds were short, these contending governors would either resort to excessive taxation on the one hand, or simply to stop paying troops, leaving them instead to prey upon the local population, looting and stealing or using intimidation to purchase goods at unfair prices. Either way, the burden on normal people was excessive and often violent. Furthermore, the Ottoman authority had grown used to dealing with the complaints of the elite with an iron fist. One of their agents is reported to have been given written orders commanding him to exterminate completely not only the mamluk factions, but also the leading religious figures, by name, Abū al-Anwār and the shaykh al-Bakrī. In Marsot’s view, the elites supported Muḥammad ‘Alī to protect “their own vested interests.” If these

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72 Muhammad Khusraw reportedly levied a property tax on houses equal to three years’ rent, Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali*, 38.
73 Muḥammad ‘Alī is first mentioned in Jabartī’s chronicles as the head of the Albanian regiment under Muḥammad Khusraw who led them in an uprising to demand their pay. He had arrived with Khusraw in one of the two armies sent by the Ottomans to confront Napoleon.
events are read in the context of the role of the religious elite before and during the French occupation, the *shafā’a* of the religious elite in support of Muḥammad ‘Alī was a continuation of their longstanding role as intercessors in times of crisis.

Khurshīd Bāshā was appointed governor in 1804 by the Porte, resulting in even more hardship for the local population. He was also unpopular for policies of excessive taxation. The sources credit ‘Umar Makram with having stood against Khurshīd Bāshā, his representatives, and the *qāḍī*, despite threats from the latter that he would kill anyone who opposed his rule. He is also credited by some sources with galvanizing the public against the governor so that the general population, organized by their leaders by guild or neighborhood took up arms to fight against the governor’s men. Finally, the ‘*awliyā’* with ‘Umar Makram at their head, sent an ultimatum to Khurshīd Bāshā demanding that he step down in Ṣafar of 1220, May 1805. The result was that in June 1219/1805 a courier from the Porte arrived with a *fīrmān* replacing Khurshīd Bāshā with Muḥammad ‘Alī as governor of Egypt. After being stabilized in this position, Muḥammad ‘Alī rewarded Makram for his support by returning him to the post of *naqīb*. Again, despite his apparent lack of any of the typical lines of genealogical authority, his acts of *shafā’a* and of advising and challenging the military elite and their clients were understood to be evidence of the ability to exercise authority in the realm of the *awliyā’*.

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76 Khurshīd Bāshā came to be seen as inept by the Egyptian population because of his failure to maintain expected standards of public safety, and particularly for reports of disorder and violence among his soldiers. Specifically, he built his military strength in Egypt by bringing infamous mercenaries known as the Delhis from Syria. These troops were even more brutal in extracting whatever they wished from the local population. See Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali*, 42.
77 Ibid., 46.
80 Jabartī, *Ajā’ib*, 2:34.
The contradictory relationship of *walāya* to the sociopolitical order

Ties of service to ascendant elites sometimes served as the basis for religious authority. However, the divine origin of *walāya* posits it as, by definition superior to any worldly authority achieved through force or human effort. This inverted relationship to the political order can be seen in the hagiography of Muḥammad and ‘Alī Wafā’ which emphasize *karamāt* that demonstrate the superiority of *walāya* over temporal political power. Muḥammad Wafā’, is shown to defy unjust worldly authorities, including a scheming vizier, a shaykh who challenges the authenticity of his sainthood and abusive mamlik soldiers. This can be seen even more clearly in the trope of the *majdhūb* who displays marks of insanity, and the *zāhid* who embraces poverty. Both based on the notion that rejection of worldly markings of status is a sign of *walāya*.

Besides manifestation in the form of *shafā’a*, this superiority is ritualized in traditions that demonstrate a rejection of social convention, the political order, and the mundane material concerns as a step toward reaching divine truth. For some individuals aspiring to *walāya*, this involved extended periods of poverty and isolation. In the case of the Wafā’iyya in the eighteenth century, this rejection of *al-dunya* or worldly marks of status is preserved only in the

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83 Reeves finds the theme of the hiddenness of sainthood and its ability to manifest as a potent inversion of mundane marks of authority and prestige in twentieth century hagiography in “Power, Resistance, and the Cult of Muslim Saints,” *American Ethnologist* 22 (1995): 306–323. This theme of inversion is increasingly prominent in the twentieth century. Hoffman observes in her study of a group of twentieth century Şâdhiyllâs that the perception of the people she worked with was that “the greatest saints in particular, are hidden among God’s servants and may be serving in very lowly and inconspicuous capacities in society. They may even be despised by the general population.” in *Sufism, Mystics, and Saints*, 90-1.
form of a ritual seclusion in the zāwiya of the ancestors undertaken by the shaykh of the brotherhood upon his induction.84

After the death of Abū al-Anwār, his successor, Abū al-Iqbāl underwent the traditional induction ceremony, which included isolation in the khalwa at the Ribāṭ in Khurunfish.85 However, this was undertaken only with the approval of the governors. before visiting the khalwa, Abū al-Iqbāl rode with a group of prominent Wafa‘īs to the citadel86 where the katkhūda Bey dressed him in a robe made out of sable fur as a sign of recognition of his new status. Even after the visit to the khalwa, his position as shaykh al-sajjāda seemed unsure. The katkhūda sent a courier with the news of the death of Abū al-Anwār to Muḥammad ‘Alī Bāshā, who was in Fayyūm. His succession to the post was not official until the Bāshā returned a month later and sent a document with an official seal to their house, granting recognition of his appointment as khalīfa.

The contradictory relationship of walāya to the socio-political order is present even in these ritual activities themselves. The tradition of isolation, with its origins as a rejection of social convention, is also, paradoxically, one of several official acts of assuming a post of prestige and influence. The visitation of the Wafa‘ī khalīfa to the zāwiya, while existing as a ritual representation of a rejection of convention, is undertaken in a traditional manner, which is passed on to elite members of the brotherhood through teaching as a part of their spiritual

84 Initiation as khalīfa of the Wafā‘ī brotherhood also included rituals of being dressed in the khirqa (mantle) of the brotherhood, and being adorned with the tāj (crown) and shadd (belt).
85 Abū al Anwār also performed the ritual of seclusion upon his induction. In his case, he was accompanied by a group of prominent shuyūkh, including Aḥmad al-Bakrī as well as all of the prominent Wafā‘īs. After performing the ceremony the shuyūkh ride with the heads of the brotherhoods to ‘Alī Bey to gain approval of the governors for the appointment. Finally, he consolidated ties with other patrons and clients by visiting the houses of those leaders with whom the Wafā‘īyya had contractual agreements in order to confirm his ties to these individuals as the new head of the brotherhood. Bakrī, Wafā‘īyya, 14.
86 It is unclear what significance should be attached to the difference in order of these processes. One could speculate that Abū al-Anwār, not having been appointed by the deceased Abū al-Imdād, might have felt it necessary to assert his authority among his peers by making his visit to the khalwa before riding to the citadel for official recognition.
training. Furthermore, it is a rite of passage into a position that commands great temporal authority, in the form of expectations of obedience from the general population, as well as entitlement to posts of wealth and influence. Finally, the isolation is undertaken as part of a series of rituals, including gestures of acceptance by other prominent members of the religious elite, as well as official recognition of succession by the military governors.

Even in the case of awliyā’ who began their career by breaking with their family and community, giving up possibilities for wealth and choosing to wander and beg, these choices are themselves based upon conventions of the cultural history of the brotherhood, or of Sufism in general. Even self-made saints, labeled majdhūbīn, follow conventional patterns of behavior associated with the archetype of the majdhūb, suggesting that cultural expectations set the limits and scope of possible practices, even in those whose identity is defined in opposition to mainstream culture. What is remarkable in discourses of sanctity is the ability for the paradigm of walāya to accommodate both of these apparently opposing views of the nature of sanctity. It is capable both of confirming the right of those in authority to their authority with reference to book learning, wealth, posts and genealogies of authority, translating into the quietistic Sufism that supports that status quo, while also confirming that walāya often takes the form of rejecting marks of status in the apparent world.

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87 In the case of the Moroccan mystic Sīdī al-Ḥajj ʿAlī, this “departure from the ordinary” was done at the order of his master, Saʿīd b. Ḥammū. His break with his family and community was at once a rejection of all that is valuable in society and a respectable choice. 87
Conclusion

After his appointment, Muhammad ‘Alī set about consolidating his position as absolute ruler. He alternately fought and bribed Mamluks to gain their support, and to put an end to their efforts to regain control of the country. The final blow was the infamous intrigue known as the massacre of the Citadel. In 1226/1811, Muḥammad ‘Alī invited the leading Mamluks to his palace to for what was supposed to be a celebration. Instead, his soldiers ambushed these guests en route, killing almost all of them. The second part of his rule was spent creating the foundation of the political and economic expansion that he desired, and to defend his territory against occupation by the Ottoman authority, or by the British, who attempted again to take control of Egypt in 1807. Historians in general seem inclined to believe in the possibility of Muḥammad ‘Alī as an idealist fighting in earnest to benefit the Egyptian nation, though Fahmy argues that institutional change under Muḥammad ‘Alī was undertaken primarily to support his military capacity, both to fight wars in service to the Sultan and to maintain his the prowess necessary to maintain governorship over an expanding territory for himself and his offspring. We seem to be significantly less inclined to believe that the religious elite were working in earnest to promote government of the country in accordance to God’s will. Rather, it is assumed that their primary concern in politics was their own vested interests, a view fully articulated by Marsot. In her analysis, the relationship between the military and religious elites after the death of ‘Alī Bey in 1186/1773 is essentially an exchange between rational actors: groups of Mamluks contending for

89 A thorough overview of this “nationalist” historiography can be found in Fahmy, All the Pasha’s Men. Fahmy provides a powerful challenge to the view of Muḥammad ‘Alī as a nationalist by showing that his policies were a product of his personal ambition within the Ottoman context. Fahmy demonstrates that his “reforms” were geared not at improving the lot of the Egyptian people, or winning independence for the “nation,” but at building an army that could win him the governorship of Egypt as an Ottoman province, and the authority to pass it on to his descendants.

90 Muhammad ‘Alī was called upon by the Sultan Maḥmūd II to fight the Wahhābīs in Arabia from 1811 to 1834, and in Greece in from 1822 to 1828. He also extended his control over the Sudan militarily through fighting that lasted from 1820 to 1822. He fought for control of Syria between 1831 and 1841 and clashed with the Sultan from 1838 to 1841.
control gave up some of their absolute autonomy to the *awliyā’* in exchange for the latter accepting their rule and lending them legitimacy.\(^9\) However, the rewards of wealth and influence alone cannot explain certain interventions. This is especially true in cases when the *awliyā’* seem prepared to face violence, as in Abū al-Anwār’s confrontation with Jazā’īrī.\(^9\) Similarly, it is difficult to imagine that the same governors who allowed their troops to go looting in the market would consider it necessary to heed the intercession of military leaders on behalf of those they had arrested, such as in the case of the Sitt Naifīsa. Rather, in Jabartī’s accounts, military leaders appear to have viewed the blessing of the *awliyā’* not as a mechanism for appeasing the masses, but as a mysterious force capable of having a real impact on the course of their fortunes in battle, as in the case of the shaykh al-Ḥifnī.

Viewing the political activity of the *awliyā’* as *karamāt* gives a more meaningful context for the relationship between these elites than a simple exchange of rational interests. Just as the *awliyā’* interceded in cycles of crisis in the lives of individuals, including birth, adolescence, marriage and death, they also intervened in times of communal crisis. In the lifetime of Abū al-Anwār these included cyclical crises, such as flooding, drought and plague, as well as the communal disorientation created by French occupation. Because moments of crisis are by definition moments of fracture in the established order, such moments call for a moral or ethical stand that is by definition outside of established legal rulings. In such moments, the subjective sense of justice embodied in Abū al-Anwār and other *awliyā’* was called upon. Though modern sensibilities may see this as arbitrary, such decisions arose from an unarticulated sense of just

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\(^9\) Marsot “Functions of the Ulema.” The realpolitik exchange of patronage for support is also expressed by Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 11.

\(^9\) Besides the examples above, is an incident when the Mamluk Ḫusayn Bey raided the house of the Bayūmī shaykh Aḥmad al-Jazzār, the inhabitants of the area of the house that was plundered went to al-Azhar to see the shaykh al-Dardīr (d. 1201/1786) and ask for his *shafā’a*. It was a mob, creating disorder in the streets and calling for justice. Jabartī quotes the shaykh as having said “we will sack their houses as they sacked ours. We will die martyrs or God will grant us victory over them.” Jabartī, *Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt*, 150.
arbitration the, while experienced as “enchanted” by individuals is also articulated in mystical philosophy as emerging from companionship and emulation of the sanctified bodies of the awliyā’. When the institutions that fulfilled the function of upholding established order broke down, this embodied morality came to function as a source of justice in the form of shafā’a.

Finally, It should follow that if charismatic karamāt are called upon in times of crisis, and if the performance of such karamāt leads to a boost in the prestige of a walī, then the prestige of the awliyā’ as a class might be expected to be enhanced in periods of political, economic and social instability. Through the successive political and economic crises during the lifetime of Abū al-Anwār, the political role of the religious elite as mediators between conflicting amirs became particularly pronounced. This increased prestige also had an economic dimension, as the military elite bestowed posts and privileges, as well as gifts on the most honored religious figures. The economy of patronage and endowment is the subject of the final two chapters.
Chapter 5

The good faith economy of \textit{walāya}

The custodians of the shrines were traditionally referred to as \textit{fuqarā’} (literally: poor people), a title commonly given to Sufis, because of the ascetic tradition from which the movement originated. However, Jabartī observes with disapproval that the posts could be the source of great wealth:

\begin{quote}
The custodians of these tombs are not the poor (\textit{fuqarā’}); indeed at present they are the richest of people. The truly poor, on the other hand, are people of some social standing who have no income, and many obscure scholars whom the ignorant believe to be rich because they are abstemious.\textsuperscript{1}
\end{quote}

Jabartī is clearly expressing his disgust at the excessive wealth of the major families of \textit{awliyā’} like the Wafā’iyya and the Bakriyya. Indeed, Sufi families like the Wafā’iyya were increasingly wealthy in this period, a development linked to their increased importance as the community weathered a succession of crises in the previous chapter.\textsuperscript{2} The accumulation of wealth by the religious elite could be viewed negatively, as a kind of opportunism: as the country floundered, Abū al-Anwār and other venerated representatives of the faith took advantage of the power vacuum as an opportunity to enrich themselves and their offspring. However, in the hagiographies of Tawfīq al-Bakrī, discussions of the wealth of the \textit{shuyūkh} have a distinctly positive expression. Through a consideration of the relationship between wealth and \textit{walāya} in descriptions of the \textit{awliyā’} of the Wafā’iyya and their main rival the Bakriyya, it will be argued

\textsuperscript{1} Jabartī, 4: 190, as translated in \textit{Al-Jabartī’s History of Egypt}, 306.
\textsuperscript{2} A similar argument is made by Marsot in “The Political and Economic Functions of the Ulema,” 132. For example, the scholar Muḥammad al-Mahdī (d. 1229/1814) amassed a great fortune through his close relationship to Ḥasan Bāshā who was fighting Ibrāhīm and Murād Bey in 1199/1785. This lieutenant rewarded him with several \textit{iltizām} after the 1204/1790 plague. Ibid., 141-2. Similarly, Muṭṭādā al-Zabīdī gained through his relationship to Ḥabrīm Katkhudā. Sonbol has a different view on the shifting balance of power. She argues that by the end of the eighteenth century, Mamluk factions were not only acting more and more autonomously from the nominal Ottoman authority, but had encroached on the traditional prerogatives of the ‘\textit{ulamā’} and \textit{tujjār}. Sonbol, \textit{The New Mamluks}, 30.
that for the big Sufi families, the accumulation of wealth and its distribution through acts of generosities was another way in which sanctity was understood to be manifested. In other words, like the ability to assert his or her view of the normative (as in the previous chapter), the ability of a waļī to gain control of economic resources, and project and share that bounty through a variety of khadamāt was understood as a kind of karāma.

This chapter will consider how Abū al-Anwār used the accumulation and dispensation of wealth to support claims of the sanctity or walāya of the Wafā‘ī household (against competing claims of the Bakriyya) in the context of what is referred to as a “good-faith” economy, that is, an economy in which the exchange of resources takes the form not of clear contracts and agreements, but of gestures of hospitality, service and gift-giving. These exchanges are shown to be characterized by uncertainty, due to the avoidance of the articulation of clearly agreed upon terms of exchange. It is argued that in Abū al-Anwār’s milieu, this méconnaissance (misrecognition) of the motives behind various gestures of service and hospitality allows the public distribution of resources at events such as the mawlid to act as a source of what Bourdieu calls “symbolic capital,” which, for Abū al-Anwār translated into public recognition of his sanctity, or walāya. To whatever degree Abū al-Anwār was able to publicly demonstrate his generosity through khadamāt including the rituals associated with endowed institutions (dhikr, tarbiya and ziyāra) as well as lavish public festivals, especially the mawlid al-Ḥusayn, he was rewarded as a true waļī. This is contrasted with his behavior at the end of his life, in which he came to be known as uncharitable, and distastefully violent with his dependents.

The chapter will also consider shifts in the definition of sanctity perceived in renovations made to the Wafā‘ī zāwiya. The preference of certain structural features reflects a move away

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from *tarbiya* (training of lodgers) and *ziyāra* (visitation of tombs) and an increasing emphasis on displays of *khidma* as hospitality toward common people and elites in the *walāya* if the Wafāʾiyya. This corresponds to the rise of household culture in Egyptian society more generally. Finally, the chapter will argue that Abū al-Anwār’s failure to follow collective views about the nature of prestige, and by extension sanctity led to a decline in his prestige, and by extension the relative sanctity of the Wafāʾī *bayt*. Finally, it will be argued that because private ownership was not an important factor in the prestige afforded the *awliyāʾ* through public displays of material generosity, the centralization of the *awqāf* under Muḥammad ʿAlī and Ismāʿīl may have had less of an impact on their prestige than histories tend to suggest.

**The *awqāf* in a good-faith economy of service (*khadamāt*)**

The *waqf* system was initially conceived as a manner of founding charitable (*khayrī*) institutions, and protecting the income of these institutions from taxation.⁴ Abū al-Anwār served as *nāẓir*, meaning superintendent, of several such endowments, acting as representative of the endowment or *waqf*. Superintendents usually received a stipend for running the institution. By the end of the eighteenth century, the assignment of such posts had become closely linked to the brotherhoods, in part because so many endowments supported institutions providing services requiring a Sufi credential, be it the maintenance of a shrine in a mosque-*zāwiya*-mausoleum complex, or overseeing rituals such as *dhikr* and *wird*. The superintendence of two *zāwiya* fell automatically to the head of the Wafāʾī brotherhood. The first is *Zāwiyat al-Ribāṭ*, which is the original *zāwiya* of the brotherhood located outside the city in Khurunfish. It has been the tradition for whoever is appointed shaykh to be taken in a procession to this *zāwiya* so that they can begin their term by

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⁴ The details of the organization of endowed institutions will be discussed in the following chapter.
sitting in *khalwa* (isolation) for a while, as their ancestors had done.\(^5\) The second is known as the Great *Zāwiya* (*al-zāwiya al-kubrā*)\(^6\) and is located at the foot of Muqatṭam to the east of the Shāfi‘ī shrine.

These endowed institutions resided in a strange location between public and private. They are public in that their appropriate function was understood to be the provision of services (*khadamāt*) to the community. Furthermore, as *nāźir* of a *waqf*, the successive heads of the brotherhood were not, strictly speaking, the owners of these institutions or the resources that supported them. Rather, in principle, a *nāźir* was charged with acting as a good steward, following the stipulations set by the *wāqif* (the donor who founded the endowment). In the strictest legal sense, however, the *nāźir* had no superior authority to judge his efficacy in dispensing the resources of the *waqf* save God and his own conscience. In this sense the economy in which Abū al-Anwār functioned was a good-faith economy akin to that described by Bourdieu in his study of exchange among the Kabyle. For him, in economies where resources move primarily through gestures of hospitality, service and gift-giving, exchanges are characterized by uncertainty, as the articulation of clearly agreed upon terms serves to undermine the primary purposes of such exchanges, which is the cultivation of what he calls “symbolic capital,” meaning prestige, or honor.\(^7\)

The importance of such informal services for prestige can be seen in the hagiographical collection of Bakrī. He emphasizes hospitality to elites as evidence of the *walāya* of his ancestry, proudly attesting to the proximity of members of the Bakriyya brotherhood to the centers of

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\(^5\) Bakrī, *Wafāʾiyah*.

\(^6\) It was originally called the *Zāwiya* of the Wafā’ nobles, but it became known as *al-Zāwiya al-Kubrā* after it was renovated into a mosque with the support of the Wazīr ‘Izzat Muḥammad Bāshā by an order from the Sulṭān ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm I in the year 1190.

\(^7\) Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 172.
power. Thus, for both the Bakriyya and the Wafāʾiyya, the prestige of the household (bayt) is indistinguishable from its sanctity (walāya). By extension, gestures of generosity meant to enhance its prestige should be expected to function in precisely the same fashion as the karamāt discussed in the previous chapter: they are manifestations of the sanctity of the wālī. The nature of this economy of noble generosity (karamāt) is best seen through the lens of Abū al-Anwār’s rivalry with the Bakriyya, and his relationship to the mawlīd of al-Ḥusayn. A consideration of the mawlīd suggests that although there was no mechanism in place to legally force Abū al-Anwār to redistribute the resources of these endowed institutions into the community, early in his career, he did so with a great vigor, verging on aggression. A consideration of the al-Ḥusayn mawlīd and other khidamāt the he performed in his capacity as shaykh al-sajjāda al-Wafāʾiyya, suggests that the prestige of his household depended upon a variety of public gestures of generosity. It will be argued that to whatever degree he did so, it led to the enhancement of his status as a wālī.

The most visible khadamāt were those established at festivals (mawāsim), of which the most important was the mawlīd, a yearly festival held as a tribute to an important holy person, whether a saint or the Prophet, such as a local saint, a member of the Prophet’s family, or the patron who endowed a particular institution. The previous chapter recounted in detail the process

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8For example, in the biography of Moḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī, he emphasizes the many prominent visitors to the house of the shaykh, including scholars and princes. Muḥammad Alī Bāshā who visited him for the Mawlid al-Nabī, in Bayt al-Ṣiddīq, 45. Similarly, ʿAbd al-Munʿīm al-Bakrī, had ministers who came to visit him (Ibid., 47), as did Abū al-Muwāhib, who lived in the early tenth hijrī century. He quotes the travel journal of al-Nabulsī in which he states that even at this time, it was the habit of the country’s heads to meet with members of the Bakrī family regularly. Abū al-Makāram Abyad al-Wijh is noted as having had correspondences with, and been patronized by a variety of princes and leaders, including Sultaṭ Sulaymān, who also established awqāf (endowments) for him and his descendants (Ibid., 84). He also enjoyed visits from Egyptian military leaders, judges and governors, including the wazīr, who reportedly visited him every Friday and would kiss his hand (Ibid., 85). In his own autobiography, the author places special emphasis on the honorary rank of ṣāḥib ʿaskar bestowed upon him by the Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd during his visit to Istanbul in the year 1892 (Ibid., 13).

9“collective pressure... requires the rich to not only to pay the largest share of the cost of ceremonial exchanges (tawsa), but also to make the biggest contributions to the maintenance of the poor, the lodging of strangers, and the organization of festivals” Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice, 180.

10Though there was also a mawlīd for the cleaning of the mileimeter in Cairo and one at the location of the Prophet’s footprint. See Winter, Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 170.
by which Abū al-Anwār won control over the al-Ḥusayn shrine, and with it, the responsibility for the *mawlid* from his primary rival, Muḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī. The *mawlid* has often been criticized for excesses that emerged in the carnival atmosphere,\(^{11}\) which ranged from the mixing of the sexes, public dancing and the use of obscene language, to prostitution and acts of violence. This sense of the usual barriers being crossed may be due to the singular location of the *mawlid* as a point of intersection between segments of Egyptian society that usually interacted only in highly regulated points of contact.\(^{12}\) For the heads of the brotherhoods, the *mawlid* was the most visible element of their existence in the public sphere.\(^{13}\) For the governors and wealthy merchants, it was an opportunity to make public demonstrations of their veneration of the saints.\(^{14}\) Three *mawālid* were exclusively associated with the Wafāʾī brotherhood. The oldest was known as Mawlid Shaʿbān, because it was celebrated in the month of Shaʿbān from the eighteenth to the twenty-third. Another is called the Mīʿād *mawlid*. A third festival known as the Muḥarram *mawlid* for the start of the new year was created by the sixteenth *khalīfa* Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū al-Ishrāq (d. 1171/1758).\(^{15}\)

Several principles of the exchange between wealth and prestige in this economy of noble generosity (*karamāt*) can be seen in Jabartī’s accounts of Abū al-Anwār’s management of the Mawlid al-Ḥusayn. First, Jabartī represents the impetus for the transference of this *waqf* to Abu al-Anwār as a direct result of whatever Abū al-Anwār gained in prestige, after his principled stand against Jazāʾīrlī. It is especially emphasized that his prestige was enhanced vis à vis the


\(^{12}\) For a discussion of this mixing of class and genders, see Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous*.

\(^{13}\) A *mawsim* unique to the Wafāʾīyya was the *takniyya* ceremony, or the granting of patronymic. For more on the significance of this ceremony, see chapter three.

\(^{14}\) De Jong gives detailed information about those in attendance at the *mawlid al-nabī* in *Ṭuruq*, 62-4.

head of the rival Bakriyya brotherhood, Muḥammad Efendī al-Bakrī, who had handed over the money he held in trust. The previous chapter has argued that this victory was perceived as a kind of karāma, and that the prestige thus accrued was indistinguishable from walāya. Bakrī’s gift may thus be viewed as a recognition of Abū al-Anwār’s enhanced status as a wallē and religious leader. His abdication could also be understood as a gesture of generosity meant to recuperate the prestige that was lost by his political misstep. Either reading yields the same conclusion: that symbolic capital (prestige) was viewed as exchangeable for material wealth. This brings out a second point: that Abū al-Anwār was functioning in what Bourdieu calls an “undifferentiated” economy. That is it is an economy characterized by a fluid exchange of resources for prestige and vice-versa. This is as opposed to principles of market economics, by which the effort is made to discursively distinguish between symbolic and material capital. Finally, the incident underscores the uncertainty of exchanges in this milieu. According to the hagiography, the understanding between the two had been that Abū al-Anwār would hand over superintendence of the (somewhat less prestigious) Shāfī’ī waqf. When Abū al-Anwār reneged on this agreement, and held on to both posts, Bakrī had no higher authority to which to appeal for satisfaction in the matter, as it was an informal understanding, rather than contractual obligation. This act might have appeared underhanded or stingy, but Abū al-Anwār’s walāya was at its peak. Perhaps he felt that he could afford to exchange prestige for the material resources that would allow him to cultivate it through other gestures of generosity in the future.

It seems clear from Jabartī’s account that the biographer considered the al-Ḥusayn mawlid to be a boon for Abū al-Anwār. Soon after receiving the files associated with the waqf, he consolidated his position as nāẓir by renovating for himself a house close to the shrine where the mawlid would take place, in order to better preside over the festivities. Furthermore, he
extended the period of the *mawlid*, which had previously been only one night to fifteen.\(^{16}\) In some ways, a longer *mawlid* meant more resources toward the *waqf* and by extension its *nāẓir*. Visitors to the *mawlid* contributed to the fund for maintenance of the shrine and its attendants by leaving cash tribute for the saint in the *sandūq al-nudhūr* (the offering box). An expanded *mawlid* also meant expanded business for those offering merchandise and services to visitors, as visitors viewed purchasing food and other items at the *mawlid* as a spiritual exercise, as items consumed and brought home from the festival were understood to be imbued with the *baraka* of the saint in whose honor it was held.\(^{17}\) These merchants in turn paid tribute to the *nāẓir*.

However, these small offerings were unlikely to have offset the expense of the many different gestures of hospitality that were understood as essential elements of a successful *mawlid*. The brotherhoods who participated in the *mawlid* promoted the sanctity of their leading guides by setting up *khadamāt* or hospitality tents.\(^{18}\) In his *khidma*, the shaykh could entertain guests, and also provide hospitality to the poor and any other passers-by. The result in years of plenty may have been what Reeves termed a “meat orgy”\(^{19}\) for the poor, based on his observations in modern Ṭanṭā. The *khidma* acted as a form of *karāma*, that is, a manifestation of the genuine *walāya* of the shaykh, and may have been important for recruitment.\(^{20}\) The brotherhoods also prepared various events and spectacles to publicize their organization, and enhance its prestige. Besides *khadamāt*, the *mawlid* generally involved visiting the shrine of the saint (*ziyāra*), recitation of the entire Qur’ān (*khatma*), the performance of *dhikr*, processions of

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\(^{16}\) Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule*.  
\(^{17}\) Reeves, *The Hidden Government*, 114-16.  
\(^{18}\) Reeves’ wording from Ibid. The *khidma* is ideally present at both the *mawlid* specific to the ṭariqa as well as at bigger festivals that draw all of the brotherhoods, like the *Mawlid al-Husayn*. Chih, “What Is a Sufi Order?”, 32.  
\(^{19}\) Reeves, *Hidden Government*, 115.  
\(^{20}\) See De Jong, *Ṭuruq*, 55. *Khidma* is also used in the context of a shrine to refer to the collective of workers who maintain it. Ibid., 71.
members of the brotherhoods, and recitation of Sufi prayers and praise poetry to the Prophet and the saints.

Funding for the *mawlid* came in part through the *waqf* of the Ḥusayn shrine, but sources suggest that this was not sufficient to cover the expenses of the festivity. Many expenses associated with the *mawlid* fell to local merchants, who contributed to the event as sponsors or patrons, by giving cash and other forms of contributions in the form of tribute to Abū al-Anwār. Funding for such events was also provided by the military governors. Paying tribute, and otherwise providing financial support for a variety of *khadamāt* offered at the *mawlid* was a way for the wealthiest individuals to publicly express their veneration of the saint. Abū al-Anwār himself personally bore the cost of lavishly hosting dignitaries in the home that he had built specifically for looking out over the *mawlid*. He worked to further impress them by calling for parades including the Aḥmadiyya, the Saʿadiyya, and the Shaʿībīyya brotherhoods, among others, to pass below his house so that they could be seen by dignitaries who were sitting with him on the day of the *mawlid*.

Jabarfī reports that in order to assure the attendance of those who may have been uninterested in this commercial opportunity, Abū al-Anwār used the police to forcibly gather people and merchants from the market to participate, and to pay their tribute to him in turn. In his description it is clear that the biographer disapproves of the aggressiveness of the action, implying that Abū al-Anwār did so for his own personal gain. However, this should not be

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23 For example, the *mawlid al-nabī*, organized by the shaykh al-Bakrī was reported to have been funded by cash from the treasury (*al-khaṣīna al-ʿāmirā*), while rice, meat, butter, tea and firewood were contributed from the Cairo municipality and the personal estate of the khedive (*dāʿirat al-khidiwī*), while other festivals were funded entirely from the estate of the khedive. See De Jong, *Turuq*, 61, 66-7.
misconstrued as evidence that this personal gain was financial. Even if the mawlid was a net loss for Abū al-Anwār financially, it was a boon in terms of symbolic capital. A long and well-populated mawlid was a highly public manifestation of his personal prestige, and by extension, his true walāya, and by further extension, the sanctity of the Wafāʾī bayt vis à vis his rival household, and the previous superintendents of the al-Ḥusayn mawlid: the Bakriyya. It is only by complete internalization (on the part of Jabartī) of the principle of the relationship between prestige and wealth in this undifferentiated economy, by which symbolic and material capital are viewed in a constant state of interchange, that Jabartī was able to perceive Abū al-Anwār’s forcing the poor to attend his celebration and dine at his khidma as an act of aggression.

The waqf funds went to support other public services that were also viewed as khadamāt of the shaykh to the public. These included the rituals (shaʿāʾr) including the five obligatory prayers, and the sessions of dhikr, and the maintenance of the tombs to allow for public ziyāra, or visitation. The tombs in the Wafāʾī zawāya have traditionally functioned as mashhad. The term is commonly translated as “shrine,” but is rendered more literally as a place for witnessing. The ritual of ziyāra (visiting the shines) is understood as an act of witnessing ongoing activity of God and the walāya of the saint and the in the material world.26 Just as it was seen as within the capacity of the living awliyāʾ to intercede through shafāʾa, as argued in the previous chapter, individuals seeking to bring the sacred and universal to bear on their immediate and particular situation would seek the intercession of awliyāʾ residing in the barzakh.27 In the context of ziyāra, the barzakh is best understood as a space between this world and the next where souls of

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26 Kugle, Sufis and Saints’ Bodies, 76. The belief that that those who have passed continue to take an interest in, and have the capacity to impact the lives of the living is not limited to the awliyāʾ. Many believe that the souls of the dead, because they dwell in the barzakh, continue to participate in the lives of living people.

27 The barzakh is described as an isthmus, or the border between parallel worlds that makes them invisible to each other. See Hossein Nasr, An introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964): 168.
the dead await the day of judgment, residing between the apparent and the eternal.\textsuperscript{28} Tombs are the places that mark this barrier, “giving physical form to the permeable boundary between this world and the next.”\textsuperscript{29}

It is clear from the sources that custodianship of a shrine also involved control of significant material resources. Votive offerings (\textit{nudhūr}) in cash were commonly made by visitors to support the facility as well as donations of items (\textit{ṣadaqāt}) which could be used at the shrine, like candles, lamps, carpets, curtains, or furniture. Cash placed in the \textit{ṣundūq} (donation box) was often used to support students and teachers around the shrines, and other workers who performed service (\textit{khidma}) for the maintenance of the physical facility, and the leadership of its rituals. Donations in kind to support people living and working in the shrine such as food, livestock and farming equipment was a separate type of offering called \textit{ṣadaqāt al-khidma}\textsuperscript{30}. Again, these resources resided in a location between the public and private. They were public in the sense that they were not intended for Abū al-Anwār’s personal consumption. At the same time, he was able to accumulate symbolic capital by dispensing with them with generosity (\textit{karāma}).

The funds of endowed institutions also typically went toward the sheltering and feeding of travelers who stayed in the \textit{zāwiya} or in the home of the shaykh. The distribution of free food

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\textsuperscript{28} This is as opposed to a barrier in the sense of a line over which the soul passes. Though the \textit{barzākh} is interpreted as an absolute division based on references in the Qur’an, in the sense that there is no possibility of return: In the Qur’ān, the unbelievers, after death say: “O Lord, send me back again that I may do some good I did not do [in the world].” Not so. These are only words he utters. Behind them lies the intervening barrier (\textit{barzakh}) [stretching] to the day of their resurrection.” Qur’an 23:99-100, as translated by Ahmed Ali \textit{Al-Qur’an}, 23. Still, souls residing in the \textit{barzakh} are understood to continue many normal activities, including going to prayer or on the pilgrimage (\textit{hajj}). See Jane Idelman Smith et al., \textit{The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection} (Oxford University Press, USA, 2002): 183.

\textsuperscript{29} Kugle, \textit{Sufis and Saints’ Bodies}, 46.

\textsuperscript{30} De Jong, \textit{Ṭuruq}, 86. In larger institutions, the distribution of such goods and money was allocated to the \textit{shaykh al-khidma}, whereas in smaller institutions, this was the role of the \textit{nāzir} (superintendent).
and drink is also generally referred to as *khadamat*[^31]. Another routine occasion for *khadamat* as the demonstration of generosity was the weekly session of *dhikr*.[^32] Even today, it is common for Sufi *shuyukh* to provide a common meal after the *dhikr* session.[^33] The Wafā’ī *zāwiya* traditionally included spaces for lodgers in the form of a collection of simple rooms for residents of the *zāwiya*. These spaces also served as the location for cohabitation of brotherhood members in the interest of *tarbiya* or training of initiates through *ṣuḥba* (companionship) discussed in the first chapter. Cohabitation with the *wali* can be understood as a kind of *khidma*, in that it provided his followers the opportunity to learn and emulate not only his dispensation of just administration and arbitration (his application of *fiqh*) and his performance of rituals including prayer (*ṣalāt*) and *dhikr* (remembrance of God), but also the most minute aspects of his bodily disposition, including habits of waking and sleeping, grooming, eating, and interacting with the teacher and fellow residents, as well as more subtle dispositions and bodily gestures. Typically, this common life consisted of a highly regimented internal order, in which rules of everyday behavior were clearly defined.[^34]

**Developments in *khadamat* through time**

All of these types of *khadamat* appear to have been performed in the Wafā’ī *zawāya* throughout the history of the brotherhood. However, changes in emphasis may have mirrored socioeconomic developments in society as a whole. Since the fifteenth century, military households had become more important in Egyptian society as the unit for organizing the flow of material resources.[^35]

[^31]: De Jong, *Ṭuruq*, 55.
[^32]: This meal is referred to by Jabartī as *tārī* in his biography of the Shaykh al-Sharqāwī. Jabartī *Ajāʾīb*, 4: 161.
[^35]: Hathaway, “‘Mamluk Households.’”
The household had also become the main unit for organizing the economics of prominent families of *awliyā’*, as hereditary appointment to the post of superintendent became an increasingly common stipulation in the deeds of *awqāf*;\(^36\) which was the status of most of the resources controlled by the religious elite.\(^37\) Holding resources in the form of *awāqf* also protected their wealth in certain ways. Wealthy merchant households were never safe from arbitrary and excessive taxation by the military governors, and even the seizure of their properties. *Awqāf*, by contrast, were not technically subject to taxation, nor was their sale permitted.\(^38\) In some ways, the religious elite were even better positioned than the military elite to assure the maintenance and growth of resources in their own household over the course of generations. The material wealth of the mamluks was based upon their ability to collect taxes from areas under their protection and control, which was in turn closely linked to their ability to defend those areas against militarily challenge. For this reason, continuation of this wealth depended on the inheritance of their wealth to their second-in-command. By the singular pattern of inheritance and cultural reproduction which Ayalon terms the “mamluk phenomenon,”\(^39\) namely, the recruiting of boys and young men and training them as soldiers in military households, the preferred successor was typically a manumitted slave and not a blood relative. Because Islamic law prefers the passage of wealth to blood relatives, mamluk households had to use legal maneuvers to maintain the continuation of their wealth under the authority of their

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\(^36\) Beginning with the establishment of the *waqf* of Barsbāy’s *madrasa* in 1432. See Jonathan Porter Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: a Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992): 126. The earliest recorded such clause was in 1402.

\(^37\) Marsot, “The Political and Economic Functions of the Ulema,” 138.

\(^38\) Certain economic tools developed to provide for the sale and taxation of *awqāf* (such as exchange—*istiibdāl*—and long rents) are discussed below. Even with the possibility of sale or taxation *waqf* properties were significantly more stable than properties in private ownership.

\(^39\) David Ayalon, *The Mamlūk Military Society* (Northampton: Variorum Reprints, 1979). Members of this elite military class built their armies by capturing or purchasing slaves, training them warfare, then freeing them. This created close relationships of loyalty that were not based on blood ties.
second-in-command. This combination of historical factors allowed the households of the religious elite to rival those of the merchant and mamluk a’yān (elites).

The economic welfare of a particular household was based on the prestige of its figurehead. In the case of the Wafā’iyya and the other big Sufi families, this figurehead was the shaykh al-sajjāda. Like the bayt, the sajjāda (the prayer rug) is both a location in physical space and the more abstract concept of the gravitational center of household authority. For this reason, Bakrī calls the family home bayt al-sajjāda (literally, the house of the prayer rug). Unlike the masjid (mosque) whose appellation comes from the same root, meaning prostration in prayer, the sajjāda is portable; it is wherever the shaykh is, whether in the tarīqa-zāwīya, in a mosque, or in his home. It is the “seat” of leadership of the organization. Also, unlike the mosque, in which the community gathers to pray, the sajjāda can only be occupied by one person. In this way, it emphasizes the physical location of the body of the shaykh as having taken the physical location of the body of the founder. No matter where the shaykh decides to unroll his sajjāda, the seat of his authority is there. He also had control over the material assets of the tarīqa, or ashāyir. These included adawāt al-dhikr such as musical instruments, flags and signboards, lamps, and sashes to distinguish members of a particular tarīqa, and tents. Also ashāyir can refer to revenues from the waqf used to purchase these things. The heads of the brotherhoods also received muratabāt al-sajjāda from the proceeds of the awqāf, which went into his direct control.

It has already been argued that the prestige of the sajjāda, and by extension the Wafā’iyya was linked to gestures of generosity (khadamāt). These gestures depended, in turn, on

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40 “This prayer (ḥizb) [“The Prayer for Enlightenment” by Muhammad Wafā’] is read in the bayt al-sajjāda every week.” Bakrī, Wafā’iyyah, 58.
41 De Jong, Ṭuruq, 8, fn 8.
42 Arbāb al-ashāyir refers to tarīqa members, as ishāra also refers to the procession of the tarīqa in parades at the mawlid.
the physical spaces and their financial endowment. By Abū al-Anwār’s lifetime, no traces remain of the original Wafā’ family home, established on the island of Ruḍā in Cairo⁴³ by Muḥammad Wafā’, which had also functioned in the early years of the brotherhood as the central zāwīya of the brotherhood.⁴⁴ Rather, the center of the brotherhood under Abū al-Anwār was the zāwīya al-kubrā located in the Qarāfa cemetery near the shrine of Iskandarī, a structure separate from the family home near Birkat al-Fīl. Changes made to the physical structure of the Great Zāwīya reflect changes in emphasis between different forms of khadamāt. Namely, a shift is observed away from the emphasis on ziyāra and tarbiya in favor of reflecting wealth through hospitality to other elites. As discussed in chapter three, Abū al-Anwār was able to secure significant financing from the Sultan ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd (d. 1203/1789) for renovation of the zāwīya in the year 1191/1777, with the help of Murtadā al-Zabīdī. According to Jabartī, as soon as the money was secured, Abū al-Anwār ordered the complete removal of the old zāwīya. Where the original structure had served as a location for tarbiya geographically located on the tombs of the saints, the renovated zāwīya was rebuilt with elements typical of Mamluk palaces. The new structure made space for great rooms for entertaining, with high ceilings decorated in gold, and a terrace (maṣṭaba) with an impressive view and expansive garden.⁴⁵ Where a wooden dome had marked the tombs of the founders and their descendants, the new building sported four porticos (liwāwīn), made of stone and fancy marble, opening into the main room, as in the houses of the military elites. Despite these elements reminiscent of the palaces of princes, the communal devotional function was not altogether neglected, as the construction also transformed a section

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⁴³ It is modern-day Manyāl, site of the Manyāl Palace, the Mosque of Salāḥ al-Dīn, and the Nilometer and Manisterlī Palace Built by Ḥassan Fū’āḍ Pasha Manesterly in (1267/1851).
⁴⁴ Zawāwī reports having participated in dhikr in the family home in Ruḍā in the fifteenth century, and having observed disciples practicing khalwa (seclusion) under the leadership of the fourth khalīfa, Yaḥyā b. Wafā’. Zawāwī referred to the residence of the khalīfa Yaḥyā as “bayt al-dhikr.” McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 55.
⁴⁵ Bakrī, Wafā’iyyah, 60.
of the place into a mosque with a mīhrāb. Inscriptions on the walls extol the power and virtue of the Wafāʾī family and its patron, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. For example, over the entrance to the mosque was inscribed in gold the following two lines of poetry:

\[
\text{‘Ibādah mawli al-hamid byhum}
\text{‘Awali ibn anwar sanāʾ qasimah}
\]

This inscription further emphasizes the primary function of the zāwiya envisioned by Abū al-Anwār as a seat of a noble family, rather than as a space endowed primarily for the tarbiya of disciples through immersion in a common life of discipline. The ritual function of ziyāra (visitation of tombs) was also sidelined. When Abū al-Anwār removed the spaces that made up the original zāwiya, he upset the tombs of prominent Wafāʾīs from previous generations resting below the structure.\(^47\)

At the same time that these enormous expenses were being taken to spruce up the Great Zāwiya, the zāwiyat al-ribāṭ, (the outlying zāwiya) which stood in the area of Khurunfish, near Bāb Zawāyla, one of the gates to the old city of Cairo, was neglected. This was the traditional site for the ritual of seclusion that was among the rites of initiation for the Wafāʾī khulafāʾ.\(^48\) Eventually, entire sections of the structure were destroyed.\(^49\)

The shift toward an emphasis on grand homes may be better viewed as a change in the meaning of sanctity rather than a cynical disregard for it. Details in the biographies suggest that even the size of the home may have come to be viewed as a source of prestige that could be translated into a manifestation of walāya. In descriptions of the competition between Abū al-Anwār and Abū al-Imdād for the post of shaykh al-sajjāda al-Wafāʾiyya. Abū al-Imdād

\(^{46}\) Ibid., 62.
\(^{47}\) McGregor, Sanctity and Mysticism, 184.
\(^{48}\) Bakrī, Wafāʾiyyah, 59.
\(^{49}\) Jabartī reports that this was because of his belief that the ancient zāwiya was not necessary, as he believed himself to be khātim al-awliyāʾ and that no one would succeed him as shaykh al-sajjāda. See chapter three.
reportedly claimed preference over Abū al-Anwār in part because his ancestors were “from the household (bayt) of royalty, and their home (manzilahum) was like the houses (manāzil) of princes in terms of its size and elegance, and the sitting areas, and what they grow of fruit and date trees…”50 This aspect of wealth-as-walāya can also be seen in the conspicuous manner of spending common to the two rivaling brotherhoods of the Wafā’iyya and the Bakrīyya, particularly in the construction of their houses. In 1226/1811, Abū al-Anwār built a giant house next to his old one, which Bakrī describes in great detail. Next to the house was the home and garden of Sayyid Khalīl al-Bakrī. Jabartī reports that when Sayyid Khalīl died, Abū al-Anwār took the opportunity to coerce his son, Aḥmad al-Bakrī to sell him the adjoining garden at a reduced price so he could connect it to his. When this was done, he added insult to injury by building a wall around the two adjoining properties, cutting the garden off even from the sight of residents of the Bakrī property of which it had been a part. The palatial homes of the awliyā’ may well have been understood to be an important manifestation of their ability to perform services of hospitality understood to be an earthly reflection and manifestation of walāya.

The increasing importance of the physical structure of the bayt as seat of a noble family and a projection of its sanctity resonates strongly with broader historical trends in Egyptian society. As the collection of social ties referred to as the military household came to be of greater importance for the organization of authority (as discussed in chapter three), the wealth expressed through the physical structure (manzil or dār) representing the household came increasingly to be seen as the projection of the prestige of that bayt. The relationship between the the bayt as a collection of social relationships, and the bayt as a material possession becomes particularly clear in the humiliation of the Wafā’ī bayt upon the death of Abū al-Anwār.

50 Bakrī, Wafā’iyyah, 13.
The extension of the Wafā’ī brotherhood into the iltizām

Hunter states in his history that, “to rule Egypt was to control its rural surplus.”\(^{51}\) That is, military governors of Egypt have historically contented themselves with gaining through military contest the right to collect the country’s agricultural surplus through taxation, with little concern for the management of the details of the production process. At the beginning of the Ottoman period in Egypt (the sixteenth century), the new Ottoman authority attempted to collect taxes by sending Turkish agents to collect revenue and deliver it directly to the treasury, in what was known as the amīn system. Over time, this was gradually replaced by a system of land ownership and management known as the iltizām (tax farm) system, by which the highest bidder was given the right to manage the land and collect whatever surplus he could from those working it. These tax farms could be quite lucrative for managers (multazimīn) depending on how much they were able to collect from the farmers (falaḥīn), as they were entitled to keep whatever was left after paying the military governors their share. Because iltizām properties could be bought and sold, they functioned nearly as private property. The iltizām system was firmly established as the mechanism for managing agricultural surplus by the beginning of the eighteenth century.\(^{52}\)

Over the course of the eighteenth century, there were more and more smaller iltizāmāt, with the result that the total number of iltizāmāt more than doubled over the course of the eighteenth century.\(^{53}\) An increasing portion of these multazimīn were the heads of the big Sufi households until, by the end of the eighteenth century, mamluk multazimīn had become the minority.\(^{54}\) Part of the reason for this was the increasing integration of the system of iltizām with the system of awqāf, or religious endowments. Although the waqf system was initially conceived

\(^{51}\) Hunter, *Egypt Under the Khedives*, 13.  
\(^{52}\) Hathaway, “‘Mamluk Households,’” 108.  
\(^{53}\) Hunter, *Egypt under the Khedives*, 13.  
\(^{54}\) Marsot, “Political and Economic Functions of the ‘Ulema’,” 136.
as a manner of founding charitable institutions, as discussed above, properties enjoying the official status of awqāf involved a much greater share of the total economy than these institutions represented. This is because besides khayrī (charitable) endowments, there were also ahlī (private) endowments, in which some, and often most of the income from the endowment was divided between private beneficiaries.\textsuperscript{55} The waqf ahlī was a means of avoiding taxation of property, protecting it from confiscation by the governors, and evading Islamic prescriptions for the division of inheritance. By the end of the eighteenth century, awqāf made up 600,000 feddāns, totaling one fifth of the arable land in Egypt.\textsuperscript{56} Abū al-Anwār was nāẓir of fifty-two awqāf, and Muḥammad al-Bakrī controlled forty-four.\textsuperscript{57} Thus, it is well-established that religious authority translated into opportunities to manage rural properties by virtue of the overlapping of the iltizām and waqf systems.

What is remarkable is that government documents confirm the authority of the shaykh as a multazim as being based upon his position as cosmological link in a chain connecting the bodies of the present to an original source of walāya. This role of cosmic intermediary is emphasized in the formula of honor for Sufi elites in state documents. For example, in the record of a waqf sold by istibdāl to Aḥmad Abū al-Iqbāl, then the head of the Wafāʾī brotherhood, he is described with the following string of honorifics:

\begin{quote}
سيدنا ومولانا الأستاذ الأعظم والملاذ الأفخم الأكرم قطب دائرة الزمان وفريد العصر والأوان خاص خواص أصحاب السعادة والصلاح خلاصة أهل الولاية والفلاح قرة أعين أهل الورع والزهد واسطة أصحاب الخشوع والرشد أستاذ أهل الطريقة وملاذ أرباب الحقيقة ... سيد السادات ومعدن الفضل والجود والсадات من به ونحاسه نتوسل إلى الله الكبير المتعال مولانا السيد أحمد أبو الاقبال السيد عبد الله السادات من له ب.Optional\\n
\textsuperscript{56} Marsot, “The Political and Economic Functions of the ‘Ulamā’,” 140.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 141.
Our lord and master, the great teacher, and the most splendid most honorable refuge, the Pole, the pivot around which his epoch revolves, unique in this era and these times, an elite among the elites of goodness and probity, the epitome of the people of \textit{walāya} and salvation, the quintessence of the pious and ascetic, the intermediary for the people of humility and integrity, the teacher of those of the Path and the refuge of the lords of Truth, master of the masters, and the mine of grace and generosity, and the masters who, by him and by his forefathers we reach God the great, the most elevated: our lord, master Aḥmad Abū al-Iqbāl al-Sādāt, present leader of the noble Wafawiyya, Muṣṭafawiyya brotherhood, may God increase his glory, highness and splendor.

The formulae in this and other government documents suggest that just as proximity was important in the discourses of education discussed in the first two chapters, it is also a factor in the economic relationships of Abū al-Iqbāl the \textit{multazim} to the \textit{falahīn} working the tax farm.

His piety and good judgment are expressed as the result of his special place as heir to the qualities flowing of \textit{walāya}, making him uniquely placed to act as a mediator of disputes, the one who can divine what is right and true, and the means for normal people to access divine power and wisdom. Similarly, in official documents granting assigning Abū al-Anwār responsibility over an \textit{iltizām}, the appointment is linked to his role as spiritual guide:

\begin{quote}
التزام زيده الصلاحا السالكين ونخبة الاتقا الراشدين سراج الفضلا الابرار مولانا السيد محمد افندي أبو الاتوار السادات
\end{quote}

The \textit{iltizām} of the one who benefits those walking the path and the best of the pious and rightly-guided, the light to the good and righteous, our lord and master, Muḥammad Efendī Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt.

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al-wafā‘iyya bil-qāhira: ma‘ taḥqīq wa nasār li-ba‘ḍ al-manāthij,” (MA Thesis, Cairo: Cairo University, 2002): 286. This can be contrasted stylistically to a collection of four documents by which Abū al-Anwār registered his properties with the \textit{Registre Du Droit}, the ownership register established during French administration in 1806 (\textit{“Confirmation of ownership"}, series 69, 70, 73, 74, 1806, “ Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, \textit{tārīkh} 2784; Ḥasan, \textit{“Dirāsa diblumāsiyya,”} 81-8). In these documents, Abū al-Anwār is referred to simply as “\textit{le cheik El sadat}”, and his right to possess the land is explained by the fact that the director of registration has verified the deeds of ownership that he presented (\textit{“Directeur du droit d’Enregistrement ai verifie les titres de proprieties presents par le cheik El sadat”}, and his right to possess the land is explained by the fact that the director of registration has verified the deeds of ownership that he presented (\textit{“Directeur du droit d’Enregistrement ai verifie les titres de proprieties presents par le cheik El sadat”} in \textit{“Confirmation of ownership"}, no. 69, 1806 Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, \textit{tārīkh} 2784); Ḥasan, \textit{“Dirāsa diblumāsiyya,”} 81. 59 “Order regarding Samālūṭ in Minyā,” Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, \textit{tārīkh} 2784; Ḥasan, \textit{“Dirāsa diblumāsiyya,”} 73.
Official documents also express the work of agricultural production on the *iltizām* as a kind of service (*khidma*) to the *multazim* as *wali*. That is, services such as working in the house of the shaykh or on his *iltizām*, were rendered out of respect of his position of divinely granted authority, and in the hope of gaining some material benefit from his grace, or at least avoiding his punishment.

These could be dismissed as the result of the custom of including extensive and highly formulaic honorifics in official documents, except that in practice, adherence to the *ṭarīqa* of the *multazim* appears to have been nearly completely propagated in the area under his control. This means that the *falāhin* working the land for which Abū al-Anwār was responsible were, by virtue of being under his authority, also followers of the Wafāʾī *ṭarīqa*. In this sense, the structure of brotherhood organizations, even those like the Wafāʾiyya whose center of gravity resided in urban households in Cairo, formed the basis of authority structures in rural communities. The territorial principle of *ṭarīqa* jurisdiction was formalized in the nineteenth century when a central organization restricted each brotherhood to proselytizing in those areas in which they had recognized *qadam* or longstanding influence.

It would follow that insofar as the *falāhin* are disciples of the shaykh by virtue of his role as *multazim*, the expectations for interacting with a *wali* in the *ṭuruq* realm should be expected to translate into similar expectations for interactions with him as *multazim*. The same expectations for the relationship of the shaykh to the *murīd* expressed through the repetition of the metaphors of parenthood discussed in the first chapter are echoed in official documents binding Abū al-Anwār as a *multazim* to his subjects, the *falāhin*. The wording of government documents

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60 De Jong argues that the principle of *qadam*, the division of areas into *ṭarīqa* jurisdictions occurred in part as a way of maintaining the same geographically based affiliations associated with the *iltizâmāt* after the land reform. See *Ṭuruq*, 41.
61 Ibid., 51.
investing Abū al-Anwār with an iltizām recalls the metaphors of parenthood used to describe the relationship between shaykh and murīd, as discussed in the opening chapter, reflecting that the sense of quasi-parental responsibility and protection associated with the concept of walāya was seamlessly extended into relationships on the iltizām. For example, in a firmān granting Abū al-Anwār control over an iltizām, he is charged with the duty of protection (ṣiyāna and ḥamāya) of the falāḥīn. This resonates with the language used to signal the relationship of husband and wife in another firmān. Abū al-Anwār’s wife is referred to without her name as “the protected” (al-mawsūna) from the same root. Similarly, in the firmān granting Abū al-Anwār the iltizām containing the village of Samālūṭ in Minya, it is stated that it charges Abū al-Anwār with the task of patronage akin to custodial protection (riʿāya) over the people of the region. The role of Abū al-Anwār vis-à-vis the inhabitants of these villages can thus be read as an extension of his parental role toward dependents in his household: to care for them as he sees fit and to expect their obedience.

Another similarity in discourse is that, just as absolute obedience was the right of the shaykh over his murīd in the brotherhood, so obedience to the multazim was expected of the falāḥ. These expectations are reflected in the wording of deeds related to the iltizām. For example, in a firmān appointing Abū al-Anwār as multazim of an iltizām including two areas (Ḥamlat Zaḥla and ‘Izbat Awdād Khalaf in Fārskūr) the language of the firmān is directed to the

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62 Along with assuring their development (عماه وهم), see “Firmān for the iltizām of Samālūṭ in Minyā, 1220, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, tārīkh 2784; Ḥasan, “Dirāsa diblumāsiyya,” 74.
63 Referring to a woman in terms of her relationship to her husband rather than her name was a common practice. Another common term for wives in official documents is “ḥurma” (inviolable). Both titles were viewed as providing for modesty by avoiding mentioning the given name of the woman.
64 The reason for the action is that the area has gone to ruin (خراب) and that the family who was responsible for it has died out (أهليها أضمحلوا). This is the same technical language used by the courts as acceptable reasons within Islamic shārīʿa for the transference (ابدال) or dropping (اسقاط) of waqf properties. In the case of awqāf, this is done when parties wish to effectively buy or sell a waqf, although it is technically defined as a property which cannot be subjected to such transactions.
65 في تصرف التزام ونظر
people of these areas, especially the elites, the mashāyikh, calling upon them to obey him and not to go against him.66 Similarly, in a firmān regarding a waqf including the village of Safṭ al-Laban in Gīza, which was also an iltizām, the dīwān announces that the “peasants and shaykhs”67 of the area were to obey the rule or rulings of the multazima (ahkāmahā) and disclose to her the value of their possessions. This ethic of obedience which finds its justification in Sufi philosophy shaped fundamental ideas of the self in the schema of leadership, such that the command to obey was by this time a typical element of such documents, regardless of whether the multazim was a religious authority, a mamluk or otherwise.

The expectation of obedience was matched with the threat of violence. This prerogative may be implied by the warning in official documents to “beware going against [the multazim],”68 commonly included in documents assigning authority over a waqf or iltizām. According to Jabartī, Abū al-Anwār was known to flog falahīn in order to extract taxes from them.69 The beating of peasants must not be understood as merely an act of brute force, as it is difficult to imagine the elderly shaykh al-Sādāt overcoming a person whose body is accustomed to grueling manual labor in a battle of strength. Rather, it is a symbolic violence analogous in its function to the kissing of the hand of the shaykh or the hem of his gown.70 It is not that the shaykh receives any pleasure from this act of submission. Rather, it serves as a gesture embodying the total

69 Jabartī (vol. 4, p. 191-192).
70 Acts of submission were so formalized and commonplace that the details of this exchange did not merit being recorded in biographical sources that explicitly emphasize the unusual and noteworthy, usually of the lives and activities of the elites alone. These are reported by Jabartī as noteworthy only because Abū al-Anwār’s repugnance at the touch of his adoring public revealed his haughtiness in ‘Ajā’ib, 8: 305. The practice of connecting to the body of the shaykh in this manner continues to be common in the contemporary culture of the Egyptian brotherhoods. See Hoffman, Sufism, Mystics, and Saints, and Reeves, The Hidden Government.
relationship of hierarchy between the parties, and the reliance of the *murīd* on the shaykh for his spiritual and material welfare. Similarly, the violence that the elderly shaykh inflicts upon the *falāḥ* is less enduring in whatever bodily injury he may have inflicted than in its assertion of his place as the exclusive holder of authority. To whatever degree these beatings are understood to assert and maintain the natural order, they are considered to be a moral good.71 In this sense, the beating reinforces the impossibility of resistance, and is carried out with the moral and administrative backing of the military elite, society in general, and God Himself. In other words, the body of the peasant is not overcome physically by the body of the shaykh, but discursively. When violence is understood as applied to uphold the moral order, it is expressed positively, as a mark of the fear-inspiring quality of the shaykh. The mixture of respect and fear (*hayba, rahba*)72 that some people experience in the presence of the shaykh is understood to be one of the manifestations, or outward signs of his *walāya*.73 The sense of a prerogative, or even duty to inflict physical pain in the support of a divine social order can be easily overplayed, as will be seen in the remainder of this chapter.

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71 In *Society Must Be Defended* Foucault contrasts premodern discourses of sovereignty, in which the ruler had the absolute power over the physical being of his subject, to a situation in which biology is in the realm of the state, where the institution has responsibilities over “the species” rather than individual sovereign over individual subject, in Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France 1975–76*, Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, eds. D. Macey, trans. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003): 240. Further, Foucault argues that modern violence differs from the form described here in that society as a whole views itself as pacifistic, preferring to transfer violence to the sphere of discipline, classification and administration. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock, 1970): 211.

72 This mixture of respect and fear that Bourdieu notes is also referred to among the Kabil as *elhiba* is used to describe the relationship of the peasant to the land itself, as “nature bestows its bounty on those who bring it their care as tribute,” in *Outline of a Theory of practice*, 175.

The decline of the Wafa’ī bayt

An inverted version of the principles at play in this “good-faith” economy of endowment, generosity and prestige can be seen in the gradual decay of Abū al-Anwār’s prestige over the course of his lifetime. Jabarti’s narrative paints the picture of a man progressively perceived less as a source of divine bounty, and increasingly as a bitter old miser. In an acid line of poetry in the biography of Abū al-Anwār, he writes: “As his life lengthened, his haughtiness grew, his righteousness dwindled, his evil exceeded.” Jabarti’s description of his reasons for having a deflated opinion of Abū al-Anwār was based on several factors that give further insight into the principles underpinning this “good-faith” economy.

Though violence can sometimes inspire respect, an excess of physical force distastefully reveals the non-consensual nature of the unequal relationships represented through the discourse of sanctity as conforming to the divine will and order. Jabarti describes Abū al-Anwār’s quick temper, writing that, “everyone was careful not to upset Abū al-Anwār or say anything against him.” As discussed above, the infliction of physical violence itself is not necessarily unacceptable. Just the right amount of violence inspires that mixture of fear and respect discussed above as hayba, as in the following lines: “he was, from the perspective of the people, feared and famous and notable in Egypt and outside it.” However, in the case of Abū al-Anwār, his violence in public sometimes took the shameful form of an inversion of the appearance of

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74 جبارتي، 'Ajā‘īb al-Āthār fil-Tarājim wal-Akhbār (Cairo: Maktabat al-Usra, 2003) vol. 7-8, 305. Bakrī removes the last half. He also sensors Jabarti’s comment that no matter how much perfume is applied, some things still stink: كل ما طال عمره زاد كبره وقال برء وتحدى شره Jabarti، ‘Ajā‘īb، 8: 305. Jabarti’s comment is a direct accusation of his loss of sanctity, since the body of the walī is considered to be sweet smelling even after death. See Kugle, Sufis and Saints’ Bodies, 76.

75 جبارتي is critical of this behavior calling the family home of the Wafā‘iyya the seat of justice until Abū al-Anwār reversed the natural order and made it like the house of the “police magistrate,” the seat of fear in Ajā‘īb, 4:191.

76 Bakrī, Wafā‘iyah, 8.


*karāma* expected from the *awliyā*, as in his treatment of al-Sayyid al-Badawī, superintendent of the al-Ḥusayn shrine:

> And he started to charge the superintendents (*al-mubāshirīn*) and the servants of the mausoleums whatever he wished, and to insult them, and to hit them on their legs.⁷⁷

Although Abū al-Anwār was technically empowered to do as he sees fit with the resources of the shrine, as he is the sole authority as *nāẓir* of the *waqf*, extracting an excess portion of the donations left at the shrine would cost him in terms of symbolic capital. Once again, the unjust behavior of the *sajjāda* reflects on the prestige and thereby the sanctity of the entire Wafā’ī bayt. Because of Abū al-Anwār’s quick temper, Jabartī opines that where the family home of the Wafā’iyya had been the seat of justice, Abū al-Anwār reversed the natural order and made it like the house of the “police magistrate, the seat of fear.”⁷⁸

A point that might be lost on contemporary readers, for whom *any* violence between individuals is taboo, and for whom the state is the only legitimate perpetrator of violence, is that where violence in the defense of the moral order was discussed above as having the potential to be viewed as kind of *karāma*, Abū al-Anwār’s violence is just the opposite precisely because it brings into visibility the fundamentally coercive nature of unequal relationships. Ideas about the relationship between sanctity and material bounty enabled what Bourdieu calls *méconnaissance*, that is, a purposeful misrecognition of the relationship between the movement of resources and the mechanisms of coercion. From this perspective, just as the conspicuous spending of the shaykh on occasions of hospitality must appear as generosity and good will rather than as self-interested investments in the appearance of sanctity, the labor of the *falāḥ* on the *ilizām*, or of

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the servants of the shrines, are meant to appear as acts of service that flow from heartfelt piety, rather than as the means of avoiding physical pain. This misrecognition can only be sustained if submission and obedience on the one hand, and bountiful generosity on the other, appear completely voluntary. The spectacle of a shaykh beating a servant of the shrine in order to “demand the offerings for himself—seeds, candles, sheep, and calves—and the money collected in the alms box of the tomb, things that they used to earmark for themselves so that the lesser of them might have some comfort in life…” must have been repugnant indeed in a context in which generosity is so closely associated with sanctity.

While Abū al-Anwār’s wealth was protected during his lifetime, this did not extend to his successor in the post of khalīfa. Upon his death, the government confiscated Abū al-Anwār’s belongings. The straw that broke the camel’s back was Abū al-Anwār’s attempt to dispense arbitrarily with his wealth, an inheritance that was meant to continue in the Wafāʿī family. In the terms of the waqf endowment that essentially served as his last will, he attempted to leave a significant portion of his wealth to his wife, rather than attempting to consolidate it in the hands of Abū al-Iqbal, his successor as shaykh al-sajjāda. In this section, Jabartī suggests, mostly through his dramatization of Muḥammad ‘Alī’s statements about Abū al-Anwār, that the wealth of a walī cannot be considered his exclusive possession. Rather, it belongs to a bayt that stretches through generations into the past and present. This principle is at the heart of conceptions of the

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79 Jabartī, Ajāʾīb, 4:189, as translated in Hathaway, Al-Jabarti’s History of Egypt, 306.
80 For example, in 1189, Muḥammad Wafāʾ sent a complaint to Ibrāhīm Bey about Abū al-Anwār in a harshly worded letter. He complained that the shaykh’s impetuous and frivolous nature had led him to misallocate and squander waqf funds that should have been spent on services in the zāwiya, using them instead to reward his cronies. Despite the fact that this petition was signed by twelve individuals, some from prominent families and some from among the scholars at al-Azhar, the response of the dīwān was curt and dismissive. The letter was returned with only a single sentence scribbled in the margins in Ottoman Turkish: “You should not interfere or oppose the law in any other way regarding this zāwiya and its shaykh. By this lawful deed, it has been determined that he is the most suitable, and this royal order has been issued to prevent anyone who opposes it, so you had better follow it and avoid going against it.” See “Petition against the Shaykh al-Sādāt al-Wafāʾiyya” Cairo: Dār al-Kutub Manuscripts, tārīkh, 2784; Hassan, “Dirāsa dilumbāsiyya,” 33-38.
awqāf (as discussed above), but is seen at Abu al-Anwār’s death to apply also to properties not legally classified as awqāf. From this perspective, because Abū al-Iqbāl took over Abū al-Anwār’s role as manager of the multiple endowed institutions, tax farms and other investments that Abu al-Anwār had brought under the administration of the Wafā‘ī ṣayt, Abū al-Anwār’s own wealth should rightly pass on to him to support the various gestures of generosity expected from a person in such a position. This is precisely the justification for the seizure of Abū al-Anwār’s property that Jabartī places in the mouth of Muḥammad ‘Alī in his biography of the shaykh, who, besides admonishing Abū al-Anwār for his greed and pride, also cites as justification his belief that the inheritance should have rightly gone to Abū al-Iqbāl, rather than the woman who the Bāshā refers to dismissively as a slave “with a price of one thousand qirsh more or less.”

Like the awqāf the wealth of the shaykh is understood as inextricable from his social role as wali, and should follow duty, not personal preference or whims. To this end, the wife of the late Abū al-Anwār was ordered by the Bāshā to marry the new head of the order, Abū al-Iqbāl. In this way, although the itizām was allowed to be passed into her hands, it continued to belong to the household of the shaykh al-sajjāda.

In Jabartī’s narrative, the Bāshā is shown to further reason that, for the public good, it is more appropriate that the treasury take Abū al-Anwār’s other goods toward payment of the expenses of troops fighting abroad. To this end, he sent Ḥusayn Katkhuda, along with some representatives from the treasury to pillage the Wafā‘ī bayt, seizing most of his furnishings and one hundred twenty-seven bags in cash. They even seized his scribe. The newly appointed khalīfa went to speak to the Bāshā in the Citadel accompanied by the heads of the orders, in

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82 Bakrī, Wafā‘īyah, 29.
83 He was a Copt named ‘Abd al-Qaddūs. See Bakrī, Wafā‘īyah, 30.
order to complain that the house of the shaykh is sacred and seizing the possessions of the shaykh was disrespectful and contrary to custom.

If generosity is linked to sanctity, then the painstaking enumeration of the items removed from various hiding places in the home must be counted among the most damning sections of Jabarti’s biography. He reports that they searched the house for his hiding places, finding hidden stores of cotton, copper, coffee, soap, candles, and honey, and finally one hundred and twenty seven bags of cash stashed in one of the seats in his sitting room. Far from the bountiful shaykh, Abū al-Anwār is portrayed as miserly to an extent that suggests senility. Expenditure for the purpose of cultivating prestige is sometimes rendered pejoratively as “irrational.” Indeed, economics theory emerging from early industrializing economies posits the greatest benefit for the economy as a whole as resulting from accumulation and reinvestment in the means of production. In the undifferentiated economy based on the continuous exchange of prestige for agricultural surplus and vice-versa in which Abū al-Anwār functioned, the ferreting away of resources displays a kind of irrational inability to distinguish material goods from their non-material ends. From this perspective, beyond basic material comforts, the purpose of wealth is to boost the prestige of the family. As Bourdieu puts it, “a family of honor must keep its capital above suspicion.” The conspicuous spending at festivals and other highly visible public functions was perceived as a kind of karāma, evidence of the bounty and thereby the true walāya

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84 This view is also challenged by Bourdieu. He argues that investing economic capital to develop prestige in the form of personal ties becomes an important form of credit: “symbolic capital, which in the form of prestige and renown attached to a family and a name is readily convertible back into economic capital is perhaps the most valuable form of accumulation in a society in which the severity of the climate (the major work -- ploughing and harvesting--having to be done in a very short period of time) and the limited technical resources (harvesting is done with the sickle) demand collective labour.” Outline of a Theory of Practice, 179. Even in modern economies that clearly differentiate between material and symbolic capital, much of the expenditure of the rich is meant to project the prestige of economic success, though it takes the form of conspicuous consumption rather than hospitality.

85 Ibid., 181. The idea that charitable giving provides a kind of purification of the wealth still in the hands of a family is a common interpretation of the meaning of zakāt, which carries the double sense of obligatory charitable giving and purification.
of the saint. At Abū al-Anwār’s death, it is shown that such expenditures may in some cases be just as important for economic survival as were material resources themselves. Abū al-Anwār’s failure to manifest his sanctity in the form of generosity late in life had dire consequences for the financial as well as symbolic fate of the brotherhood. Whatever prestige he was able to accrue earlier in his career, by asserting authority over the overlapping genealogies of religious authority, by asserting his sense of justice against Jazā’irī, and by manifesting divine grace through generosity, his miserliness late in his career, and in death were perceived as a disgrace. Besides the confiscation of possessions in his home, further evidence of the diminishing *walāya* of the Wafā’ī bayt vis à vis other holy families was the transfer of some of Abū al-Anwār’s posts of honor and responsibility to competing households after his death. As discussed in chapter three, these included the superintendence of the Ḥusayn shrine (which went to Maḥrūqī), and the post of *naqīb al-ashrāf*, which went to the family of his rivals, the Bakriyya. The posts and assets of the Wafā’iyya continued to dissipate over the following decades, such that the brotherhood, which had grown to be the most powerful in Cairo during the tenure of Abū al-Anwār, completely disappeared by the mid nineteenth century, when it became subsumed under the authority of the Shaykh al-Bakrī.

**Prestige of the awliyā’ and the centralization of the awqāf**

In 1224/1809, Muḥammad ‘Alī brought the *awqāf* under the control, of the central government bringing under his control endowed institutions as well as the *īltizāmāt*. He arranged for the administration of these properties through the *Dīwān al-Ḥisābāt*, which allowed the government to take its share of the profits of agricultural *awqāf*. Later, Ismā’īl brought the *awqāf* firmly under the control of the reform government by replacing that body with the Ministry of Religious
endowments (Dīwān al-Awqāf). He also appointed himself as superintendent for some major existing endowments, including that of Muhammad Bey al-Kabīr, a mosque-madrasa-takkiya complex which had been generously endowed in the time of its founder, but had since become almost completely defunct.

Historians often report this move to centralize the awqāf along with the massacre of the mamluks as two parts of a single strategy of consolidation of control through the annihilation of his political competitors. Though Jabartī reports that all of the shuyūkh spoke out against the move, it is questionable whether it was really perceived as such a devastating blow. First, the seizure of religious endowments was not so novel, as it had occurred in earlier centuries in times of financial crisis. Crecelius lists several cases in which the seizure of the superintendence of major endowments had been used as a source of revenue for the support of other state priorities, while in times of financial plenty, the amirs established and renovated religious institutions and provided them with generous stipends. Second, the military elite continued to personally patronize religious institutions after the nationalization of the awqāf. New endowments provided wealth to the awliyā’, and acknowledged their continued authority. Muḥammad ‘Alī renovated Zāwiyat al-Khalūj with resources from his own estate. His grandson ‘Abbās Bāshā (d. 1270/1854) established a Naqshabandī Takiyya in 1268/1851 for the shaykh Muḥammad ‘Āshiq Effendi. ‘Abbās also renovated a zāwiyā that was in ruins (from his own funds) for Ḥassan al-Finjīlī in 1265/1849, as well as providing him with a generous stipend, reportedly because the shaykh foretold his governorship of Egypt. Ismā‘īl Bāshā (d. 1312/1895) established an

86 This is the representation in Hunter, Egypt Under the Khedives, 15.


88 Zāwiyat al-Khalūjī (Mubārak, Khiṭat, 2:247), which continued to function with its mawlid and dhikr when ‘Alī Mubārak wrote the Khiṭat, and was supported by its own revenues in coordination with the Dīwān.

89 Ibid., 3:89.
endowment for a popularly acclaimed *walī* who ʿAlī Mubārak claims originated as a mad highwayman (known as Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Abū al-Ḥadīd), and his mother established the impressive Rifāʿī mosque. Wealthy religious leaders, too, continued to invest in endowed properties. The Shaykh al-Jawharī, for example, who was both a teacher at al-Azhar and head of the Shādhiliyya in Egypt funded the renovation of his family mosque, the Jawharī mosque, even though the establishment was technically under the authority of the *Dīwān al-Awqāf*, which should thus have been responsible for financing any renovations.

Furthermore, some of the changes initiated by the government in Cairo may have been perceived as beneficial to these institutions. The predominant legal opinion about charitable endowments was that proceeds of an endowed property could not be spent other than according to the stipulations of the donor. This meant that some institutions fell into disrepair, while others had significant extra funds that went to private beneficiaries of the endowment, or into the pocket of the superintendent himself. Significant legal acrobatics had to be undertaken in order to circumvent the prohibitions on sale and other activities resembling ownership. The *Dīwān al-Awqāf*, under the administration of ʿAlī Mubārak, ignored these restrictions and distributed endowed funds from more prosperous properties to renovate structures that had fallen into disrepair, and to reestablish stipends for educational and ritual activities in institutions whose funding was no longer sufficient. Crecelius argues that during the reign of Ismāʿīl, religious institutions experienced a “modest revival” thanks to these policies.

The most important reason that the takeover of the *waqf* system may not have appeared as threatening as might be assumed was the policy of coopting already existing authority

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90 Ibid., 3:137.
91 Ibid., 3:157.
92 Crecelius, “The Waqf of Muhammad Bey,” 76.
structures and practices. Rather than attempting to task new bureaucratic departments with mediation and regulation of individuals connected with the *ṭuruq*, successive rulers worked to incorporate living representatives of the old elite households and Sufi families, respecting the basic principles of operation described above. Even when official control over these appointments shifted to the *dīwān*, superintendence of many institutions continued to go to those with hereditary rights to these positions. In the register of the *taqarīr al-naẓr* (appointments to superintendence) through the period of Ismā‘īl, appointments mention the hereditary line through which the right to hold that position has been passed, noting that the appointee is “taking the place of his deceased father, who took the place of his deceased father…” and so on. A comprehensive study of the *taqarīa al-naẓr* could give insight into general trends in the logic of appointment to these posts. In the absence of such a study, the *Khiṭat* of ‘Alī Mubārak gives some indication. He mentions explicitly in his description of several *zawāyā* that they are run by descendants of the shaykh or founder. Even before centralization, gestures of generosity and the air of sanctity that they served to confer were never really financed through the personal funds of the *nāẓir*. From this perspective, if posts continued to be granted to the descendants of holy families, and funds continued to be forthcoming for the provision of the expected *khadamāt*, the prestige of the individual religious elites may well have been unaffected by the administrative change.

The acceptability of the new administrative offices is also suggested by the fact that some of the bureaucrats in the *dīwān* itself were drawn from families with hereditary rights to superintendence. Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Effendī, for example, maintained supervision of his

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93 This continuity is also seen in *ṭuruq* administration of the guilds. See Gabriel Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times*, Oriental Notes and Studies, 8 (Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society, 1964): 107.
family *awqāf*, associated with the eighteenth century *sharīf* Badr al-Dīn al-Maqdīsī, but also held a post in the *dīwān al-awqāf*. Similarly, De Jong has shown that on lands that had been separate *iltizāmāt* before centralization, the territorial principle of *ṭarīqa* jurisdiction was maintained, with each brotherhood restricted to proselytizing in those areas in which they had recognized *qadam* or longstanding influence.

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95 There is also continuity in that many *awqāf* retained the names of the *shuyūkh* that endowed them in the early nineteenth century, such as the *waqf* of Mohammad al-Amir and Muhammad Maḥdī, along with some of the properties of Abu Anwar al-Sadat b. Wafā’ after they were taken under the authority of the ministry of religious endowments. Crecelius “The Waqf of Muḥammad Bey,” 77.
96 De Jong, *Ṭuruq*, 51.
Chapter 6

Invisible relationships and material spaces: the multiple functions of religious institutions

In his hagiography, the infant Muḥammad Wafāʿ Abū al-Ṭadānī (d. 765/1363) is visited by the companion of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī, Ibn Aṭṭāʾ Allāh al-Iskandarī, who attests that the infant was born with knowledge of all of the spiritual realities (al-haqāʾiq).¹ In another episode in the hagiography, the child Muḥammad Wafāʿ experienced a vision of the Prophet coming to him while he was listening to a poorly delivered recitation of Surat al-Duhā. The Prophet commanded him to recite (“iqrāʾ”) echoing the first word of the Angel Gabriel to Muḥammad at the beginning of his prophethood.² Later in life, both Muḥammad and ‘Alī Wafāʿ were granted inspiration (waḥy) in the form of prayers (aḥzāb and awrād) that they taught to their followers. Just as religious knowledge is represented in the ijazāt and manuals as a form of blessing (baraka) granted by God,³ hagiographies represent manifestations of this inspired knowledge as an attribute of the wali, a virtue belonging to his sanctified body and flowing through him. This chapter will argue that this view of knowledge as embodied had very material outcomes for the organization of spaces in endowed institutions where education took place, and for the principles by which resources and bodies moved through them.

It will be argued that the view of knowledge as one form of miracle (karāma) among many flowing from the sanctified bodies of the awliyāʾ, led to the expectation that the transmission of that knowledge required only a genuine teacher, while structural features of endowed spaces where education took place were deemphasized. For this reason, there is no particular physical feature or ritual function that clearly distinguishes one type of endowed

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² He also dressed him in a white shirt. Ibid., 64
³ The prayers that are revealed to Muḥammad Wafāʿ and to his son ‘Alī are referred to as “gifts.” Ibid., 66.

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structure, whether mosque, madrasa, zāwiya, or ribāṭ from another. Rather, before the efforts to rationalize the educational system in the nineteenth century, multiple, apparently contradictory practices overlapped in a variety of multifunctional spaces, each of which defied clear categorization, and many of which had nothing whatever to do with education in the sense of conceptual learning, referred to as dirāsa (study). Endowments provided facilities for pedagogical practices including riwāya (recitation), ṣuḥba (companionship), and tarbiya (the training of novices), but provided more support for rituals of devotion such as ṣalāt (prayer), dhikr (rituals of remembrance), ḥaḍāra (ritual gatherings), and khalwa (isolation), as well as rituals for seeking help and assistance, such as ziyāra (visitation), shafā’a (intercession), and fatwā (issuing legal rulings). Furthermore, the integration of these different functions as part of an undefined quality of walāya meant that certain shuyūkh were sought after for qualities unrelated to their cognitive mastery of scholarly material.

In the introduction, the turn of the nineteenth century was referred to as a “watershed” from the perspective of historians, as many profound changes in social organization find their starting point there. Considering in retrospect the way that, in time, these imported European institutions were to marginalize the voice of the religious elite as a class in the public sphere, it is worth considering why they individuals participated so actively in the production of these new institutions, and the implementation of new administrative practices. The final sections of this chapter will argue that the new schools were not initially perceived as threatening to the religious elite because, their stated purpose being the training of the military, they did not appear to infringe on the customary prerogatives of the awliyā’. What is even more remarkable is that despite the common assumption that the religious elite, as fundamentally “traditional” took a reactionary stance toward the imposition of “modern” principles of social organization, the most
prominent members of this class of elites seem to have initiated “modern” reforms in their own institutions. One such process was the partitioning of the multiple functions that were previously understood to flow from the sanctified bodies of the awliyāʾ into separate, professionalized fields of action by separating institutions into jurisdictions. Another such reform was the move to progressively define standards for entry into and graduation from these institutions based on a standard curriculum. This was coupled with efforts to articulate the relationship between al-Azhar and other endowed institutions as hierarchical by design, irrespective of the sanctity of individual scholars that moved through them. Finally, religious education grew increasingly focused on the mastery of fiqh, cognitive knowledge that, it was believed, could be fully contained and transmitted through the verbal content of the text or recitation. The clearest example of this is in the Dār al-ʿUlūm, in which study of the scriptures was largely abstracted from practice.

These are referred to as processes of “disembodiment” because they all serve to shift authority from the sanctity of the individual, manifested in his combined attributes of exemplary conduct and advantageous ties, as perceived by the relative and subjective assessment of his peers, to limited and abstract expectations of a post in an institution. It will be argued that efforts to disembodify religious authority were undertaken in an effort by religious elites to demonstrate that their own existing institutions conformed to the new standards of order coming into vogue in Egyptian elite culture. Specifically, as the concept of niẓām came to be seen as a moral imperative, in that it was the foundation of the health and wellbeing of society as a whole, religious elites worked to embody that ideal. Still, these efforts on the part of the awliyāʾ themselves to be “legible” to this developing ideology of order and progress sealed off many of

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4 Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, 45.
the spaces (physical and discursive) in which creative and spontaneous responses to emerging communal and personal crises, articulated as karamāt, could be manifested. Finally, that actively creating the appearance of niẓām or order came to be a source for prestige in the Sufi milieu is suggested by its successful application by members of the Bakriyya.

The multiple functions of the madrasa

Very little information about the practice advanced study that took place in endowed institutions can be deduced from the organization of space in these structures. There is some symmetry between structure and practice in elementary schools (kuttāb), which were often located in a freestanding structure, sometimes built in combination with a public fountain (sabil-kuttāb), or next to a mosque. However, higher education, took place in a variety of multifunctional institutions, in which learning of the religious sciences was fully integrated with a variety of other forms of religious expression and experience. This was true even of Egyptian institutions labeled madrasa (literally “place of study”). In the eighteenth century, the premier madrasa in Egypt was al-Azhar. Today, al-Azhar is a modern institution, with a centralized bureaucracy, standardized teaching practices, assessment, and curriculum. These standardized processes have a material form in the spaces that make up the school or university campus, which are divided into units with specific functions, including classrooms, administrative offices,

5 In the kuttāb (also called a maktab), a group of children were taught by a schoolteacher or fi’ī (the colloquial pronunciation of فقيه, meaning jurist) or as mu’addab (مؤدب) that is, disciplinarian. Some variation in curriculum has been found between different regions—see Ahmad Fu’ād al-Ahwānī, al-Tarbiya fil-islām aw al-ta’lim fi ra’y al-Qabīsī (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Arabiya, 1955): 71, 80-8—but on the whole the emphasis is on memorization of the Qur’an, this forms the basis for developing skills of reading, writing and grammar, thought these are secondary to the primary task of memorization. Often some arithmetic and handwriting would be taught, and less often poetry, and pre-Islamic history (akhbār al-‘Arab). Ahwānī had the impression that the Qur’anic schools in their original form in the fourth (tenth) century, are identical, except in some superficial features, to what existed at the publication of his book in 1955 (Ibid., 98). Egyptian treatises from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries relating to ta’lim or tarbiya, assume that the kuttāb is supported by a charitable endowment (waqf). The documents assume that the teacher is appointed by the nāzir or overseer of the endowment, who is responsible for assuring that the conditions of the donor are met.

6 Ahwānī, al-Tarbiya fil-islām, 64.
libraries, dormitories, student centers, etc. The university is also defined by the practices that take place in these spaces, including teaching, curriculum, community activities, administrative procedures, etc. The modern campus has been designed such that these different processes and practices are divided into distinct fields of action, each with designated staff and carefully defined spaces. That is, “University Admissions” at al-Azhar is at once a process, a collection of employees, and a location where those processes take place. Like in modern universities elsewhere, these overlap so completely on the modern campus of al-Azhar that an effect is created that these separate aspects are naturally united. Beginning from the assumption that spaces should clearly reflect the activities that take place in them, producing a symmetry between space, personnel and practice, some European visitors saw the imperfect overlay of these elements in al-Azhar and other religious spaces as a failing, concluding that such institutions were “disorderly.”

Indeed, this “disorderliness” can be clearly seen by surveying the spaces, people and allocations of resources at al-Azhar before the major reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in detail. Even into the mid nineteenth century, Mubārak describes the complex called al-Azhar as a conglomeration of multiple institutions that overlap significantly in space. There were three separately endowed madāris attached to the mosque. Besides the multiple madāris, the mosque was also divided in to arwiqa (sing. riwāq), of which Mubārak describes twenty five. A riwāq is a space set apart for groups (tawā’if) of students. Each riwāq was supported by its own endowment (waqf) or collection of endowments. A waqf could be something as small as a book, or facilities, such as a stove or fountain, or something as valuable as a business or piece of

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8 Mubārak, Khīṭar, 4:29-92.
9 These include the Madrasa al-Taybursiyya, the Madrasa al-Iqbaghāwiyya and the Madrasa al-Jawhariyya. Ibid., 4:44-48.
land, the profits of which went to provide students and teachers with rations of bread, other kinds of food, and less often, cash. Students were eligible to benefit from the living spaces and stipends provided by the proceeds of a waqf associated with a riwāq by virtue of their geographical origin. There were multiple riwāq for Egyptian students, by region, such as the riwāq of the students from Upper Egypt, as well as for those from across the Islamic world, such as the riwāq of the Kurdish students. There was also a riwāq endowed for students of Ḥanafī fiqh, and one for certain Ḥanbalī students, and one established especially for the students of the Shaykh ‘Abdulla al-Sharqāwī (d. 1227/1812) who became rector in 1208/1793.

The distribution of the resources of the waqf associated with a particular riwāq was in the hands of a shaykh or naqīb responsible for distributing these resources for the upkeep of the students. Mubārak adds that the head of the riwāq was also responsible for mediating any disputes between members of the ṭā’ifa, and also acting as intermediary between them and the other leading figures at al-Azhar, such as the heads of the schools of fiqh (madhāhib). The head of the riwāq was not necessarily a teacher of fiqh in Mubārak’s day, as he makes particular mention of some shuyūkh of the riwāq who were also mudarrisīn, such as the shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Rāfi‘ī al-Ṭarābusī, who is mentioned was a teacher as well as one of the judges on the High Court, and Aḥmad Rafā‘ī al-Fayyūmī, who acted as teacher and head of the students from Fayyūm, and Salīm al-Basharī head of the Riwāq al-Iqbaghawīyya. The prestige of these figures seems to have corresponded to the size of the endowments over which they were responsible. Some allocations were generous, such as that of the riwāq for students from the

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10 They could fit around their own riwāq because they were so few, according to Mubārak, only three. Khītāt 4:56.
11 It originated as a subdivision of the Zāwiya of the blind. Mubārak, Khītāt 4:58.
12 Ibid., 4:57-8.
13 Ibid., 4:52.
14 Ibid., 4:49.
15 Ibid., 4:55.
regions of Shām (Lebanon and Syria) who received cash and 856 loaves of bread each day, while others received as few as eleven loaves.\textsuperscript{16}

Besides the nesting of multiple endowments into overlapping spaces, the picture of the institution is further confused by the fact that, within these separate endowed spaces, multiple functions were performed. For example, though the title “\textit{madrasa}” suggest the primary intended purpose of was for the study of \textit{fiqh}, the Taybursiyya \textit{madrasa} was created with a special window to allow people to approach for \textit{istifā́},\textsuperscript{17} meaning asking for legal advice. Thus, law professors and students were expected to also function as legal advisors. Furthermore, Maqrīzī reports that in his day, \textit{dhikr} was performed in al-Azhar,\textsuperscript{18} and this continues to be the case into the nineteenth century when Mubārak mentions that \textit{dhikr} was performed at a fixed time in spaces specifically designated as \textit{madrasa}.\textsuperscript{19}

The same “disorderliness” is also a feature of other \textit{madāris} in Cairo. The oldest mosque-\textit{madrasa} of Cairo, Jāmī‘ ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣṣ contained multiple spaces for different kinds of learning. In the \textit{Khīṭāt} of Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442), he attests to the presence of eight different \textit{zawāya} for the study of \textit{fiqh} and \textit{ḥadīth} nested in that mosque, along with more than forty \textit{ḥalaqa} (study circles).\textsuperscript{20} Similarly, the al-Ghūrī mosque (constructed in 911/1505) was in all practical terms a \textit{madrasa}, in that the structure included four halls for the study of the four main schools of \textit{fiqh}, yet, it was known as a mosque, and included not only an ornate \textit{mihrāb} for communal prayer, but a Qur’ānic school (\textit{maktab}), a public fountain, and a domed mausoleum containing a tomb where \textit{dhikr} was performed.\textsuperscript{21} Even a structure erected in 925/1519 to house the shrine of

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 4:52.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 4:45.
\textsuperscript{18} Maqrīzī as cited in Trimingham, \textit{Sufi Orders}, 21.
\textsuperscript{19} Mubārak, \textit{Khīṭāt}, 4: 225.
\textsuperscript{20} As cited in Makdisi, \textit{The Rise of Colleges}, 20.
\textsuperscript{21} Mubārak, \textit{Khīṭāt}, 2:112.
the uneducated (majdhūb) Sufi ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Dashtūṭī and to provide a place for the performance of Sufi rituals was also called a madrasa by Ibn Iyās.\textsuperscript{22}

The performance of dhikr in al-Azhar and other madāris suggests that a single endowed institution could house significant diversity of belief and practice, beyond the differences between the four main schools of fiqh. This complicates the representation of the madrasa as funded by the political elite in order to promote unity or consistency of religious belief.\textsuperscript{23} The first and archetypical madrasa, established by the Seljuk vizier Niẓām al-Mulk, in Baghdad in 460/1068 as a college of law is understood to have served this function, but the situation in Egypt appears to be more complicated. The idea that the power of the religious elite was orthodox and traditional, and centered in al-Azhar has been challenged.\textsuperscript{24} De Jong argues that it was only slowly through the course of the nineteenth century that al-Azhar was transformed into “the stronghold of orthodoxy and a center of opposition towards those propagating mystical conceptions of Islam,”\textsuperscript{25} though this becomes projected back though the history of the mosque.\textsuperscript{26} Al-Azhar may thus be better conceived of as a hub through which the sanctified bodies of the religious elite, and those seeking to connect with them passed, rather than as an educational institution in the modern sense, with a unified pedagogy, curriculum or mission. These elites as sanctified bodies engaged in a variety of different kinds of educational and devotional practices,

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{22} Badā’ī’ al-zuhūr, as cited in Sabra, “Household Sufism,” 106.
\bibitem{24} Paul Walker debunks the common view that al-Azhar was first established as the central institution for spreading Shi’ī propaganda under the Fatimids in \textit{“Fatimid Institutions of Learning.” Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt} 34 (1997): 179–200.
\bibitem{25} De Jong, \textit{Turuq}, 23.
\bibitem{26} Carl Petry has shown important role that other smaller institutions also played in Egyptian society in the fourteenth century in \textit{The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).
\end{thebibliography}
all the while maintaining connections with other institutions across the country, and indeed the region.

**Education in ṭuruq-linked institutions**

The same kinds of teaching that took place in al-Azhar and other madāris also occurred in institutions that DeJong labels as ṭuruq-linked institutions, that is, endowed spaces that functioned either as the nucleus of a particular ṭarīqa,\(^{27}\) or tended to be controlled by, or inhabited by individuals explicitly linked to the Sufi milieu.\(^{28}\) Such spaces could be referred to as ribāṭ, khānqāh, takiyya and zāwiya. The distinction between institutions carrying these names is also unclear, and each category includes a variety of institutional arrangements. Some scholars understand the different appellations as due to regional preferences for certain terms, or as based on the size of the endowment,\(^{29}\) while others argue for qualitative differences between their social functions and architectural components. Ribāṭ are understood to be the earliest structure associated with Sufism, having originally served as outposts in Muslim controlled “frontier” lands where charismatic shuyūkh recruited followers in a region of Muslim minority.\(^{30}\) The khānqāh also historically served as “hostels” for travelers, as well as places where the poor or homeless could find help. One of the most important functions of the khānqāh was providing for traveling Sufis. Later the term ribāṭ became synonymous with khānqāh. Institutions referred to as takāya in Ottoman Egypt were distinguished by being tied to a foreign population, usually Turkish, as in the waqf of Iskandar Bāshā which stipulated that fifty-three Turkish students

\(^{27}\) This was the case at the end of the eighteenth century for al-Qāsimiyya al-Shādhiliyya, al-ʿAfīfiyya al-Shādhiliyya, (established by the student of Sabbāgh mentioned in the second chapter), the Demerdāshiyya and the Ghulshāniyya, both Khalwaṭī, the Bektāshiyya, and the Saʿdiyya. See De Jong, Ṭuruq, 24-7.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 2.

\(^{29}\) Berkey states that in practice, the term zāwiya could be applied to any small mosque in The Transmission of Knowledge, 123.

\(^{30}\) Tringham, The Sufi Orders, 170.
should live in the *takiyya*, and that of Muḥammad Bey which, perhaps not coincidentally, stipulated the same number. Some *takāya* were under the jurisdiction of a “mother” *takiyya* in Istanbul or elsewhere as the Takiyyat al-Baktashiyya.\(^{31}\)

By the eighteenth century, *zawāya* were by far the most numerous type of religious endowment in which education took place in Cairo.\(^{32}\) The *zāwiya* in its original form was not necessarily funded through an endowment, as were the *khānqāh* or the *ribāṭ*. Rather, *zawāya* were small, less formal establishments built up around a master.\(^{33}\) In other cases, a family residence became tied to a particular *ṭariqa* and then became endowed as a *zāwiya* by a patron. For this reason, *zawāya* were typically tied to a particular family, and posts were usually passed on by inheritance from father to son.\(^{34}\) Some *zawāya* functioned as the base for the *ṭariqa*, in the sense of an exclusive, initiatory organization. Other *zawāyā* were established by princes primarily to provide for the Sufi *dhikr* to be read over their tomb, such as the *zāwiya* of the blind at al-Azhar, established by the amir ʿUthmān Katkhūda. It was located right next to the Madrasa al-Jawhariyya. Such was also the case with the *zāwiya* of shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Marṣafī (d.930/1523). Still, even *zawāyā* that functioned primarily as shrines of princes often had libraries, and some provided a stipend provided for a schoolteacher (*muʿaddab al-ṭafāl*), such as the *zāwiya* of shaykh ‘Abd al-Karīm (established 1174/1760).\(^{35}\)

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32 A survey of a sample of institutions in ʿAlī Mubārak’s *Khitaṭ* (vols 2-3) found no functioning *khānqāh* or *arbaṭa*, and only four *takāya*, compared to twenty-eight *zawāya*.
33 Trimingham distinguishes the *zāwiya* from the other forms as the one in which a genuine teaching shaykh was most likely to reside, as opposed to the other types of institutions, the superintendence of which was sometimes awarded to individuals who had no credentials to train *murīdīn* in a mystical path. Trimingham, *Sufi orders*, 20.
34 Berkey argues that this probably contributed to less social mobility among the higher *ulamā* in *The Transmission of Knowledge*, 127.
The heads of the *khānqāh* were nearly always trained as scholars, not only versed in mysticism, but also in the *sharʿī* sciences. Some *zawāyā* appear to have been built for explicitly scholarly purposes, in that their endowments provided stipends for the study of the *sharʿī* sciences. Some of these also included libraries with extensive collections. The type of sciences to be studied were specified in the *awqāf* of some *zawāyā*, such as in that of the Zāwiya of Zayn al-Dīn Ṣīdqa which provided for four *fuqarāʾ* to lodge there and study the *furūʿ* (substantive legal rulings) of Shāfīʿī *fiqh* through lectures held in the zāwiya with the Shāfīʿī instructor. Similarly, the Zāwiyat al-Malikiyya, located in the tomb of Sayyida Nafīsa, drew some of the most distinguished Mālikī scholars in Egypt, especially those who migrated from Western North Africa to study at al-Azhar. Beyond the mystical and *sharʿī* sciences, Maqrīzī mentions that some of the heads of the *zawāyā* were also skilled in music, poetry, philosophy and rhetoric, such as the eighth century shaykh Shams al-Dīn, who, besides being the supervisor of the zāwiya bearing his name, was also a prominent musician. He wrote a book on the discipline of music entitled “*Ghāyat al-Maṭlūb fī ‘Ilm al-Anghām wal-Ḍarūb,*” which Maqrīzī mentions having heard from him at the zāwiya.

Some *ṭuruq*-linked institutions served Azharī *shuyūkh* and can thus be considered part of the Azhar system. The relationship of al-Azhar to the Shaykhū mosque in Ṣalība is instructive of its relationship with other institutions in which religious instruction was taking place. The Shaykhū mosque was the old site of the Dār al-Ḥadīth, which had in Mamluk times been situated in a *khānqāh* before the sixteenth century. Both *hadīth* and *fiqh* of the four legal schools had

38 Hassan Qāsim as cited in Mansūr, “Manshaʾāt al-tasawwuf,” 63.
39 That was in the year 745. Farābī also attended his sessions on music. Shams al-Dīn was a Hanbali. See ‘Abd al-ʿĀfī. *al-Taʾlīm fī Misr*, 245.
been taught there. In its heyday, the Dār al-Ḥadīth was a famous school. According to Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī’s Mu’jam, the most distinguished scholars, including Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī and Suyūtī had taught and studied there. Zabīdī was reportedly unable to teach at al-Azhar because he was not a native speaker of Arabic. Instead, he built his notoriety in Cairo by reviving the study of ḥadīth by teaching in the Shaykhū mosque which had fallen into disrepair by the time Zabīdī arrived in Cairo. There is some indication in Jabartī’s history that Azhari scholars tended to be discreet about their auditions with Zabīdī because he was not Egyptian. His lectures began with the intention of serving scholars from al-Azhar, then expanded to include people from various walks of life, who eventually drove out the more distinguished attendees. Thus, in Zabīdī’ day, this mosque, which had originated as a khānqāh, and had served as a school for the study of ḥadīth was made, by the presence of Zabīdī’s sanctified body, and his exceptional learning, an important part of the Azhar system. That learning opportunities for Azhari students were available outside the physical space of the mosque was not uncommon. Some shuyūkh were loaned out for studies elsewhere. It was reported that in the Takiyya al-Ḥabbāniyya, courses were given by teachers “on loan” from al-Azhar, until at least 1875. It was also common for an accomplished ‘ālim to be shaykh or nāẓir in several institutions simultaneously. This was accomplished through the appointment of nā’ib, a deputy or representative in the position.

The waqfiyya (deed establishing a charitable endowment or waqf) for the madrasa of Muḥammad Bey Abū al-Dhabah (est. 1157/1774) gives a sense of the range of activities that typically took place in conglomerate religious institutions. The endowment provided for a

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40 Reichmuth, Zabīdī, 66.  
41 Ibid., 66.  
43 Berkey, Transmission of Knowledge, 126.  
44 Abū al-Anwār al-Sādāt, as well as the shaykh al-Bakrī acted as two of a large group of witnesses for the establishment of this waqf, including not only religious authorities, but a long list of leading amirs, including Isma’il Bey. Crecelius, “The Waqf of Muhammad Bey Abu al-Dahab,” 57–58.
physical structure that included a mosque, madrasa and takiyya. Because this was such an immense endowment, religious functions provided for in the waqfiyya are differentiated, each carrying its own allotted stipend, and assigned to a different qualified individual. These included stipends for sixteen teachers from the three most popular schools of Islamic jurisprudence, eighteen assistants, and one hundred and sixty-four students. It also provided stipends for an imām (who leads the prayer) and the qāri’ (who recites Qur’ān), and a muftī from of each of the three most popular schools of fiqh. It also provides stipends for fifty-three Turkish students to reside in the takiyya that formed part of the structure, and a nāżir, or superintendent, the individual responsible for general management of the space, distributing its resources and seeing that ritual and other activities in the institution comply with the wishes of the donor. The nāżir was responsible for managing the properties generating profit for funded institutions, as well as dispensing these profits to private beneficiaries including the family and often other non-related associations of the endower.

Even when such studies were not mentioned in the waqfiyya, education in the shar‘ī sciences of tafsīr, hadīth and fiqh, as well as the study of mystical texts were usually offered by the head of the zāwiya. Such informal study sessions may not always be reported in biographies. However, in more detailed biographies of prominent scholars, mentions are sometimes made of their attendance of lectures on a variety of topics in ṭuruq-linked institutions. Such sessions were sometimes attended by scholars who taught or studied at other more prestigious institutions in the city or around the region. For example, Shaykh ‘Abdulla b. ‘Umar (d. 807/1405) set up a
time to give lectures in the zāwiya of which he was nāzir. Also, Maqrīzī mentions having heard ḥadīth in the Zāwiya of al-Ḥalāwī from its Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abdulla.48

Berkey illustrates in his comprehensive study of waqfiyyāt (deeds of endowment)49 from the Mamluk period that even endowments for explicitly teaching institutions provide first for the maintenance of the physical facility, only providing for the support of teachers and students in cases of exceptional abundance. The main concern of the awqāf appears to have been providing the physical facilities for a range of religious activities, and the financial basis for the basic ritual functions, including a stipend for an imām, and sometimes also rations of food or money for students. Little or no reference is made to the details of educational activities.50 This leads to the conclusion that the absence of provisions for teachers and students in the waqfiyyāt of other religious facilities does not mean that teaching in the sharī sciences was not taking place there as well, or even that the place was not intended by the founder for that purpose.

What is clear is that structural features, and the uses for space in a particular place could vary considerably from those in another similarly named location. Any of the four types of ṭuruq-linked institutions described may or may not include an attached prayer hall with a mihrāb, a minaret, living quarters, a fountain, an attached kuttāb, guest rooms, a tomb, mausoleum or shrine, or a separate room where the Qurʾān is read. It would not be an overstatement to say that each institution was unique, and defined by its founder and those participating in its construction and administration. It was also common for the label applied to a structure to change with the passage of time, as renovations and changing circumstances contribute to a phenomenon of

48 Abd al-‘Āṭī, Al-Ta’līm fi Miṣr, 245.
49 The law of waqf for charitable purposes, and as a means of funding education was created in the fourth/tenth century. See Muhammad ‘Afīfī, al-Awqāf wal-hayāh al-iqtisādiya fī Miṣr fil-‘asr al-Uthmānī (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1991).
50 Berkey, Transmission of Knowledge.
“multiple lives”\textsuperscript{51} for these institutions. In some cases, names are used interchangeably in different official documents from the same period.\textsuperscript{52} The issue is further confused by the fact that auxiliary functions provided for in the endowment of the original institution sometimes took place outside of the actual structure built from the same endowment, at the same time that related informal activities (such as women’s study circles) often took place within the endowed structure independently of the resources provided in the original \textit{waqf}.\textsuperscript{53} The integration of a broad range of practices in even the smallest of endowed institutions reflects the generally accepted understanding that such practices are indivisible components of a unified process of cultivating religious authority. The center of gravity for this process was not any particular endowed institution, but the sanctified body of the \textit{walī} himself.

It has been argued above and in other studies that the individual teacher has typically been the standard for education based on his personal credentials, rather than as a representative of an institution. Makdisi argues that what provided order and standards in this context of overlapping functions for endowed institutions was the relationship of \textit{suḥba} between teacher and student.\textsuperscript{54} Similarly, Berkey concludes in his analysis of documents for the establishment of charitable endowments in Cairo, that the \textit{awqāf} reflect an understanding that education could take place even in the absence of formalized institutions.\textsuperscript{55} In this environment, the prestige of each teacher, and the quality of the relationship that the student is able to cultivate with that teacher were valued over any guarantee that might be implied by the fact that this relationship grew within the walls of any particular structure.

\textsuperscript{52} Such as in the \textit{waqf} deed of Ḥassan al-Rūmī, which established a \textit{zāwiya}. Some records in the \textit{Taqarīr al-Naẓr} in the eighteenth century refer to it as a \textit{takiyya}.
\textsuperscript{53} Tamari, “Multiple Lives,” 102.
\textsuperscript{55} Berkey, \textit{Transmission of Knowledge}. 
This is most clear in the structure of citation of credentials in the biographical literature. Returning to Jabartī’s biography of Ḥifnī, the emphasis is clearly placed on the teachers with whom he studied, and how many works he studied with them,56 with only rare mention of where these studies took place. For example, although the shaykh al-Ḥifnī rose to the position of rector of al-Azhar, Jabartī’s only mention of where he studied is the Khalwatī zāwiya of Sīdī Shāhīn al-Khalwatī in Muqaṭṭam. Furthermore, when Jabartī mentions Ḥifnawī’s relationship to this ṭarīqa–zāwiya, he mentions his participation in it not only as a student, but also as a lodger, teacher, and provider of public activities including the reading of the Qur’an.57 This points to the many other dimensions of religious life that co-existed with theoretical learning in the zāwiya. The movement of people of authority in these multifunctional, conglomerate institutions was gravitational, in that students flocked to those teachers who projected an air of sanctity. Unlike in the madrasa of Muḥmada Bey discussed above, smaller institutions, like in the kuttāb, responsibility for all categories of education would fall to a single shaykh-nāẓir. Similarly, in the zāwiya, which is, by definition a smaller institution, it was conceivable that one sanctified individual would be expected to be able to take on all or most of these roles.58 The transmission of knowledge was thus just one part of the same undifferentiated concept of karāma as a manifestation of sanctity deicussed in previous chapters. The karamāt of individual teachers in any or all of these realms, rather than institutions, “invited”59 their contemporaries into their hands based on their demonstrated ability to impart divine blessing, whether in the form of the most authoritative akhlāq, the most preferred chains of transmission (as in the first two chapters),

56 Jabartī, Al-Jabartī’s History of Egypt, 87.
57 Jabartī, Ajā’ib, 1: 290.
58 Geoffroy writes that “En effet tout musulman, possédant l’ensemble des connaissances, composé de la langue arabe et de la théologie musulmane, est, nous venons de le voir, un « ‘alim »; il peut donner des consultations juridiques, être chargé par le khalifé, ou son heutenant, de juger, de présider à la prière en commun, etc.” in Le Soufisme en Egypte et en Syrie. A similar observation is made by Chih in “What Is a Sufi Order?” 25.
59 Bashir, Sufi Bodies, 5.
or in the form of good advice and intercession (shafāʿa, as in chapter four) or in the form of other khadamāt supported by the funds of the waqf, as discussed in chapter five.

The religious elite and the new schools

It is into this integrated, undifferentiated intellectual and spiritual milieu that the participation of the religious elite in the evolution of the Egyptian educational system can be better understood. Although education was one of the basic functions of the religious elite, it should be clear from the previous chapters that they did not see themselves strictly as educators, so it is unlikely that they would have imagined their social status and livelihood to have depended entirely upon the continuity of their monopoly on education. Indeed, though new definitions of authority in the public sphere would, over time, marginalize the influence of religious elites, and especially those whose prestige was primarily linked to the Sufi milieu, the negative impact of the policies aimed at modernizing the educational system along European lines on individual religious elites appears to be overstated.60 Though some of the changes taking place were unpopular among a religious elite that had become significantly enriched and favored due to their intercession in times of crisis by the end of the eighteenth century, it is not clear that the kind of reform undertaken by Muḥammad ʿAlī represented a significant overstepping of the prerogatives that had typically been considered to belong to earlier generations of military leaders.

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60 Mubārak’s Khīṭāṭ mentions that the dhikr continued to be performed at least weekly in most zawāyā in Cairo, and that many continued to house fuqārāʿ as before the reforms, and to host lessons and debates in the shārīʿ sciences. Even institutions that lacked support either from the Diwān al-Awqāf or from the original dower, continued to hold yearly the mawlids and weekly ḥaḍārā into the late nineteenth century, as in the Zāwiyyat al-Baḥūl (Mubārak, Khīṭāṭ, 2:283)
The new schools may not have been perceived initially as threatening in part because of their location in space. The first school was established by Muḥammad ‘Alī in the citadel in 1816, for the instruction of his mamluks and emphasized basic studies, Qur’ān, reading and writing, foreign languages and military training.\(^{61}\) The Dār al-Handasah (School of Engineering) was also established in the citadel to educate poor inhabitants of the area in arithmetic, geometry and mathematics, while the Madrasat al-Handasah was established in the Palace of Ibrāhīm Bāshā, all with mostly foreign teachers.\(^{62}\) In 1825, the Madrasat al-Jihādiyya al-Ḥarbiyya (the Military Preparatory School) was placed in the palace at Qaṣr al-ʻAynī, which would become the location for the medical School in 1836.\(^{63}\) This trend of placing schools in palaces and homes of princes, rather than taking over institutions endowed for religious functions, underscores the role of the new schools as belonging to the Palace, rather than usurping the role of the religious elite. They were based on a concept of education in service to the state, and more precisely, to the military.\(^{64}\) The schools were perceived as parallel to, rather than in competition with, religious spaces in which educational processes took place. This trend would continue through the nineteenth century.

Finally, the new schools may have been less threatening to the religious elite because, to the degree that the two systems overlapped under Muḥammad ‘Alī, this initially took the form of inviting traditionally trained scholars to participate in the new schools, aiding in the process of translating educational materials, as teachers and as students. Heyworth-Dunne hints that this

\(^{61}\) Heyworth-Dunne, *Education in Modern Egypt*, 107.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., 108.

\(^{63}\) Ibid., 117-8.

\(^{64}\) The Madrasat al-Hadasah, for example, was intended to be the source for surveyors of land, and to create a new army using modern techniques, Ibid., 107-114. The earliest educational missions to Europe were to Italy in 1809, to study military science, ship-building, printing and engineering, though the best known mission is the one sent to France in 1826 (Ibid., 105-6).
may have been against their will, but ‘Abd al-Karîm asserts that only an ignorant minority of Azharîs felt threatened by the expansion of public schooling. The participation of Azharî scholars and other religious elites expanded further under the reign of İsmâ’îl Bâshâ, who emphasized the use of Arabic in education. ‘Abd al-Karîm argues that while most students and teachers at al-Azhar believed in the continued importance of traditional schools as the ideal model for the study of language and religion, they also acknowledged that the government schools taught material of undeniable value. Well before the institution of new schools, the shaykh al-‘Arûsî who was shaykh al-Azhar from 1778 to 1793 suggested that medicine be added to the curriculum of al-Azhar. The addition of new sciences to the Azhar curriculum was also advocated by Ḥassan al-‘Aṭṭār, who was shaykh al-Azhar from 1830 to 1834. He simultaneously acted as a lecturer for the exams in the medical school, and spoke in support of the study of medicine in general. Furthermore, ‘Abd al-Karîm asserts that his interest in “modern” education and “Western” sciences was not perceived as impiety by his contemporaries.

Beginning from an understanding of religious authority as walāya, that is, an integrated, embodied authority, the most significant challenges to this authority in the nineteenth century are discursive, rather than material. The Egyptian religious elite can be seen to be integrating new ideas about what was possible and desirable in the organization of society that Mitchel describes as a “metaphysics of modernity.” Modernity is a metaphysics insofar as it, like the metaphysics of mysticism described in the first chapter, is based on unfalsifiable beliefs about the nature of time and space, and the relationships of human beings to that reality, linked to normative 

65 Ibid., 395
66 ‘Abd al-Karîm. ta’lîm, 584.
67 Ibid., 585.
68 Ibid., 588.
69 Ibid., 590.
70 Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, xi.
principles for the practical organization of bodies in space and time. Modernity as metaphysics is also an epistemology, in that it contains ideas about what can be known and how it can be known, with specific implications for normative principles regarding disciplinary practices and the cultivation of legitimate authority.

Mysticism and modernity can be seen as contradictory metaphysics: where mysticism emphasizes the subjective and particular morality of the wali, a certainty that he feels in his heart but cannot articulate and explain, modernity calls for “attention and detachment,” by which the observer can feel himself as separate from the object world, observing it from the outside. Mitchel carefully describes the way that this effect was created in Egyptian institutions including model housing, army barracks and schools by actively “enframing” processes and spaces by dividing them up and containing them. Where the normative in mysticism may be defined as the ceaseless effort in every moment to embody that which is in line with the divine will and order, an entirely different definition of “order” as niẓām came to be seen as normative in this emerging metaphysics of the modern. Where conformity to God’s order is visible through karamāt, conformity to modern order is visible in those things that offer themselves up to be seen, or reflect to outsiders viewing such things for the first time that they conform to an abstract plan, and were imagined before they came into existence. In principle, then, the belief that the world should conform to human beings’ abstract plans denigrates absolutely the mystery of the ineffable that mysticism associates with the action of God in the world.

In practice, however, many Egyptian religious elites seem to have found the view of order as niẓām as a social good convincing. Members of the religious elite were privy to critiques

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71 Ibid., 19-20.
72 Ibid., 44.
73 Mitchell also shows how this appearance of order empowers surveillance by a centralized state apparatus as well as enhancing its capacity to intervene and manage even the most minute movements of individuals.
by Europeans that their institutions were “disorderly,” and some experienced the European nizām firsthand by traveling with the missions to Europe.\textsuperscript{74} While some expressed reservations about the integration of such techniques, others worked instead to attempted to demonstrate that their own existing institutions were orderly.\textsuperscript{75}

Disembodiment as Standardization: The Azhar Reform Law

That the concept of nizām was coming to be seen as a value in and of itself is expressed in even before the centralization of the awqāf and the creation of new military schools is expressed in the initiatives of the shaykh al-‘Arūsī. He won the admiration of ‘Alī Mubārak by working to set a standard regarding which voices should be allowed to be heard in the mosque. In previous chapters, a system of authority was described by which scholars’ authority was relative and personal. They were in a constant process of asserting and contesting their right to speak vis a vis their contemporaries based on their overall reputation as a holy person. ‘Arūsī’s activities show the beginning of an effort to implement a standardized system by which the institution as a whole silenced or elevated particular individuals as representatives of that particular abstraction.

In 1288/1872, the efforts to make explicit the customary principles by which religious authority was cultivated were legislated in the form of the first reform law at al-Azhār. Rather than gaining access to the hands of the most esteemed teachers through the subjective and collective esteem of a community of peers, the reform law instituted standardized examinations

\textsuperscript{74} This experience is dramatized by ‘Alī Mubārak in ‘Alam al-Dīn. Cairo: Bulāq press, 1882.
\textsuperscript{75} This is similar to what Zaman observes in India, where scholars of the law reacted to European critiques that the Islamic legal system was inconsistent and subjective by making it more rigid despite a reality of historical flexibility. Even though scholars were reluctant to call themselves mujāhidīn, they were in fact practicing \textit{ijtihād}. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change (Princeton University Press, 2007): 18.
for admission. Similarly, the “right to speak” which ‘Arūsī had begun to articulate years earlier was finally abstracted in the form of standardized examinations for graduation to the level of teacher (mudarris). In order to teach, a student was required to have studied a set list of subjects. These subjects, in turn, were to be known through a new standardized curriculum defined as a cannon of what Mubārak refers to as the “great books” (kubār al-kutub). The law also shifted the status of other institutions where students and teachers at al-Azhar also taught and studied by legislating that students could only sit to be examined in works that they had actually studied at al-Azhar. This excluded students who did the majority of their studies in other madāris, as well as those who may have done the majority of their studies in turuq-linked institutions. Where in Abū al-Anwār’s day, the best opportunities were available in whatever endowed space contained the most esteemed bodies, as discussed above in the case of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī’s lessons in the Ṣalība Mosque, and the shaykh al-Ḥifnī early in his career, the exclusion of students who were not educated at al-Azhar was an early manifestation of efforts to abstract the authority of Azharī shuyūkh away from their individual bodies and into the institution itself in by setting it off in opposition to other spaces supported by religious endowment. In 1908 a law was passed centralizing responsibility for religious education in al-Azhar. Where diverse practices for the cultivation of religious authority had thrived in turuq-linked institutions, whether ribāṭ, khanqāh, or takiyya, the new law classified them all as religious institutes (ma’had), defining them by their subsidiary status in relation to the center, and emphasizing their educational objective as the preparation of their students for the

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76 Lois A. Aroian, The Nationalization of Arabic and Islamic Education in Egypt: Dar-Ulum and Al-Azhar (Cairo: The American University in Cairo, 1983): 34.
77 Ibid., 34.
78 These included tafsīr (exegesis), hadīth, Usūl al-fiqh (theories of jurisprudence), tawḥīd (theology), grammar, and logic, Mubārak, Ḋhitat, 71.
79 For example, significant administrative efforts were made to assert the superior position of al-Azhar over the Ahmadī Mosque in Tanta. See Stephanie Boyle, “Sickness, Scoundrels and Saints: The World in Tanta and Tanta in the World 1854-1907” (PhD diss., Northeastern University, 2012).
standardized entrance examination at al-Azhar. In 1911 al-Azhar was declared by law the “greatest Islamic and scholarly institute,” and in 1923, official recognition of having reached the highest levels of religious education could be achieved only by study and examination at al-Azhar.⁸⁰

The examination process itself was also standardized, as described in detail by Mubārak. Students were required to submit a petition (‘arīda) to the head of al-Azhar stating his intention to be recognized as among the ranks of the ‘ulamā’ (“ḥūmat al-‘ulamā’ al-mudarrisīn”). The petition, states the law, was to enumerate the list of which works the student has studied, a break with the tradition of listing scholarly genealogies described in chapter two.⁸¹ The shaykh al-Azhar was to discuss the petition with at least eight other teachers at al-Azhar to take their signatures in writing if the student may sit for the examination, and to attest to the truth of what is included in the student’s petition. Then an examination committee (majlis al-imtihān) was to be formed in the home of the shaykh for the examination. The successful student is to be granted al-shahāda, which was, in turn, to be reported to the khedieval court, where it would be granted an official seal.⁸² In contrast to the relative and personal quality of walāya, as proximity and acts of karāma, the Azhar law attempted to standardize and quantify religious authority, and centralize it in the hands of the rector of al-Azhar at the examination phase, while actual licensure was contingent on recognition by the military government. Later, the meaning of traditional titles also became standardized in the Azhar system. The highest distinction, the shahadat al-‘ālimiyya (certification as an ‘ālim) was granted based on performance in a

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⁸⁰ Aroian, Nationalization, 44.
⁸¹ Mubārak, Khīṭat, 71. The term ḥūma refers to something that is confined by borders.
⁸² Ibid., 72.
standardized examination before a board of shuyūkh.\textsuperscript{83} To the degree that religious authority as walāya continued to be understood as manifested in service (khadamāt) to the public good, awliyā’ can be understood to have participated in processes of disembodiment in an effort to make their customary educational processes legible in a context where uniformity and had come to be seen as a moral good in the context of emerging discourses that posited nizām as a moral good.

**Disembodiment as Partitioning: Separating ṭuruq institutions from al-Azhar**

The post of shaykh al-Islām, conferred an undifferentiated authority over moral issues in the country. Like other religious elites, the shaykh al-Islām was called upon to intervene in crises and disputes as they emerged. However, this was to change over the course of the nineteenth century, beginning with a maḥḍar issued in 1263/1847 appointing the shaykh al-Bayjūrī to the post. The maḥḍar states explicitly that Bayjūrī is responsible only for al-Azhar and that he is to manage it “without obstruction of the affairs that do not come under the competencies of al-Azhar mosque, like those pertaining to the zawāyā and the fuqarā’.”\textsuperscript{84} The maḥḍar further states that responsibility for ṭuruq-linked institutions should fall to the shaykh al-Bakrī, then naqīb al-ashrāf.\textsuperscript{85} The agreement claims to articulate and define an existing but previously unarticulated customary separateness of these roles as representing distinct spheres of influence. At the same time, by making the separation explicit, the maḥḍar reveals that in reality the shaykh al-Islām did at times intervene in ṭuruq affairs, presumably, based upon his subjective, or practical sensibilities of whether or not his intercession was called for in a given situation. The maḥḍar

\textsuperscript{83} Aroian, *Nationalization*, 38.
\textsuperscript{84} De Jong, *Ṭuruq*, 194.
\textsuperscript{85} Witnesses to the agreement included the shaykh al-Islām ʿIbrāhīm al-Bayjūrī, Muḥammad Ḥabashī, shaykh al-Mālikiyya, Muḥammad al-Tamīmī al-Maghribī, ʿUthmān al-Sādī, Aḥmad Minnā, and the shaykh al-Bakrī, then naqīb al-ashrāf.
makes legible to an outsider implicit principles governing the relationship of the shaykh al-Azhar to the turuq, carefully parsing affairs that are rightly in the jurisdiction of Sayyid al-Bakrī from those within the jurisdiction of the mosque.

The mahdar can be understood as part of a process by which authority of the shaykh al-Islām was progressively “disembodied.” Rather than depending upon Bayjūrī’s integration of principles governing the proper application of authority through experience, the mahdar served to place that authority instead in an abstract position that he was appointed to fill. The more the expectations and guidelines of the post could be abstracted, the more it is conceivable that an outsider, following these guidelines could potentially fill it. Where there had been only one space, shaykh al-Islām, the mahdar had created two separate “enframed” areas of jurisdiction, one of which was al-Azhar, and the other a newly distinguished turuq realm, defined as the areas where someone in Bayjūrī’s post was not to meddle, by name the zawāya and shrines. Furthermore, his shafā’a was no longer welcome in any disputes in which the individual bringing the concern was either a sharīf or a member of a tariqa.

The signing of the mahdar did not lead immediately to the separation of roles in practice. Though the shaykh al-Azhar was technically restricted to the affairs of teachers and students in the mosque, in 1884 he weighed in on a dispute regarding the promulgation of a new tariqa in Sharqiyya. The shaykh al-Bakrī had attempted to prevent a Shādhilī shaykh, al-Sayyid Ḥasanayn al-Ḥiṣāfī (d. 1328/1910) from performing dhikr in the mosques in an area dominated by another well-established tariqa. Ḥiṣāfī responded by distributing a pamphlet in which he asserted that no

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86 To use the terminology of Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, 44.
87 De Jong, Turuq, 34.
88 The mahdar also attempted to more clearly define the hierarchy of responsibility between the heads of the arwiqa (teaching areas) in the mosque. Ibid., 195.
one has the right to prohibit his activities. Ḥiṣāfī complained to the khedive who passed the matter to the Shaykh al-Azhar, causing Bakrī to back down. In 1886, the shaykh al-Azhar was called upon to participate in the mediation of a disagreement as to whether the increasing independence of the ‘Ināniyya represented illegal succession from the Rifā‘iyya, or merely a continuation of their established independence. The shaykh of this brotherhood, Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Ḥarīrī was able to use his tie as imām for the khedive Tawfīq to bring ‘Abd al-Khāliq al-Sādāt, ‘Abd al-Bāqī al-Bakrī, as well as Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-‘Abbāsī, the shaykh al-Azhar to intervene. They decided in his favor, stating that since the ‘Ināniyya had irrefutable silāsil, and were only continuing what they had always done, they could not be prevented from acting independently, against the original ruling of the Shaykh al-Bakrī. Even as late as 1310/1893, the shaykh al-Azhar (Muḥammad al-Imbābī) recognized Muḥammad Māshīna as the shaykh of a new branch of the ‘Arūsiyya against the wishes of Muḥammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī. At other times, the shaykh al-Bakrī was able to intervene to solve such conflicts without intervention from the shaykh al-Azhar.

Still, the partitioning marks a movement in principle toward decreasing the autonomy of the shaykh al-Azhar as šāhib al-karamāt bringing his mysterious ethical perception to bear on worldly disputes and crises as they presented themselves to him, wherever and between whomever. Instead, his role was limited the specifications of a position that was increasingly an abstract set of expectations into which a qualified individual would step. Where the intercession as shafā’a described in chapter four was seen as emerging organically from the sanctified body

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89 Ibid., 102.
90 Ibid., 103.
91 Ibid., 104. He offers a different reading of these events as evidence of a shift away from the need for the turuq administration because of the increasing efficiency of state organizations.
92 Ibid., 104-5.
93 Ibid., 129.
94 Ibid., 131.

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of the wali in response to crises which themselves were unpredictable, the separation of jurisdictions in this document represents an attempt to delineate and categorize the kinds of situations in which the intercession of the shaykh al-Azhar might be necessary, and to separate these from the kinds of situations in which Bakrī’s authority was to be obeyed.

De Jong attempts to situate the impetus behind this partition in the comfortable narrative of Muḥammad ‘Ali’s grand plan for the modernization of Egypt by linking it to an earlier firmān95 issued by the Bāshā in 1227/1812. His reading of this document is that it centralizes supreme authority over the ṭuruq in the hands of the shaykh al-Bakrī, in a purposeful effort on the part of the Bāshā to strike at the autonomy of the ‘ulamā’ in preparation for the tax reforms undertaken between 1812 and 1814,96 which increased their dependence on his good graces. This is central to his basic thesis that developments such as centralization in the ṭuruq realm were purposeful efforts by Muḥammad ‘Ali to undermine the autonomy of the ṭuruq. However, although the shaykh al-Bakrī clearly played an important historic role as mediator in disputes between heads of the different brotherhood organizations, there is nothing in the firmān to clearly suggest that he was to be given official responsibility over anything more than the same posts held by his father. Furthermore, that the khedive Tawfīq called upon the shaykh al-Azhar to intervene in a dispute in the Sufi milieu seems to undercut the view that this partition was part of a government modernizing agenda. This places “the genesis of the transformation of al-Azhar into the stronghold of orthodoxy and a centre of opposition towards those propagating mystical

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95 Published in Bakrī, Bayt al-Sadiq, 377 and translated in De Jong, Ṭuruq 192-3.
96 De Jong, Ṭuruq, 21.
conceptions of Islam” (in the words of De Jong)\textsuperscript{97} inexplicably in the hands of a collection of awliyā’ without the explicit presence of any “reformer”, “modernizer” or “colonizer”.

**Disembodiment as scripturalism abstracted from practice: Dār al-‘Ulūm**

The Dār al-‘Ulūm, which welcomed its first class of students in 1881, was conceptualized as a school where religious sciences would be taught beside the “rational” sciences, as they were classed by ‘Alī Mubarak, the energetic reformer in charge of the project. The broad goal of the new school, according to his writing, was to “spread the light of civilization and progress by expanding the scope of education.”\textsuperscript{98} Besides studying the new sciences at the Dār al-‘Ulūm, these modern experts in religion participated in the regimented military training that was part and parcel of the new schools, including daily morning exercise and drills every bit as scripted as the rituals that were practiced in the traditional educational settings. The result was that religious training was relegated to the realm of the conceptual, while the embodied morality that was traditionally learned in the context of ṣuḥba was replaced with modern military training of the body. What resulted could be called a “disembodied scripturalism,”\textsuperscript{99} in that students continued to study sharī‘a through works of fiqh to gain a conceptual understanding of legal rulings and their sources, while their bodies were being subjected to all manner of modern humiliations, many of which defied implicit principles about the way that sanctified bodies are meant to move in relation to the material world. The incongruous divorce of the physical inculcation of sunna or ṭarīqa as habitus from the abstract verbal knowledge of fiqh as a legal code is best captured in a

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., 23. Crecelius sees this as part of Muhammad ‘Alī’s efforts at centralization in “Non-ideological responses of the ‘Ulama’”. DeJong argues that the firmān undermined the authority of Abū al-Anwār who was then naqīb al-ashrāf, Īrāq, 21.


satirical comic produced at the beginning of the Twentieth century. It shows a student at the Dār al-‘Ulūm dressed in the *galabāya* (robe) of a shaykh. He has hoisted the lower part of his robe and tucked it into his belt in order to be able to run and kick the ball. A robe lifted in this manner is an undignified position, associated with actions that purvey ritual impurity, like using the bathroom, or sexual intercourse. For this reason, being caught with a *galabāya* up in public may be understood as analogous to “being caught with one’s pants down.” In other contexts the *galabāya* may be lifted to run away from something out of fear or weakness, and may be associated with humiliation or defeat like “having one’s tail between one’s legs”.

6.1 Cartoon. The caption reads: “A cartoon of one of the students playing soccer in his official clothing in the first decade of the twentieth century.”

This incongruence, between religious learning and *akhlāq* unbefitting to that knowledge seems to have struck the boys behind the central figure in the drawing. They are wearing modern uniforms, but still they are laughing, having sensed the irony in a full grown man, wearing the

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clothes of a shaykh, but demonstrating no knowledge of the *akhlāq* associated with religious learning. The result is something ridiculous at best, and sinister at worst.

In chapter one, it was argued that the view of knowledge as embodied implied that for a student to emulate the *akhlāq* of the shaykh was to emulate the *akhlāq* of his masters in a line reaching back to the physical body of the Prophet, and the perfection of his *sunna*. The bodies of students at the Dār al-‘Ulūm were, like the bodies of students trained in the Medical School or the Military College, conforming to the “new discipline of the body.” 101 One aspect of this discipline was the standardization and abstraction of acceptable behaviors into a published code of the organization, along with a list of regulations. 102 Another element of this new discipline related to questions of health and disease. Sports such as the one pictured, as well as modern military drills intended to promote physical fitness were based on the view of the body as a “physical machine, and disease as a mechanical process of cause and effect.” 103 In other words, any body would grow and thrive in the same way, given similar conditions. For this reason, like the body of a student trained in the Medical School or the Military College, the bodies of students at Dār al-‘Ulūm came to be evaluated based on their conformity with fixed standards of health. Article fourteen of the 1887 regulations put in place mandatory examinations and vaccinations for students at Dār al-‘Ulūm, which were expanded and given greater detail in the 1913 regulations. 104 In short, the student’s most valuable tool for developing religious authority as *walāya*, his body, was entirely removed from the learning process. This model of the modern school of religious learning was expanded to include a similar modern school for the training of shari‘a judges (*Madrasat al-Qādā al-Shar‘i*), established in 1907.

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102 This was added by a provision in 1901. Aroian, *Nationalization*, 30.
Still, the fact that the boys in the comic are laughing suggests that even as policy shifted, the *doxa* or implicit sensibilities about the relationship of bodily dispositions to sanctity were not eliminated by the new modern metaphysics of order. Rather, as individuals attempted to bring institutions more in line with the ideal of authority as abstract, visible and orderly, implicit principles regarding sanctity as subjectively dignified bodily dispositions persisted in practice.¹⁰⁵ Further, it suggests that these sensibilities about the nature of sanctity were integrated into general cultural principles outside the Sufi milieu. Before the establishment of the Dār al-ʿUlūm, to be a religious authority required a lifetime of cultivation of relationships of intimacy with people of *walāya*. The disembodiment of religious authority has major implications for the definition of social class. Over time, teachers from the *muhandiskhāne* (engineering school) took over the work of teaching math, and graduates of government schools such as al-Alson pushed Azharī graduates out of Arabic teaching, in which they had historically had a monopoly.¹⁰⁶ The new class of bureaucrats, rather than emerging from the genealogies described in chapter three, were often talented students from families of no note.¹⁰⁷

**A call for *nizām* in ritual practice**

The success of representatives of different brotherhoods competing for the positions of authority in this shifting discursive environment appears to have been linked to their ability to make their

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¹⁰⁵ ‘Abd al-Karīm mentions that negative reactions to graduates of the new schools who studied European techniques and served the military governors as doctors, engineers and officers were treated with suspicion, “as if they had sold their bodies and souls to the Europeans, and even that they had become Christians.” In *Taʿīm*, 587.


¹⁰⁷ ‘Alī Mubarak was among these. In his autobiography, he describes his dilemma about running away from the school. He mentions that students who deserted the school were severely punished if they were caught, and if not, their family members bore their punishment. He also mentions his father’s response to his recruitment and his decision to stay in school. It certainly does seem that, at least in his case, his father saw enrollment in the schools as a great disservice to his son. Mubarak, *Khiṭat*. 229
ritual practice itself more legible from within this emerging modern normative framework by attempting to codify customs associated with the ritual practice of the ṭuruq. Polemics against particular devotions associated with the brotherhoods or the shrines was nothing new. Writings against excessive devotion to the shaykh, questionable doctrinal pronouncements, and especially the more dramatic devotions associated with ziyāra and the annual mawlid festivals have already been touched upon on earlier chapters. However, the steps taken to curb such activities in the nineteenth century reflect an increasing tendency to prefer the appearance of order as a manifestation of moral correctness, rather than the air of mystery and enchantment privileged in earlier mystical thought.

In a circular issued in 1881, Muhammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī prohibited such activities as self-injury with the sword, coal, serpents, glass, cannon balls in processions and fairs, the use of musical instruments, praying to anyone other than God and the Prophet, and separating the sexes at sessions of dhikr. DeJong speculates that these prohibitions were pronounced more for show than for the purpose of curbing actual practice, and that a tacit understanding was that they would not be enforced. Still, this was a way of projecting the intention to institute order and uniformity in the practice of the ṭuruq in line with abstract and legible order as an emerging social value. Bakrī’s ability to demonstrate moral correctness as promoting “law and order” seems to have led to a boost in his prestige vis a vis the Wafā’iyya, such that the latter would

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108 Detailed descriptions of the kinds of practices that would eventually be prohibited can be found in De Jong, Ṭuruq, 98-100.
109 As in chapter one, where it was argued that morality was understood as located in a haqīqa which was by definition that which “sights and insights (al-absār wa al-basā’ir) are utterly unable to see, nor can mental powers and minds stumble upon its knowledge.” Ibn ‘Arabī al-Futuḥāt al-Makiyya, as quoted in Hoffman, Sufism Mystics and Saints, 172.
110 De Jong, Ṭuruq, 196-200. DeJong represents Bakrī’s action to curb questionable public displays by the ṭuruq as a response to pressure from a newspaper publicizing the practice of self-piercing during the mawlid in 1880. Ibid., 94.
eventually be completely subsumed into that organization in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

**Conclusion**

The understanding of authority as embodied provided a set of working principles for the transmission or cultivation of that authority that were internalized through the practice of the religious elite themselves. These institutions were valued precisely for their opacity to outsiders, which lent the rituals and texts of the initiated an air of mystery and enchantment that in and of itself attested to the sanctity of those people and their ways. However, as an appearance of *nizām*, that is, an abstract order that can be explained, conceived and observed from outside an institution by the uninitiated came to be valued, the reliance of these institutions on the peculiar personal qualities of the individual *awliyāʾ* that passed through them came to be seen as a defect. The efforts of the religious elite to make their institutions embody this *nizām*, then, may not have been understood as a movement away from a traditional role as conservatives, but as a continuation of their historic role as representatives of the public good.
Conclusions

It has been stated above that hagiography is less concerned with the recording of historical truth than it is with the expression of a society’s values through the portraiture its most exemplary members. Despite efforts in Western historiography to present an objective truth in historical representation, the expression of a subjective normative through the representation of historical fact is inevitable in any historiography, as argued most famously by Hayden White.1 Said’s Orientalism most vividly demonstrated the way that common themes in Western narratives of the rise and decline of Islamic civilization served to provide the moral justification for the violence associated with colonialism and for the material gain that flowed from the resulting imbalanced relationships of trade.2 Since this study has attempted to give insight into the social values and principles of operation expressed through historical and hagiographical narratives, it seems fitting to conclude by contrasting these with some of the beliefs about what leads to social good that are expressed through trimmingham’s history of Sufism. This is not to ascribe to Trimingham any underhanded agenda, nor to challenge the factual basis of the analysis he offers in his excellent study. Rather it is to contrast the metaphysics of modernity that I will argue underpins his study with the metaphysics of mysticism that provided the organizing principles for the work of Zabīdī. Also, there is no claim that the values read below in Trimingham define “modernity.” Just as Islamic mysticism as a category includes a variety of sometimes contradictory beliefs and practices, so modernity as an ideology and practice is not unified, but includes multiple varieties, none of which can claim the status as archetype.

Trimingham narrates the long arc of the history of mysticism as a golden age followed by a slow decline. It is an odd assessment, considering that until the lifetime of Abū al-Anwār, the popularity of practices associated with Sufism was steadily increasing, as were the number of adherents, and the political and economic influence of Sufi elites. But he is not referring to this type of structural decline or obscurity. Rather, Trimingham bases his claim of “decline” on a perceived lack of change. He observes that “the integral association of the saint cult with [the orders] contributed to the decline of Sufism as a mystical Way. Spiritual insight atrophied and the Way became paved and milestoned.”

The belief that change through chronological time tends naturally toward greater moral perfection or progress, while the lack of change leads to civilizational extinction is based on ideas about the evolutionary progress of civilizations that find their fullest articulation in Durkheim’s theory of social evolution. Durkheim extended Darwin’s theories about the evolution of the species to whole institutions and societies, privileging later forms as “more complex” and more perfect. Durkheim viewed these changes as internal, necessary, and uniform. This view continues to be a basic organizing principle in modern descriptions of historical change in societies. It is invoked whenever societies are described as “advanced” or “backward.” It is from this unarticulated belief in the relationship between change through time and both perfection and survival that scholarly activities such as memorization or commentary are denigrated. Trimingham laments that intellectual production in the field of taṣawwuf “became limited to compilations, revisions and simplifications, endless repetition and embroidery on old themes, based upon the writings of earlier mystics.”

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3 Trimingham, *Sufi Orders*, 70. See also his discussion on page 103.
4 The view of the present as the most perfect is also suggested by the lexical overlap between “modern” as both to the latest and best model of something, and “modern” as a set of normative principles about social organization.
6 Trimingham, *Sufi Orders*, 70.
By contrast, Zabīdī’s manual shows little interest in the broader changes in mysticism or the practice of *taṣawwuf* as a whole through time. The orientation of masters in parallel unrelated chains of transmission to each other in time is clearly of no importance to him, and would be impossible to discern without the aid of biographical works. If anything, there is an inverse sensibility to that expressed by Trimingham, in that individuals closest to the source (the Prophet), and thereby most remote from the future, are valued. Where Durkheim views progress as change in societies as organisms in competition, Zabīdī represents progress as the spiritual progress of the individual soul toward a unified *haqīqa* regardless of the time and place in which that soul came into form. *Haqīqa* is thus sometimes represented in diagrams as the center point of a circle, an unchanging common location toward which everyone striving earnestly in pursuit of spiritual progress are moving. It is from the view of perfection as a point in the center, rather than a point on the future that proximity to the Prophet can be understood to be a matter of piety and practice rather than space or time.

Because innovation and change are valued by modernists, as evidence of the health of the civilization as a whole, and from the promise of increasing perfection through time, historical narratives emphasize social change. These changes are self-consciously touted as a move away from things *passé* which are passively impugned simply by their location in historical time. By the same logic, because the evolutionary change of society as a whole is not valued by Zabīdī, such changes should not be expected to be central elements of his narrative. For this reason, although changes in doctrine and practice through time is an historical reality, reading he work of Zabīdī gives the impression that practices are standard and unchanging. The first chapter showed that this sense of timelessness, was achieved in the *‘Iqd* by presenting practices that may have
been invented in different historical moments as multiple, equally valid parts of a unified practice.

Trimingham sees the practice if initiation directly through a vision of the Prophet as an effort on the part of dynamic individuals to free their native curiosity from the salāsil of the authoritarian masters. His negative view of the salāsil, with all that implied for the necessity of obedience, reveals his view of the importance of personal freedom. This is an axiom of the metaphysics of modernity that is closely related to the necessity of change. Modernists such as Habermas asserted the view that real progress can be measured in terms of free expression, and development in the human ability to reason and communicate. Indeed, to Trimingham, this lack of freedom for creativity was not just seen as preventing the linear progress valued in discourses of modernity, but a kind of civilizational disease “symptom[atic] of a deeper spiritual malaise.”

The importance of the belief that collective freedom of individuals leads magically, miraculously and mysteriously to the greatest good for society as a whole in modern discourses cannot be understated. That it is first and foremost a metaphysical orientation is nowhere more clear than in the reification of this theoretical effect into a kind of beneficent deity referred to as the “invisible hand” of the market.

By contrast, the Islamic sources express no sense of innovation as a social good for its own sake. On the contrary, the concept of innovation (bid'a) has a distinctly negative connotation. Rather, authors like Zabīdī and Suhrawardī map the beginning of spiritual progress

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9 Though this phrase was first coined by Adam Smith in his *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, originally published in 1776, several scholars have pointed out that Smith’s own statements regarding the “invisible hand” were qualified, whereas liberal economics represents the market very much as a kind of beneficent deity. For a detailed discussion of how the original concept has been converted into an absolute metaphysical principle, see Warren J. Samuels, *Erasing the Invisible Hand: Essays on an Elusive and Misused Concept in Economics* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).
as the effort to imitate the master absolutely. As discussed in chapter one, this was based on the
belief that his behavior is the result of the perfect imitation of his master, and he of his master,
and so on back to the infallible sunna of the Prophet. Though this may have translated in practice
into the forceful restriction of the freedom of the student, the process is represented as volitional,
with the student himself wishing to obliterate his personal preferences or habits in order to
replace them with the idealized akhlāq of the master. However pervasive this ideal, innovation in
belief and practice of taṣawwuf is an historical reality. This can be seen in the change in practice
through time that Trimingham describes in his overview. With the knowledge that change
through time is not valued, the historian should be wary about accepting the representation of
practice as unchanging as historical truth. The diversity of practice can be seen as evidence of
creative innovation, even as Sufis themselves attempted to represent their own creativity as
continuity.

Indeed, there is much to suggest that authority may not have been as clearly top-down as
the ideal. Ghazālī states in his Iḥyā that a student should choose his teacher wisely, and only after
having determined him worthy. This places the student, seeking to become like a “corpse in the
hand of his teacher,” as the saying goes, in the position of determining the merit of that teacher.
It is an odd formulation that belies an unspoken reality by which at the advanced levels, the
hierarchies between teacher and student were often unclear. The loose organization of
educational relationships described in chapter six may have allowed for more individual freedom
in belief and practice than what scholars such as Zabīdī liked to let on. Students appear to have
had an enormous mobility between teachers. Though children beginning their studies were
probably at the mercy of whoever held the position of the family or village school teacher,
advanced students commonly traveled to seek out teachers who were of interest to them, or if
they studied in larger conglomerate institutions like al-Azhar, they were noted to move between teachers or neighboring but separate institutions, to hear Zabīdī recite hadīth in the Salība mosque, for instance.

These hierarchies are so ill-defined that in some instances, teachers are seen granting each other certifications in different works, prayers, or prized isnād. In this sense, the standardization of the educational system described in chapter six may have limited the freedom of individual students to study the works that interested them with the teachers that interested them. It is beyond the scope of this study to attempt to quantify the freedom of thought and practice that elite students of religion experienced in this chaotic banquet of teachers, but it is still fair to state that Trimingham’s assumption that all of those involved in the Sufi milieu were the stifled slaves of masters is an oversimplification.

Besides representing the absolute authority of the awliyā’ as teachers, the Islamic sources also like to represent the authority of the religious elite in economics and politics as more perfectly entrenched in their positions than may have been the historical reality. Chapter three has shown that hagiographies make every attempt to represent the religious elite as the passive or natural heirs of the Prophet in terms of his genes, his intellectual heritage and his moral or ethical perception. This reveals the ideal that true religious authority should be ascribed, the result of God’s will, expressed through the placement of human beings in relation to each other, rather than from personal effort or ambition. It idealizes the leadership of those in power as a duty undertaken out of love for Him, downplaying other possible motives, such as the desire for notoriety or the comfort offered by material wealth. Western historians have been too quick to take these scholars at their word, believing these genealogical ties to be as unified and indisputable as their owners present them.
However, chapters three through five have shown that the process of rendering the messy reality of contending claims to religious authority into tidy lines of *nasab, silsila* or *sanad* involved the purposeful elision of the many gestures through which that authority had to be manifested throughout the career of a religious leader in order for him to hold his place as the rightful inheritor of that genealogy. The case of Abū al-Anwār shows vividly that in order to be recognized as a *wali*, he had to embody those values that society as a whole cherished. The embodiment of these qualities goes far beyond the knowledge of and adherence to abstract laws articulated in *fiqh*. Lacking any such articulation in theory, the particular qualities that distinguished those claiming to move in sanctified bodies from the rest of the population were entirely rooted in their local historical context. In context, Muḥammad Wafā’ remotely disemboweling a man without giving any legal justification is recorded as an act of noble generosity; the purposeful misstatement of products for import to avoid taxation is rendered as a defense of “the truth.”

Depending on the context, both the cultivation of ties to military elites and resistance to them could have been either evidence of sanctity or of its lack.

In this sense, a genealogy was only as good as the reputation of the individuals who carried it, a reputation which depended, in turn, on the shared values of society as a whole, as well as shared ideas about how these values are manifested in practice. In this sense, though the religious elite were the keepers of the law as *fiqh*, they were still subject to the unarticulated moral principles of society as a whole. It was possible for those with the best pedigree to lose face, just as it was possible for those with undistinguished genealogies (like ‘Umar Makram) to establish themselves as *awliyā’*. The moral principles by which sanctity is established, of course, have the same origin in the unarticulated values developed through the emulation of cultural practice. The reputation of a *wali* thus depended more on implicit cultural expectations than on

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10 See the summary of Jabarti’s account, page 153 above.
any abstract rulings of *fiqh*. This can be seen in the way that hagiographies and chronicles laud the acts of some religious elites as *karamāt* while labeling others as despicable without any attempt to root that valuation in legal precedent or in the sources of the law. Unlike the abstraction of morality in *fiqh*, *walāya* includes all of those exemplary behaviors that, as Justice Potter Stewart put it, are difficult to describe, but one knows it when one sees it.\(^{11}\)

Because the definition of *walāya* developed in dialectic with changing practical realities,\(^{12}\) the need to appeal to popular moral sensibilities created an ongoing impetus for change. Because sanctity was manifested through the active embodiment of those qualities of leadership and conduct that society cherishes, the principles by which sanctity could be recognized and manifested changed with shifts in the moral framework of society as a whole. In chapter six, this included efforts to conform to emerging ideas about the social good. As the appearance of order came to be increasingly seen as a moral good in and of itself, so the *awliyā’* attempted to demonstrate their orderliness by actively enframing processes and standards that had been valued for the air of mystery that had previously surrounded them.

Thus, “modern” societies cannot be distinguished from “traditional” ones absolutely in terms of either change or freedom. Social change in Egypt was a reality, just as modern societies have their own traditions.\(^ {13}\) The “traditional” change, or change-within-tradition experienced by Abū al-Anwār differed most from the “modern” change undertaken by reformers such as ‘Alī Mubārak less in terms of the degree of change, and more in terms of the discursive mechanisms

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\(^{11}\) For a fascinating discussion of this statement regarding the definition of “hard-core pornography” and the controversy it raised regarding the place of subjectivity in a democratic legal system, see Paul Gewirtz, “On “I Know It When I See It”” (*The Yale Law Journal*, 105, 1996), 1023–1047.

\(^{12}\) Hallaq makes a similar argument about the dialectical relationship between the law and social change in “Can the Shari’a Be Restored?”

for its justification. That is, “modern” change differs from “traditional” change primarily in what is put forth as the justification for that change.
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