Becoming a Sunni Scholar:

Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1690), His Role in Seventeenth-Century Medina and the Transregional Contexts of His Writings

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation was written and prepared by me independently. Furthermore, no sources and aids other than those indicated have been used. Intellectual property of other authors has been marked accordingly. I also declare that I have not applied for an examination procedure at any other institution and that I have not submitted the dissertation in this or any other form to any other faculty as a dissertation.

Zacky Khairul Umam
23.08.2024

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Figures and Tables

Notes on Transliteration, Dates, and Other Conventions

This dissertation follows the transliteration system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) for Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish. Simplified versions of this system will be used only for writing names without diacritics. Cited Malay and Javanese names and terminologies follow the vernacular version in Southeast Asia (e.g. Hamzah Fansuri, and not Hamza Fansuri). I use the Arabic definite article al- when the fuller version of an Arabic or Arabicized name is being used but omit the article al- to abbreviate it (e.g., Ibrahim al-Kurani but subsequently Kurani; Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji but subsequently Barzanji; ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Fansuri but subsequently Fansuri). In this dissertation, I mostly use the Gregorian calendar for all dates, but when I have to explain the dates of manuscripts, I use both the Islamic calendar and the Gregorian, hence: "Hijri date/Gregorian date." All translations are my own unless indicated otherwise.

Introduction

1. Research Scope and Approach

This dissertation examines the history of Ibrahim al-Kurani's (d. 1690) quest for knowledge and the formation of Islamic intellectual culture in Medina in the seventeenth century. This dissertation does not claim to provide a comprehensive account of the social, cultural, intellectual, and political dynamics in Ottoman Arabia as a whole; rather, it examines Kurani and his Medinan circle specifically. By limiting the scope of this research, it aims to answer the question of how Kurani's intellectual career was shaped and the extent to which his authority and major writings were produced.

The secondary literature in Western academia offered a novel and creative analysis on the intellectual progress of the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb in the seventeenth century.[1] Khaled El-Rouayheb presents a compelling reinterpretation of the notion of the intellectual decline in the Ottoman Empire. He situates Kurani within a broader context of intellectual currents, drawing upon hitherto underexplored manuscripts and printed Islamic books. El-Rouayheb posits that the seventeenth century of the Islamic world was a period of considerable intellectual efflorescence. To support this argument, he examines the concept of philosophical verification, namely *taḥqīq*, which was particularly embraced by non-Arab scholars. Among these scholars was the Kurdish Ibrahim al-Kurani. A noteworthy aspect of this intellectual milieu was the development of rational theology in parallel with the Sufi philosophical thinking endorsed by the school of Ibn ʿArabi (d. 1240), which is exemplified by the doctrine of "the unity of existence" (*waḥdat al-wujūd)*. In contrast with the most celebrated fifteenth and sixteenth-century Arab mystics, whose writings were characterized by a meticulous adherence to ontological monism, Kurani, along with other prominent mystics in the seventeenth-century Arab East, espoused the doctrine that, as El-Rouayheb asserts, was inextricably linked to the proliferation of Sufi orders, including the Khalwatiyya from Anatolia and the Shattariyya and Naqshbandiyya from India.[2]

[1] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb*.

[2] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 236, 249-258.

Furthermore, El-Rouayheb indicates that Kurani played a pivotal role in the rehabilitation of the Hanbali purists Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350). As a later Ashʿari thinker, Kurani appears to have held dissenting views from those of previous Ashʿari scholars, who considered these purists as problematic or even heretical. By elucidating the spirit of intellectual verification employed by Kurani, El-Rouayheb therefore argues for the confluent tradition between monist mysticism and the neo-Hanbali traditionalism. In the seventeenth century, the adverse positions between Ibn ʿArabi and Ibn Taymiyya – the former a speculative mystic and monist, while the latter a stringent traditionalist who opposed esoteric thought, Neo-Platonism, Greek logics, and pantheism – were fused by the commentators of Ibn ʿArabi and the Hanbali traditionalists. Both groups were unified in their opposition to Ashʿari and Maturidi theology on several crucial points: (a) the rejection of *taʾwīl* or figurative interpretation of obvious anthropomorphisms in the Quran and hadith; (b) the vilification of the discipline of rational theology; and (c) the rejection of major Ashʿari opinions on secondary causality and the creation of human acts. Kurani's views diverge from these three points by radically redefining Ashʿarism – as interpreted by ʿAdud al-Din al-Iji (d. 1355), Taftazani (d. 1390), al-Sharif al-Jurjani (d. 1414), Muhammad b. Yusuf al-Sanusi (d. 1490), and Jalal al-Din al-Dawani (d. 1502) – without hostile attitude to the writings of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya.[3]

In addition to this, El-Rouayheb's assessment to Kurani's rational theology with an emphasis on the interpretation of the doctrine of "the unity of existence" contributed to trace the importance of intellectual currents in the seventeenth century of Sunni Islam by providing an extensive geographical scale from the Maghreb to the Ottoman Arab lands. El-Rouayheb compared Kurani's position to Mulla Sadra and his thought in Safavid Empire and one of the reasons why Mulla Sadra has been more popular than Mulla Kurani is historical. He wrote, "Had the antiphilosophical and antimystical trends of Safavid Iran emerged vistorious in the modern period, chances are that Mullā Ṣadrā would have been as little known today as Kūrānī is."[4] Even though he did not claim that his approach is a type of global intellectual history, El-Rouayheb's

[3] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 275-311; El-Rouayheb, "From Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 1566) to Khayr al-Dīn al-Ālūsī (d. 1899): Changing views of Ibn Taymiyya among non-Ḥanbalī Sunni Scholars"; cf. Atallah Copty, "Taḥqīq Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan al-Kūrānī li-masāʾil kalāmiyya ʿinda Aḥmad b. Taymiyya al-Ḥarrānī."

[4] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 332.

work contributes to elaborate the understudied intellectual tradition in the seventeenth century with its encyclopedic perspective.

While El-Rouayheb's work locates Ibrahim al-Kurani's scholarship within the broader context of other Sunni thinkers, theologians, philosophers, and mystics in diverse geographical settings, a more comprehensive account of the entirety of Kurani's corpus, situated within his own milieus and the specific contexts of the Hijaz, remains elusive. Such an understanding is necessary to elaborate historical differences played by Kurani with his whole intellectual genealogies and manuscripts. Nasser Dumairieh, in his dissertation (2018), offered a specific contribution to portray Kurani by particularly tracing the intellectual dynamics of the Hijaz in a macroscopic view and then focusing microscopically on the writings and thought of Kurani.[5] In this work, the author proposed detailed information, almost like a modern compendium of biographical dictionaries (*ṭabaqāt*), on certain endowed institutions in the Hijaz and their settings, prominent Hijazi scholars, and Kurani's writings. The work is structured into two main sections: the first explores theological and Sufi thought, while the second delves into hadith, jurisprudence, and Arabic grammar. Following El-Rouayheb's sizeable project on the intellectual progress in the seventeenth century of the Ottoman Empire and beyond, along with the contributions of other scholars engaged in post-classical intellectual history of Islam,[6] Dumairieh sought to answer the contribution of Kurani's rational theology and Sufi philosophical system by further providing the history of ideas relevant to Kurani's thought. The central argument of the work revolves around the fact that during the seventeenth century, the Hijaz, specifically Medina, "returned to the center of Islamic intellectual life." By examining the case of Kurani, Dumairieh illustrated how the Hijaz underwent a transformation, becoming a prominent center for intellectual activity in the seventeenth-century Islamic world. This was achieved by analizing the development of rational sciences, transmitted knowledge, and Sufi theories and practices. The objective of this study is to contextualize the Hijaz as a distinctive geographical area within the burgeoning discourse of post-classical Islamic thought.[7]

[5] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century: The Works and Thought of Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (1025-1101/1616-1690)*; it was subsequently published in 2022 as *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz before Wahhabism: Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī's (d. 1101/1690) Theology of Sufism*.

[6] For instance, Robert Wisnovsky, "The Nature and Scope of Arabic Philosophical Commentary in Post-Classical (ca. 1100-1900 AD) Islamic Intellectual History."

[7] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 13.

Dumairieh divided his dissertation into two sections. The first is an examination of the contexts of the Hijaz in the seventeenth century. This includes an exploration of the multiple local and global contexts of the region, as well as an analysis of the intellectual picture of the Hijaz in general, which is presented in Chapter One and Two accordingly. While Chapter One of this work does not offer the theoretical notion of connected and global histories, the author presented a useful overview of the history of the Hijaz in the seventeenth century. The author presented a range of religious, economic, and political elements of the region within its larger global imperial contexts in which, he argues, many scholars and students around the world came to the area to study and teach. The centrality of the Hijaz, according to the author, transformed the area as a cosmopolitan center of intellectualism and of knowledge transmission through the annual rites of hajj pilgrimage. Chapter Two of this work corroborates the previous chapter in which the author addressed the intellectual and scientific merits in Mecca and Medina such as medicine, agriculture, astronomy, chemistry, and music theory. Following this, he then provided information on three scholars outside the circle of Kurani—of whom he discussed in the rest of the chapters—who contributed to teach the rational sciences including the rational theology, logics, and philosophy. Over the course of the seventeenth century, there were around fifty noted scholars who taught the rational sciences, including the treatises written by Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, Jalal al-Din Dawani, Taftazani, Jurjani, and many more. The author analyzed *isnād* or "chain of transmission" as a critical source to study post-classical Islamic philosophy, not merely useful to understand transmitted sciences, especially hadith. While prior to the seventeenth century, Muslim scholars did use chains of transmission to delineate their curriculum vitae, Dumairieh argued that the significant change happened in the seventeenth century. Most Hijazi scholars mentioned their chains of transmission pertaining to the rational sciences in addition to the transmitted sciences. He claimed to consult the works of six scholars in the area including Kurani, Shams al-Din al-Babili, Abu al-Mawahib al-Baʿli, ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi, Rudani, and Salim al-Basri. In the section "How the Rational Sciences Reached the Ḥijāz",[8] the author selectively charted Kurani's *isnāds* of the rational sciences from several post-classical Islamic thinkers including Taftazani, Jurjani, and Dawani. Readers are expected to solicit more information and critical analyses from this section due to his important claim to corroborate the vibrant intellectual culture of the Hijaz

[8] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 126-141.

in the seventeenth century, as opposed to previous dominant studies of the Hijaz from the perspective of Southeast Asian Studies and the study of reform movements of the eighteenth century. However, the author did not provide a thorough examination on the *isnāds* of post-classical Islamic philosophy and theology.[9] A comprehensive examination of *isnāds* for the depiction of post-classical Islamic thought pertaining to the rational sciences, therefore, is imperative for future research endeavors.

The second section is the core of Dumairieh's dissertation and constitutes the main contribution of this work. It contains three case studies: (a) the portrayal of Kurani's life, teachers, students and works; (b) Kurani's theological and Sufi thought; and (c) Kurani's endeavors in hadith, jurisprudence, and Arabic grammar. In (a), the author solicited the most hitherto complete information on Kurani's teachers, students, and writings. This information resembles the modern compendium of biographical dictionaries in comparison to the same approach in a Turkish dissertation.[10] While Dumairieh claimed to offer 'a comprehensive study' of Kurani's life, teachers, students, and thought, over the course of critical examination in (a), the work relies heavily on the catalogues of Kurani's manuscripts that were already mentioned in the Turkish dissertation with only additional information. One of the shortcomings in (a) is that the author interpreted *Jāwī* as merely Javanese in depicting one of Kurani's students, for which I clarify more clearly in the last chapter of my dissertation. Another shortcoming is that the author offered succinct information on the cultural and intellectual settings of Kurani's journeys in Ottoman Kurdistan and Arab lands in only six pages, despite its claim to provide 'a comprehensive study'.[11] Different from this, the first part of my dissertation, as will be discussed, considers the importance of cultural settings in which Kurani intellectually nurtured, from the imperial borders of Kurdistan to Ottoman Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, and the Hijaz. My approach in this part is to follow the chronological journeys of Kurani without neglecting the geographical and cultural contexts. It seems that Dumairieh ignored to incorporate the relation between imperial contexts and Kurani's curriculum vitae. His rendition of geographical sites between Kurdistan and Arabia in the life of

[9] Cf. Reza Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran: Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Nayrīzī and His Writings*; Shahab Ahmed's *Before Orthodoxy* is useful to employ the study of *isnāds* in their historical contexts.

[10] Ömer Yılmaz. *İbrâhîm Kûrânî: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Tasavvuf Anlayışı*.

[11] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 146-152.

Kurani implicitly relied on the limitations of a nation-state paradigm in which he did not sufficiently relate the significance of Ottoman Arabia as an integral part of the nexus of Ottoman elites in Istanbul.

In (b) and (c), Dumairieh examined Kurani's thought. The strength of his dissertation can be seen in (b) in which he extensively scrutinized the contributions of Kurani in the study of rational theology and Sufism. The author argued that Kurani's theological and Sufi thought are indivisible, as Kurani's theological arguments depend heavily on Ibn ʿArabi's thought. The author explicated that Ibn ʿArabi's ideas are constituted as the key factor of reference and the central theological authority for Kurani's theological discussions. Kurani established, according to the author, a "coherent structure" between rational theology and Sufism. In addition to El-Rouayheb's crucial contribution, Dumairieh traced in (b) the history of theological ideas and concepts including thirteen key theological concepts elaborated by Kurani and six other theological issues raised by this Kurdish scholar. The author argued that the "unity of existence" is the central theological doctrine developed by Kurani, making theology and Sufism as one breath of intellectual pursuit. There were attempts to reconcile Ibn ʿArabi's Sufi theology with the rational theology and philosophy before the seventeenth century; but, according to the author, Kurani did not resolve the conflicts between theology and Sufism or to understand Ibn ʿArabi in a philosophical or theological perspective. While in (b) the author significantly contributed to the conceptual history of Kurani's ideas, his claim that Kurani did not make any intellectual reconciliation is a sort of contradictio in terminis. In my opinion, what Kurani did in his treatises is another reconciling method that becomes a synthesis between Sufi theology, rational theology, and philosophy with the longue durée of post-classical Islamic history. Even so, my dissertation is not an attempt to specifically clarify this issue.

Elaborating on El-Rouayheb's critique on the notion of 'intellectual decline' in the seventeenth century, Dumairieh specifically argued for the vibrant intellectual culture in the Hijaz with a focus on the works of Kurani. Considering that the author's emphasis is the question of intellectual progress, it is not surprising that in part (c) he treated Kurani's contribution in three fields (hadith, jurisprudence and Arabic grammar) under the theoretical shadow of part (b). Part (c) is a shorter addendum of analysis compared with part (b) and the author implicitly undervalued Kurani's endeavors in transmitted sciences. The author wrote, for instance, "Al-Kūrānī's interest in *ḥadīth, fiqh,* and Arabic grammar was of a different nature than his main interest in theology and

Sufism. His interest in the former seems to have been only insofar as they related to other topics, rather than a result of a genuine desire to contribute to them…"[12] The author devalued these sciences as ancillary sources from which Kurani would draw proofs to reinterpret his theological and Sufi theories. It is accurate to observe that the number of Sufi-theological works penned by Kurani is double his other works. However, the history of post-classical Islamic thought, especially the seventeenth century, is not merely the history of the rational sciences. The transmitted sciences are an integral part of Islamic thought in the post-classical age through which Kurani pursued his religious authority and credentials worldwide, as will be shown in my dissertation. Separating the transmitted sciences from the rational sciences degrades the nuanced history of a scholar and his time. Moreover, Dumairieh's reconstruction on Kurani's history of ideas led him to overlook the rich paratextual repertoire in Kurani's manuscripts and the meaning of cultural history to understand the mode of production and transmissions of Kurani's texts. My dissertation was initially planned to approach Kurani's writings with the same division as Dumairieh's work and, since early 2019, my research focus shifted to the research question posted above. Although, my earlier plan inclined to ask for the comparable view of both the rational and transmitted sciences without underestimating the meaning and function of the last ones. The present dissertation is an attempt to examine Kurani's life and works from a different perspective.

The story of this dissertation itself cannot be separated from the search of relevant manuscripts. Archival research at libraries in Istanbul, Aceh, Jakarta, Berlin, Riyadh, Medina, London, Princeton, and Leiden supplied me sufficient, even rich, materials on most works of Kurani and other scholars relevant to his intellectual career. The Istanbul and Princeton libraries offered the most representative body of Kurani's writings, while other libraries have valuable copies of other manuscripts of Kurani, despite a much lower number. This collection does not include digital collections around the world, which I only used in a selective mode, especially a small selection from the National Library of France and others from Casablanca and King Saud University libraries. There are certainly more manuscript libraries to consult, physically and digitally. However, focusing on my recent question, I have deliberately selected the most relevant data in my research scope in order to answer the intellectual journeys of Kurani following his own physical

[12] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 438; this view is echoed in his latest article, "Revising the Assumption that Ḥadīṯ Studies Flourished in the 11th/17th-Century Ḥiğāz: Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī's (d. 1101/1690) Contribution."

mobility from the cultural terrains of Kurdistan, Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, and then Medina, from where his writings were produced through transregional configuration, for which Kurani's corpora were not separated from boundary-crossing interactions, debates, and communications between different cultural-geographical milieus and agents. By choosing the three contexts—the Ottoman milieus, trans-imperial boundaries from the Maghreb to Mughal India, and Islamic Southeast Asia, respectively—this dissertation then contextualizes major writings of Kurani with their transmission, circulation, and adaptation into new, different cultural ecologies. This transregional configuration is also effective to understand the global makings of Kurani's authority as a Sunni scholar, Sufi master, and theologian. While El-Rouayheb's thesis focuses on the rational sciences and the philosophical verification propagated by Kurani and his contemporaries—corroborated by Dumairieh's thesis on the importance of the Hijaz and Kurani's intellectual contribution—my specific agenda in this dissertation is pertaining to the question of how to investigate Kurani's authority by not undermining the role of traditional sciences which contributed significantly to the formation of his scholarship. By juxtaposing all of Kurani's intellectual weight, we can look at his persona through an integrative approach: how his authority in the rational sciences was supported by his deep knowledge on the traditional sciences and vice versa. This juxtaposition has also been yielded through my pragmatic, or paradigmatic, choice to use a transregional analysis, especially in the second part of this dissertation. This attempt does not mean that this dissertation will discuss all rich repertoire of intellectual transmission and production that took place between the 1630s and 1690, the historical duration of Kurani's intellectual life. My pragmatic choice has motivated me to look broadly at the entanglements, connections, and relations between Kurani and his proponents and opponents. Through this, I have used not only the contents of Kurani's texts (*mutūn*), but also marginalia and other notes scattered in many manuscripts, mostly from the collections of Istanbul, Princeton, Leiden, and Jakarta, to provide certain coalescence between texts, materiality, and human mobility in the reconfiguration of Kurani's intellectual scenes. This approach, therefore, lead this dissertation to offer a micro, yet fuller engagement to the geographies to which Kurani connected in various corporeal, virtual, intellectual, and philological encounters[13] such as narratives on cultural exchanges of let-

[13] I have definitely been inspired by the name of a Brill journal, *Philological Encounters*. My involvement as the first cohort of MA Intellectual Encounters of the Islamicate World, which led me to do my doctorate studies at Berlin Graduate School of Muslim Cultures and Societies, FU Berlin, has also motivated me to ask about different types of 'intellectual encounters' in premodern societies of the Islamicate world.

ters and manuscripts, either written by Kurani's autographs in his scattered manuscripts, marginalia of other scholars, or historical records from other sources. Then, detailed intellectual contents of Kurani's writings are intentionally suspended for future research only to answer the limitation of this project.

Approaching Ibrahim al-Kurani and his underexplored manuscripts certainly 'compels' researchers to look at a comprehensive dimension of his intellectual development along with the spatial understanding of Medina and other routes of scholarly communications. Azyumardi Azra's work on the intellectual networks between the Middle East and Southeast Asia offers a networked analysis to scholars from Southeast Asia in which Kurani played an important role in reconciling the conflict between legal and Sufi methods with the Truth.[14] However, his adoption of the concept of "neo-Sufism" following the intellectual trend in the 1980s in Western academia created a reduction of the intellectual portrait of the seventeenth century that has been meticulously argued by El-Rouayheb who also critiqued this "neo-Sufism" narrative. While Azra's analysis proves to be cultivating a Southeast Asian perspective—and other works in other languages use their regional perspectives[15]—Kurani's intellectual repertoire belonged to the global entity of *umma*, as implicitly critiqued by Dumairieh. My position in this project follows this path to offer a preliminary account on the 'total' picture of Kurani by considering a spatial dispersion of his texts, ideas, and manuscripts. Therefore, this dissertation is a combination of connected history[16] and intellectual history that explores textual and paratextual elements of manuscripts. This combination is certainly compatible with the recent discourse on "global intellectual history,"[17] but following the confession of El-Rouayheb in his work, the purpose of this dissertation is not to contribute to the debate on global intellectual history. Definitely, global historians mostly argue that the significance of 'global' in this approach is also meant to analyze specific historical landscapes, events, or figures who have wide connections that were global, regional, or

[14] Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulama' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.*

[15] See for instance Ömer Yılmaz, *İbrahim Kurani: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Tasavvuf Anlayışı*, Sa'id Sarraj, *Maslak al-sadād li-l-Kūrānī wa-rudūd 'ulamā' al-maghrib 'alayhi: Dirāsah wa taḥqīq* (I was unable to consult this); Oman Fathurahman, *Itḥāf al-Dhakī: Tafsir Wahdatul Wujud bagi Muslim Nusantara* etc. I was also unable to consult Atallah Copty's dissertation written in Hebrew submitted at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

[16] See on this, for instance, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia."

[17] Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (eds.), *Global Intellectual History;* see also other publication trends in *Journal of Global Intellectual History*, Taylor & Francis.

transregional.[18] Future trajectories might lead me or other scholars to engage with this method, especially because such method is employed mostly to write non-Islamic histories, as well as modern histories from the eighteen century onwards. While I look at a variety of writings and languages, including some Persian, Ottoman Turkish, classical Malay, and Javanese in addition to Arabic, to reconstruct the extensive communication, transmission, and circulation of Kurani's texts in some parts of the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean cultural contexts, this dissertation is purposed to provide preliminary surveys and analysis to the connected history, or *l'histoire croisée,* in the French tradition. The history of Kurani and his texts can be seen as a case study on Islamic connections and exchanges, on the circulation of people, ideas, and materiality across boundaries. In this connected history, we obviously comprehend why Kurani's texts and ideas were transferred easily to the rest of the Islamic world in his time, but not necessarily to other scholars. It implies certain degrees of comparisons: how one of Kurani's theological treatises was contested in certain places, while not really debated in other cultural spheres. While comparisons with extensive connections and broader contexts constitute a crucial angle in the global history field,[19] this dissertation only focuses on the way in which entanglement, connectedness, and comparative geographical milieus are indivisible from Kurani's intellectual career and writings.

Relevant to this framework is the theory of *translatio studiorum*. My engagement in this concept was motivated after reading Souleymane Bachir Diagne's article on the need to write another history of thought.[20] Diagne argued that the conception of *translatio studiorum* as the mono-linear trajectory connecting Greek thought and sciences to medieval European Christianity was required to be rewritten by *pluralizing that history* (his emphasis). Using the critique of Eurocentrism and biased ontological nationalism of European languages, Diagne urges to pluralize the concept not only as "Jerusalem-Athens-Rome-Paris or London or Heidelberg", but also, for instance "Athens-Nisapur-Cordoba-Fez-Timbuktu." This is certainly relevant to understand the way Kurani's works, for instance, transmitted certain theological and Sufi thought from the context of post-Timurid intellectual culture to the Malay world via Medina. *Translatio studiorum* in this context is used as a perspective to understand the transmission of knowledge and how it is

[18] On the recent debate about global history, see for instance Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?*—I was fortunate to attend his global history classes in the 2014/2015 academic year.

[19] Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History*, 42.

[20] Diagne, "Decolonizing the History of Philosophy;" see also his *Open to Reason: Muslim Philosophers in Conversation with the Western Tradition.*

conveyed intellectually and materially through different paths. This concept connects to transmission and communication as happens today. All major cultural and intellectual exchanges in history are based on certain type of translation and transmission of knowledge from one intellectual context to another.[21] The transmission, translation, and adaptation of the philosophical Sufism of Ibn ʿArabi, the theology of Ashʿari, the philosophy of Ibn Sina, hadith, etc. from one milieu to another happened in the premodern time; and Ibrahim al-Kurani is included as the Sunni thinker and author who engaged with this type of cultural-intellectual exchange in the Islamic world before the encroachment of the European colonialism.[22]

The cognate perspective of '*translatio studiorum*' is the theory of The Republic of Letters (*respublica literaria*). İlker Evrim Binbas applied this concept in a fine way to understand the intellectual culture of the Timurid Empire.[23] Following the analysis that intellectual authority in the fifteenth century was "a transnational product of contested asymmetries of power," Binbas considered a wider cosmopolitan network of contemporaries who shared similar aesthetic, religious, political and ideological affiliations by analyzing the formal and informal intellectual network of the Persian polymath Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi (d. 1454). The significance of the Islamic Republic of Letters is addressed to understand the formal and informal intellectual networks of scholars, authors, Sufis, hadith transmitters, etc., in certain temporalities and spaces. Departing from this approach, this dissertation aims to portray Ibrahim al-Kurani's intellectual network as the best case to verify his informal and formal connection to the Ottoman viziers and elites, as well as between him and his proponents. This project will employ neither *translatio studiorum* nor the Islamic Republic of Letters in the strictest way; rather, it will use both as useful frameworks to rethink the way in which the cultural and intellectual formation of Ibrahim al-Kurani was formed, connected, and contested. Hence, the main argument that will be demonstrated in this dissertation is that the makings of Ibrahim al-Kurani's authority were not only supported by his pursuance of multiple intellectual genealogies through his intellectual journeys from the imperial frontiers to the more 'cosmopolitan' cities of the Ottoman Arab regions, but also constructed by

[21] See the preface of *Translatio Studiorum: Ancient, Medieval and Modern Bearers of Intellectual History* (ed. Marco Sgarbi).

[22] For another angle in the eighteenth century, see Ahmad Dallal, *Islam without Europe: Traditions of Reform in Eighteenth-Century Islamic Thought.* However, its Arabo-Indian centric has offered no correlation to the archive and intellectual discourse in the broader Ottoman Empire.

[23] Evrim Binbas, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī and the Islamicate Republic of Letters*; cf. Muhsin al-Musawi's *Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge Construction*, although this work is not a fine way to employ the theory of *respublica literaria* in Islamic contexts.

a global interaction and configuration of ideas, people, events, and the materiality that occurred through the transregional settings of Medina as a center of religio-intellectual learning. To support this argument, there will be discussions on Medinan knowledge production that were materialized through historical and codicological points of view. Because this dissertation does not follow the history of Kurani's ideas per se, as also emphasized above, there will be more emphases on the broader settings of cultural connection and contestation from which his thought was contextualized. Therefore, analyses on his foremost proponents, students, transmitters, and opponents are required to comprehend cultural sites of connection and contestation.

Cultural connection and contestation in early modern Islam have been a particular focus among historians and Islamicists. Most recently, Christopher Bahl[24] contributed to the burgeoning study of cultural exchanges in the Indian Ocean between the late medieval and early modern periods. In his study, Bahl explicates 'shared and connected histories among communities of the Western Indian Ocean region' which unite the Red Sea region and western parts of the South Asian subcontinent as an interoceanic religious community. His exploration contributes to the understanding of histories of circulation across transoceanic connections by emphasizing the extant Arabic manuscripts constituted as a predominant form for transregional cultural exchange in the early modern time. The author depicts the movement of texts and people as significant connective trajectories in the period when 'Arabic cosmopolis'—coined by Ronit Ricci based on Sheldon Pollock's theory of Sanskrit cosmopolis[25]—became the dominant Islamic factor in the process of cultural vernacularization. By underlining the mobile communities of scholars, scribes, sultans, and other agents in the process of cultural exchange, the author explores textual circulation in different social and professional groups. Histories of circulation, he strongly argued, are multilinear interactions. Members of these mobile communities, he ultimately proposes, "interacted in various and complex ways amongst each other, yet, importantly, they become a textual community through their common cultural pursuits."[26] This dissertation, in particular a case study of Kurani, speaks directly to the notion of mobile transregional communities of

[24] Bahl, *Histories of Circulation: Sharing Arabic Manuscripts across the Western Indian Ocean*.

[25] Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia*; Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India.*

[26] Bahl, *Histories of Circulation: Sharing Arabic Manuscripts across the Western Indian Ocean*, 21.

scholars, scribes, and nobles. By employing this approach, I will locate Kurani's textual and cultural history within the transregional web of communication and interaction in the seventeenth century.

In addition, textual culture in early modern Islam was not different from the previous era, in which it is best understood as a vivid process of transmission, translation, and transformation of a legacy. In *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture*, Robert Wisnovsky and other scholars argued for this statement. The introduction of this anthology offers a methodological paradigm to better understand the textual formation of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian civilizations in the medieval world as the dynamic process of transmission from antiquity and retransmission further from one cultural inheritor to another. The recipient culture had never been passive, rather new cultural productions happened. They strongly argued that the work of transmission and translation was active and interactive. Transmission, they write, "involved a multilateral commerce in texts, commentaries, fresh elaboration, and idea... transmission *was* transformation, a creative act of reception."[27] The dynamic process of transmission is marked by the picture of richness and complexity. Seeing specific medieval cultures as passive recipients of transmission hence, as they argued in the book, implies the neglection of multidimensional and intercultural relationships and the cultural agencies of mankind. In defining 'vehicles', they refer to the assemblage of textual forms and practices which include, for instance, forms of selection and arrangement; forms of interpretation and elaboration; and material forms of transformation.[28] The book encompasses the semantic and contextual explication of 'transmission', 'translation', and 'transformation' into various forms of textual motion and change. In defining 'transmission', they include, for instance, not only physical movement of a text from one scholar to another, or from one place to another, but also all the different forms of interpretation, from the word-by-word, sentence-by-sentence unpacking of the original text, to the larger assessment of the meaning of a concept, example, or argument. Regarding 'translation' as it is related to transmission and transformation, they wrote that knowledge in the Middle Ages was "preserved, communicated, appropriated, elucidated, marketed, contested, and reclaimed through programmes of translation ranging from faithful transliteration to creative adaptation." Meanwhile, 'transformation' is deliberately discussed as creative appropriation and active forms

[27] Wisnovsky et.al., *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture*, 1-2.

[28] Wisnovsky et.al., *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture*, 7.

of reception in specific medieval intellectual contexts.[29] Departing from this notion, the textual history of Kurani and Medina in the seventeenth century, as also broadly happened in the early modern period, speaks significantly about the process of transmission, selection, translation, and transformation of texts from multiple cultural sites. This dissertation thus will delineate various vehicles of transmission, translation, and transformation that commenced from Ottoman Kurdistan to Medina, and then from Medina to other places in the Islamic world. Kurani's intellectual trajectory is a resultant engagement from multiple actors connected to his life and works. This dissertation will demonstrate the intellectual contexts of his journey in which he transmitted and transformed an assemblage collection of classical texts (the Ashʿari theology, Ibn ʿArabi's Sufism, hadith canons and their chains of transmission, reception of certain Ibn Taymiyya's texts, etc.) with an active, dynamic approach toward them. This dissertation will also demonstrate that the 'post-Timurid' and 'post-Mamluk' intellectual traditions were coalesced in the historical agency of Kurani who vigorously interpreted, reinvigorated, and reformulated certain post-classical Islamic thought into his own agenda. The scholarly contribution of Wisnovsky et al. speaks significantly to the notion of *translatio studiorum* and the Islamic Republic of Letters in broader forms of textual motion, exchange, and transformation. Hence, this theoretical approach is extremely useful in analyzing the intellectual contexts of Ibrahim al-Kurani's journey and Medina in the seventeenth century. This study aims to trace Kurani's journey to become a scholar by examining his physical mobility through a series of studies from Shahrizor, an imperial frontier, to Ottoman Arab lands. Additionally, it considers these lands as a zone of transregional formation, prompting a rethinking of the boundaries between cultural transmitters in the post-Timurid and post-Mamluk intellectual traditions. His forty-year productive engagement in Medina can also be interpreted through the lens of this spatiality as a multiscaled region where the mobility and transfer of different actors and texts/ideas occurred across boundaries. His becoming a Sunni scholar by incorporating this transregional construction was a combination of his personal efforts to cross and transcend boundaries, but also of multiple interactions and transmissions between different actors in trans-imperial or cultural contexts.

[29] Wisnovsky et.al., *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture*, 9-22.

2. Selecting the Corpus of Writings of Ibrahim al-Kurani

In lieu of providing a 'complete' inventory of Ibrahim al-Kurani's manuscripts[30] and a comprehensive codicological analysis these manuscripts, a general map of Kurani's relevant writings is especially needed. I try to chart the major writings of Kurani through a transregional dispersion that has guided me to understand the geographical route of transmission.

Before analyzing the specific corpus of Kurani's writings according to the need of this dissertation, the overall picture of his manuscripts will be elaborated as follows. Kurani's works include several large genres including his curriculum vitae, dialectics, exegesis, linguistics, jurisprudence, hadith, Sufism, rational theology, and others. This category is not one hundred percent correct, since 9 out of the hitherto known 118 titles of Kurani's works are difficult to identify as to which genre they should be incorporated. Furthermore, we can also incorporate several of Kurani's writings as "interdisciplinary" works, especially his *Inbāh al-anbāh fī iʿrāb lā ilāha illā Allah* and its shorter version. Although, the title of this work contains a word '*iʿrāb*', in fact Kurani offered three extensive analyses of linguistic, theological, and hadith frameworks. In Kurani's corpus of writings, Sufism and rational theology have been amalgamated into one coherent philosophical analysis and this is usual for post-classical Islam. Considering that category never satisfies us perfectly, however I will use it to analyze different genres of Kurani's writings. Here is the quantity of Kurani's works according to the genre:

GENRE	NUMBER OF TITLES
Curriculum vitae or biography	4
Exegesis	8
Linguistics	5
Dialectics	1

[30] Inventories of Kurani's manuscripts were written by Ömer Yılmaz and Nasser Dumairieh in their respective dissertations (2005 and 2018 accordingly), although there should be more efforts to include understudied manuscripts especially produced in the time of Kurani or in the generations following him. Konrad Hirschler once said that early modern Islamic manuscripts were produced much more than those from the previous era. While this is correct, detecting Kurani's manuscripts and their stemmata in the libraries worldwide from Indonesia to Morocco, from Europe to the US will certainly need more effort.

Jurisprudence	7
Hadith	13
Sufism	28
Rational theology	42
Miscellanea	10

Table 1. Genre of Kurani's writings

The above table reveals that rational theology and Sufism dominated the entire writings of Ibrahim al-Kurani, followed by the hadith genre. If we aggregate all these three genres, they dominate more than 70 percent of the total titles, while the others comprise less than 30 percent and include biography, exegesis, linguistics, dialectics, and jurisprudence. There are two equivalent weights pertaining to the intellectual profile of Kurani: the rational sciences and the traditional or transmitted sciences. Dialectics, Sufism, and rational theology totaled 71 (the rational sciences), meanwhile the others can be roughly included into the transmitted sciences which equaled 48. Therefore, the rational sciences dominated the aggregate production of Kurani's treatises. Other comparisons can be added according to the folia of the manuscripts: which one is a thick manuscript and which one is the booklet manuscript;[31] as well as many aspects of codicological framework. Furthermore, we can also compare all of them based on the collections in libraries around the world which, I believe, the Süleymaniyye library and other libraries in Turkey are ranked first as libraries that recorded the most complete collections of Kurani's writings. Other comparison categories include core texts versus commentary or glosses, thick books versus short treatises, different scribes of manuscripts dated to the seventeenth century and so on. The list will be numerous depending on the interests of researchers and their accessibility to extant manuscripts (physical or digital).

[31] On "booklet manuscript" see Konrad Hisrchler, *A Monument to a Mediveal Syrian Book*.

فهرست

[illegible]

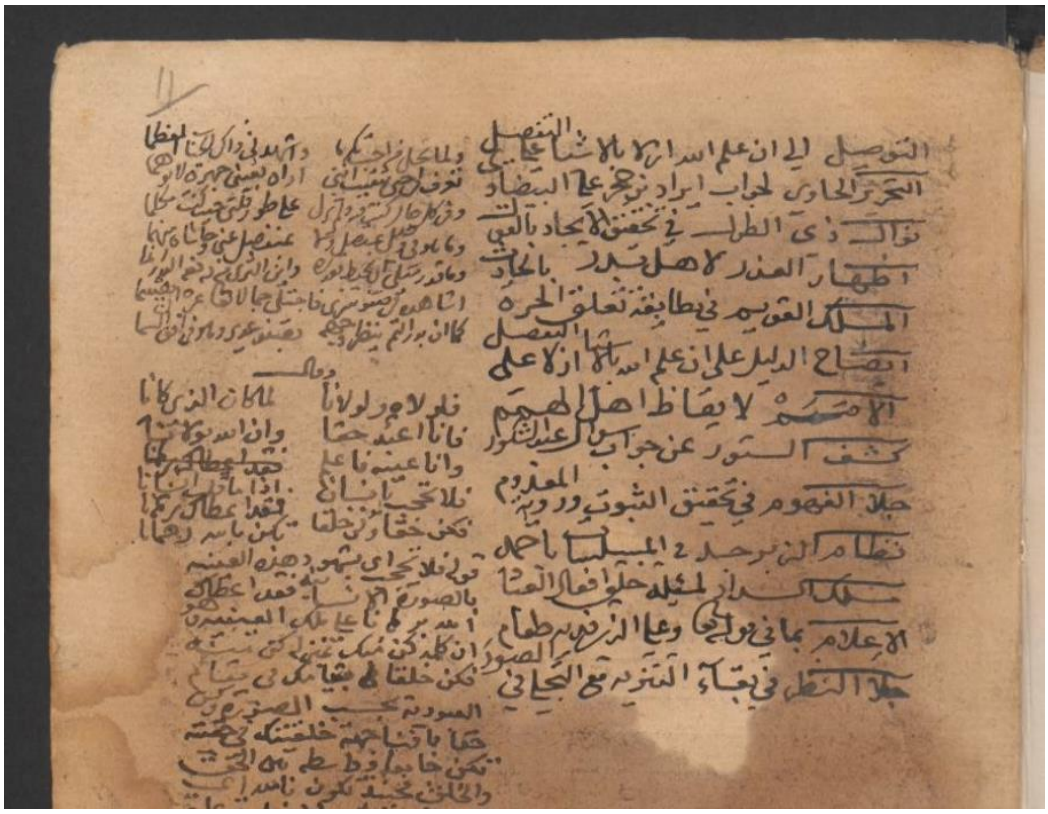

Figure 1. List of Ibrahim al-Kurani's works as appeared in MS Sprenger 299, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, fols. 10b-11a.

My own selection is to look at the routes of transmission related to the manuscripts of Kurani, which follow the contexts and connections of certain of his writings. In this category, I have selected, or to be precise, traced, Kurani's writings that are responses to problems originating from different parts of the Islamic world. In addition to this, his writings that were relevant to problems happening in the 'entire' Islamic world are included in this category. Therefore, this category has two dimensions: internal, meaning that Kurani wrote his treatises by his own 'desire' to comment on things that were not requested by other people; external, meaning that Kurani penned his treatises because other people requested him to do so. As a result, there are some fascinating routes that can be depicted as the sites of connection and transmission across Islamic empires from the Maghreb to the Malay world. In addition to this, I made a selective transmission of certain books that were written due to requests from certain people from certain geo-

graphical locations, but spread to other cultural milieus, as well. This selection hence has extensive geographical dimension. This category is relative, yet constitutive in the making of my narratives in this dissertation. Here is the list of Kurani's writings that I will use to corroborate my arguments:

Contexts/connections	**Title**	**Total**
The Malay World	a. *Al-Jawābāt al-gharrāwiyya li-llmasāʾil al-jāwiyya al-juhriyya* (MS Islamic University of Medina 5343) b. *Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm saṭḥ al-walī* (printed version) c. *Mirqāt al-suʿūd ilā ṣiḥḥat al-qawl bi-waḥdat al-wujūd* (MS Delhi 277) d. *Ijābat al-sāʾil ʿan mā istashkalahu min al-masāʾil* (MS Delhi 277) *e.* *Itḥāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* (printed version; MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820) *f.* *Kashf al-muntaẓir li-mā yarāhu al-muḥtaḍir* (MS 135/A/19/75)	6
The Ottoman Empires	*a.* *Itḥaf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* (MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820) *b.* *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādith al-nabī al-mukhtār* (MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279) *c.* *Janāḥ al-najāḥ bi-l-ʿawālī al-ṣiḥāḥ* (MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279) *d.* *Niẓām al-zabarjad fī al-arbaʿīn al-musalsala bi-Aḥmad* (MS Landberg 986) *e.* *Maslak al-iʿtidāl ilā fahm āyāt khalq al-aʿmāl* (MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820)	5
The Qasimi Imamate, Yemen	*a.* *Sharḥ al-ʿaqīda allatī allafahā mawlānā al-Imām alʿAllāma al-Mutawakkil ʿalallāh Ismāʾīl b. al-Qāsim riḍwān Allāh ʿalayhimā* (MS Garrett 224Y) *b.* *Takmilat al-qawl al-jalī fī taḥqīq qawl al-Imām Zayd b. ʿAlī* (MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722)	2

The Maghreb	a. *Itḥāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* (MS Arabe 5402) b. *Maslak al-sadād fī masʾalat khalq afʿāl al-ʿibād* (MS Garrett 3867Y) c. *Imdād dhawī al-istiʿdād li-sulūk maslak al-sadād* (MS King Saud University library, nn.) *d. Nibrās al-īnās bi-ajwibat suʾālāt ahl Fās* (MS Laleli 3744) *e. Al-Lumʿa al-saniyya fī taḥqīq al-ilqāʾ fī al-umniyya* (MS Arabe 6826) f. *Bayān al-qawl bi-īmān Firʿawn* (not available to me)	6
Mughal Empire	*a. Ibṭāl mā ẓahara min al-maqāla al-fāḍiha fī mā yataʿallaqu bihi* (MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722) *b. Itḥāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* (MS Delhi 277) *c. Mirqāt al-suʿūd ilā ṣiḥḥat al-qawl bi-waḥdat al-wujūd* (MS Delhi 277) *d. Ijābat al-sāʾil ʿan mā istashkalahu min al-masāʾil* (MS Delhi 277)	4

Table 2. Certain selection of Kurani's writings that are connected to the problems and people in the Islamic world.

Based on on the list in Table 2, in the second part of this dissertation, especially, I will contextualize these writings into different geographical locations, some of which happened in trans-imperial contexts such as the problem of messianic ideas and movements. As Kurani lived and developed his career within the Medinan intellectual community, there are certainly works written by his teacher, Ahmad al-Qushashi (d. 1661), and by those in his close circle, Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji (1691), that closely supported Kurani's intellectual attitude. In this dissertation, I will also use voices of other proponents of Kurani and his Medinan teachings using materials that were written in Arabic and some other non-Arabic Islamic languages in order to "listen to the manuscripts' story."[32] Opponents of Kurani's ideas will also be investigated in order to create

[32] Konrad Hisrchler, *A Monument to Medieval Syrian Book Culture*, 13.

a balanced view to the intellectual career of this Kurdish scholar. Situating some of Kurani's major writings into broader contexts will force us not to employ the current perspective of "the fluorescence of the rational sciences" in the post-classical era exclusively, but engage dynamically with different streams of knowledge that were transmitted, translated, and appropriated to different religious-intellectual milieus.[33] In this dissertation, my aim is to show that various streams of knowledge produced and propagated by Kurani and his proponents bolstered his intellectual and religious authority. We cannot separate the rational sciences or the "intellect" from the religious authority in the portrayal of Kurani and his Medinan intellectual culture strengthened by hadith ideological and Sufi universal authority prevalent in the early modern period.[34]

3. Chapterization

Based on the consideration of the research scope above and the selective paradigm of Kurani's writings, the chapterization of this dissertation will be divided into two parts. In the first part of this thesis, I will demonstrate the intellectual journeys of Kurani through a chronological perspective from around the 1630s in Ottoman Kurdistan to the first decade of his engagement in Medina in the 1650s and beyond. Following Kurani's routes of education, in other words, is an attempt to investigate the process of transformation that he experienced in the variety of cultural and intellectual settings.

In the first chapter, I will show different routes of intellectual tradition in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo which informed and created 'the first intellectual genealogy' of this Kurdish scholar. By selecting the major figures, books, and their relations, this chapter will offer the way Kurani shifted his religious and intellectual interest during his journeys. I will argue that the intellectual journey of Kurani from Kurdistan to the Ottoman Arab lands facilitated his 'radical' shift from the specialist of the rational sciences to the deep involvement in the Sufi and hadith tradition. His Baghdad experience caused him to enter the period of 'mystical turn' and his Damascene and Cairene scenes affected him to enter into the realm of hadith discourses. This chapter

[33] On "appropriation", see I.A. Sabra, "The Appropriation and Subsequent Naturalization of Greek Science in Medieval Islam."

[34] On hadith and Sufi ideological functions, cf. Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*; Hüseyin Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined*.

will demonstrate how his radical shift prepared him to encounter the Medinan Sufi and intellectual tradition, while at the same time developing his critical philological skills to embark on writing an intellectual project related to a combination between linguistic, theological, and hadith traditions.

With an emphasis on the first decade of his involvement in the Medinan Sufi and intellectual tradition, I will argue in the second chapter that Kurani's engagement in the Medinan context with Ahmad al-Qushashi, his last and foremost teacher in Medina, was the perfection of his pursuing multiple intellectual genealogies that amalgamated two different routes of scholarly traditions: post-Mamluk and post-Timurid intellectual cultures. Kurani's case is one of the best examples to look at the amalgamation of both these traditions that occurred following the inclusion of the Arab lands into the Ottoman Empire in the early sixteenth century, through which the process of knowledge production and transmission was determined by the dispersion of Persianate books and teaching into the intellectual realm of the central and provincial lands, as well as imperial frontiers. In other directions, more hadith scholarship from the post-Mamluk cultural milieu was produced and disseminated to Medina where Kurani perfected his hadith studies that were closely connected to his rigorous reading of classical teachings that he studied from the learned men in Kurdistan. In this chapter, I also show 'philological encounters' between Qushashi in Kurani in the form of writing his theological magnum opus as a lengthy commentarial note of his teacher's poetical treatise.

Following the first part of this thesis, I will turn my focus to the locus of the Medinan intellectual culture, mostly from the late 1650s until the death of Kurani in 1690. This will be determined as the second part of this dissertation which addresses the problem of intellectual networks and the global transmission, connection, contestation, and reconfiguration pertaining to Kurani and his Medinan circle. This part will not use chronological points of view; rather, it will employ a thematic discussion of Kurani's production of writings in Medina related to three bigger contexts: the Ottoman connection, the trans-imperial nexus from the Maghreb to Mughal India, and the Malay world. There are three different chapters in this part: Chapters Three, Four, and Five.

In the third chapter, I firstly aim to scrutinize the political rhetoric during the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the limitations of this reduction by ignoring the Ottoman Arab provinces in

which Kurani, as a Kurdish scholar, contributed to the general picture of the Ottoman intellectual tradition. A particular emphasis on Kurani's hadith scholarship is an important aspect to reinterpret his becoming a celebrated Sunni scholar. His hadith authority, which was established through the Medinan intellectual culture in the post-Mamluk period, formed his Sunni authoritative charisma among not only scholars and students, but also Ottoman elites. Then, the focus of this chapter shifts to the lesser-known connections of hadith discourse to the Ottoman elites in Constantinople where Kurani played a particular role in the circulation of hadith discourses. I will argue that this Sunni authority, as endorsed by the superiority its hadith discourses, contributed to the extension of Kurani's role in both the informal and formal intellectual networks among Ottoman elites and scholars.

The fourth chapter will present the trans-imperial contexts in which Kurani and his Medinan circle engaged in a productive way to pen a variety of polemics and controversies that occurred in more transregional structures. There will be a discussion how the establishment of the Zaydi Qasimi Imamate in southern Arabia encouraged Kurani to critique the ideological and theological foundations of the Zaydi community and politics in Yemen in order to defend Ottoman Sunnism. Then, messianic currents throughout the gun powder empires urged him and his coreligionists to rearticulate a form of proper Sunni orthodoxy to support Ottoman sovereignty. Furthermore, this chapter will take the polemical case triggered by the writings of Kurani in the cultural terrains of the Islamic Mediterranean Sea. I will argue that religious difference in multiple transregional structures motivated and created Medinan intellectualism in which Kurani's scholarly career was colored by a series of extensive connections and contestation.

In the fifth chapter, this thesis will take a closer look at the close connections between Kurani and his Medinan circle and the Malay world. This chapter will first analyze historical and semantical terms written in the corpus of writings of Kurani related to maritime Southeast Asia. This will be followed by a brief description of Kurani's proponents in the region. Three cases of discussions in this chapter will focus on Kurani's engagement to legal-theological questions, perpetual political and intellectual conflicts that happened since the early sixteenth century, and an endorsement to create a culture of tolerance that facilitated the religious communities in the region towards a new crystallization of Islamic knowledge. I will argue that Kurani's encounters with the scholars, nobles, and students from the Malay world considerably strengthened his intellectual and Sufi authority through a symbiotic process of knowledge production in which Kurani's

thought and texts were disseminated, translated, and adopted in the furthest east of the Islamic world. The incorporation of the variety of agents across the Malay world into the Medinan intellectual culture finally contributed to the creation of long-distance proponents who 'translated' a mode of religious tolerance bolstered by Kurani's thought.

Part One

Intellectual Genealogy and the Search for Knowledge

Chapter One

Before the Medinan Episode

Ibrahim al-Kurani's Intellectual Journey through Shahrizor and Ottoman Arab Cities

Try even a hundred different things in this world –
It is love alone that will free you from your Self.
Do not turn from love of a fair-face, even if it be metaphorical [*majāzī*],
Though it be not Real [*ḥaqīqī*], it is a preparatory.
For, if you do not first study "A" and "B" on a slate,
How, then, will you take lessons in the Qur'an?
It is said that a disciple went to a Sufi master
That he might guide him upon his journey:
The master said, "If you have not yet set foot in the realm of love;
Go! First, become a lover—and only after that come back to us!
—**Nur al-Din Muhammad Jami (d. 1492)**[35]

This chapter aims to explicate the settings of Sunni Islamic learned tradition in the seventeenth century by focusing on the space and time of Ibrahim al-Kurani's early biographical narratives in Shahrizor (1616-1645) and his initial travel to Mecca, through an unforeseen series of learning activities in various Ottoman Arab cities including Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo for approximately six years (1645-1651). It is then continued with the Medinan episode of Kurani's reading and writings in the first decade (the 1650s), the subject of the ensuing chapter. Although the chapter employs a chronological narrative of Kurani, it attempts to investigate the cultural atmospheres in these cities which attracted and informed him during his intellectual journey. By doing so, it can facilitate the interpretation of the broader milieu of scholarly cultures through the lens of Kurani's personal upbringing and inquiries. Nevertheless, only prominent teachers are elaborated upon in this chapter to specifically highlight the macro-analysis of Kurani's intellectual genealogies. While Shahrizor infiltrated Kurani's exceptional interests in philosophical and linguistic studies, further, yet somewhat unexpected, journeys to Baghdad, Cairo and beyond, will be elaborated in the next chapter, as the final route to Medina resulted in radical shifts in his own

[35] *Mathnavi-yi Haft Awrang*, translated by Shahab Ahmed, *What is Islam?*, 38.

career: from the mystical turning towards deep engagement with the prophetic tradition. Altogether, these shifts anticipated Kurani's writing style and intellectual approaches by means of his multiple intellectual genealogies.

1.1. Pursuing the Rational Sciences in Shahrizor, the Imperial Frontier

The Kurds, with whom Ibrahim al-Kurani is ethnically identified, had integrated into the Islamic community since the classical period. Many are recorded as important figures who inhabited the urban culture of Islamic metropolises. They participated in the Islamicate cosmopolis, and some were even largely forgotten as members of Kurdish societies. Over the course of a millennium, they occupied a variety of significant roles within numerous social strata. They were characteristically identified when they inhabited their own territory, which was known as *arḍ al-akrād* in Arabic or its Persian cognate *kurdistān*, situated at the present-day intersections between Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. As demonstrated by Martin van Bruinessen, numerous majestic madrasas were established during the medieval period and with the stipulation that they be maintained independently by the Kurds. A number of artifacts from this period have been unearthed in various cities across Anatolia and Iraq, including as Diyarbakir, Hisn Kayfa, Miyarfaqin (Silvan), Mardin, Mosul, and Erbil.[36] Members of the Artukid dynasty, for instance, established Sitti Radviye (also known as Hatuniye) and the Zinciriye in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, respectively, and several other madrasas in Mardin and the Mesʿudiye madrasa in Diyarbakır between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Zinciriye madrasa in Diyarbakır is attributed to either to a twelfth-century Artukid or a thirteenth-century ruler of the Ayyubid dynasty. Subsequent dynasties that governed the region erected their own madrasas.[37] Molla Gürani (d. 1488), a fifteenth-century Sunni scholar who became the mentor of Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror was educated within this system.[38] In general, the objective of these formal madrasas was to educate individuals who would occupy the highest ranks of scholars, thereby qualifying them for positions as judges (*qāḍī*), jurisconsult (*muftī*), or teacher (*mudarris*). The establishment of the Otto-

[36] Bruinessen, *Mulla, Sufis and Heretics*, 39-43; 46-47.
[37] Bruinessen, *Mulla, Sufis and Heretics*; Bruinessen (Eds.), *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbakır*, 45-52.
[38] Molla Gürani's identity, education, and his integration into the Ottoman system is analyzed in chapter one of Helen Pfeifer's *To Gather Together: Cultural Encounters in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Literary Salons*.

man state incorporated these madrasas under the newly centralized bureaucratization with an irrevocably fixed curriculum and career designs that facilitated vertical mobility of students and teachers across imperial positions or locations.[39] During this new imperial polity, Molla Gürani and other prominent Ottoman Kurds in the early modern period thus were differently recorded within the biographies of Arab, Turkish, Persian, and Kurdish ulama, irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds. The practice of writing these records provides evidence that the Kurdish scholars were dynamically mobile, as was the case with many premodern Muslim scholars. Following their new residency, the onomastics (*nisba*) related to their Kurdish identities usually changed.

It should be noted, however, that there is an exception to this general circumstance. It would appear that political autonomy was established within the administration of the Ottoman Empire, with the educational system also following the same trajectory. The rulers of the Kurdish emirates, which retained autonomy as Ottoman vassal states (*hükumets*) within the empire, established their own madrasas, which managed their own curriculum and career patterns. Notable among these educational hubs were the madrasas of Bitlis, Cizre, and Ahmadiye. With regard to Islamic jurisprudence, the curriculum of these distinctive madrasas predominantly adopted the Shafi'i School of Law, which constituted the predominant school among the Kurds. However, the presence of other schools, primarily Hanafi, but to a lesser extent Maliki and Hanbali, existed in some parts of the Kurdish region.[40] Additionally, Bruinessen illustrates another distinctive aspect of this autonomy. The Kurdish language first emerged in the seventeenth century and originated within these Kurdish madrasas, where numerous authors were able to achieve the revival of Kurdish literature. The preceding generation of writers had primarily composed their oeuvres in Arabic or Persian. The Kurdish literary revival included the works of Molla Ahmad Ceziri (Melaye Ehmede Ceziri) who taught at the Read Madrasa (Medrese Sor) of Cizre. He is the author of a renowned divan of Kurdish metaphysical poetry that has often been compared with that of the Persian poet Hafez. One of his Persian poems, "I am the rose of Eden of Botan; I am the torch of the knights of Kurdistan," has retained its popularity to the present day. Ahmad-i Khani (or Ehmede Xani, d. 1707) adapted a popular romance, *Mem u Zin*, into his epic poem of the same name. Perceived as a great literary achievement, the poem is notable for its multiple layers

[39] Bruinessen, *Mulla, Sufis and Heretics*; Richard Repp, "Some observations on the development of the Ottoman learned hierarchy."

[40] Bruinessen et al. (eds.), *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbakır*, 48-49.

of meaning and was adopted as the Kurdish national epic. This was inspired by the famous Kurdish epic *Mame Alan*. *Bayt-i Dimdim* recounts the Persian-Safavid blockade of the Kurdish stronghold of Dimdim in 1609-1610 and is commonly measured as a national epic, second only to *Mem u Zin* in significance. Additionally, Khani authored two elementary texts for teaching: an Arabic-Kurdish dictionary in verse form, titled *Nubihar*, and a simple cathecism in Kurdish, *Eqida Iman*. The works of Ceziri and Khani represent the pinnacle of this genre, yet neither can be considered a singular exemplar.[41]

In addition to the general feature of Kurdish ulamalogy emerging within such madrasas, Kurdish scholars archieved particular renown as the disseminators of philosophical sciences in the premodern Islamic world. During the post-classical period, roughly between 1200 and 1800, historical accounts on the lives of Kurdish scholars are not uncommon, but hitherto largely underexplored. The *Seyahatname* of Evliya Çelebi only captured incomplete pictures of the educational system in Diyarbakır, but not in other parts of Kurdistan. The eastern part of Kurdistan was independently controlled in terms of political and cultural affairs, mainly due to the challenging topography, which the Ottomans likely considered a significant obstacle to direct rule. This was influenced by the policies of the Safavids prior to the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514. Evliya, for instance, noted the presence of different madrasas in Diyarbakır, the majority of which appeared to specialize in a specific branch of Islamic disciplines, including the art of Arabic eloquence, rational theology, jurisprudence, monotheistic belief, and Quranic exegesis.[42] He provided an ambiguous account of philosophical inclinations of the Kurds, especially in eastern Kurdistan. However, a more precise portrayal of this phenomenon was subsequently offered by by another scholar and historian, Katip Çelebi (d. 1657):

[41] Bruinessen, *Mulla, Sufis and Heretics*, 48; M. Gunter, *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds*, 85, 200-201. Among the earlier generation of Kurdish writers includes: (1) the thirteenth-century historian Ibn al-Athir who wrote in Arabic; (2) Idris Bitlisi, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, wrote *Hasht Bihisht* (The Eight Paradises) in Persian to trace the early history of the Ottoman sultans [for the recent scholarship, see C. A. Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Kingship in Late Medieval Islam*]; (3) Sharaf Khan Bitlisi's *Sharafnāma* written in Persian, a history of the Kurdish dynasties up to the end of the sixteenth century; (4) The abovementioned Melaye Ceziri was a renowned Sufi poet; (5) Abu al-Fida, the famous fourteenth-century Islamic historian and geographer; (6) Fuzuli (d. 1556), the great poet of the Turkish language; (7) Eli Heriri; (8) Mele Ahmed of Bate; and (9) Mir Mihemed of Mukis, surnamed Feqiye Teyran, a disciple of Melaye Cizri.

[42] Bruinessen, *Evliya* eds., 45-48.

> From the beginning of the Ottoman Empire till the time of the late Sultan Suleyman whose abode is Paradise, scholars who combined the study of the sacred sciences with that of philosophy were held in high renown. The Conqueror, Sultan Mehmed, had built the Eight Imperial Colleges, and had written in his endowment deed 'Let the work be carried on in accordance with the *qānūn*', and had appointed lessons in the 'Notes on the *Tajrīd*' and the 'Commentary on the *Mawāqif*', those who came after put a stop to these lessons, as being 'philosophy', and thought it reasonable to give lessons on the *Hidāya* and *Akmal.* But as restriction to these was not reasonable, neither philosophy nor *Hidāya* nor *Akmal* was left. Thereupon the market for learning in Rum (Constantinople and Anatolia) slumped, and the men of learning were nigh to disappearing. Then the novices of scholars who were working 'in accordance with the *qānūn*' in some outlaying places, here and there in the land of the Kurds, came to Rum and began to give themselves tremendous airs. Seeing them, some capable men in our time became students of philosophy. As a student, I, the humble writer of these lines, in the course of discussion and study, was encouraged by some men of talent, as Plato was encouraged by Socrates, to acquire of the truths of things.[43]

In the text, Katip Çelebi underscores the scholars from the land of the Kurds who migrated to the newly established capital of the Ottoman Empire and introduced the study of philosophy, which subsequently became a prominent area of interest within the Ottoman educational curriculum. Many were instructed by them in the principles of *falsafa*, thereby fostering a novel interest in reviving this among the literati of Istanbul. Even Çelebi employs the analogy of Greek philosophers to elucidate this new environment. This phenomenon persistenly occurred in Kurdistan until the seventeenth century. Ibrahim al-Kurani was born and raised in an environment permeated with philosophical discourse. He pursued advanced studies in his early thirties, at which point he had already established himself as a prominent figure in his hometown.

Ibrahim al-Kurani, son of the esteemd scholar Hasan b. Shihab al-Din, was born in Shawwal 1025 AH, or October 1616 AD. He was a member of a distinguished scholar family in Shahran (Persian: *Shārānī*), situated within the region of Shahrizor (Persian: *Shah-razur*, literally 'kingly

[43] Lewis, *The Balance of Truth* (*Mīzān al-ḥaqq*), 26; *Mīzān al-ḥaqq fī-khtiyār al-aḥaqq*, 10-11; cf. Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 56-67.

forest'[44]). The region encompasses a vast expanse of valleys and mountains, situated between Erbil in the north and Hamedan in the southeast. The anthroponym of 'Kurani' is believed to have originated from one of three prominent Kurdish subethnics: the Goran,[45] located in Shahrizor, Dinawar, Kermanshah and Hamedan. This information has been documented by various Kurdish authors, including Bitlisi.[46] In Perso-Turkish appellation, the anthroponym of 'Kuran' is written as *Gūrān*, which has been Arabicized as *Kūrān*. Ibrahim al-Kurani is also known/written as Ibrahim Gürani in numerous Turkish libraries, without the definitive article *al-*. One of the most salient characteristics of the Guranis or Kuranis, which is regarded as a defining feature among Kurds due to their perceived distinction from the Kermanj and the Lors is their inclination towards religious belief. The Gorani people adopted Gnostic Yarsanism, a syncretic religion founded in the fourteenth century by Soltan Sahak in western Persia. It is popularly called *Ahl-i ḥaqq*, which translates to "People of Truth" or "People of the Universal Spirit".[47] In general, the mystical tendency among the Guran people, including those in Shahrizor, has been a primary indicator that Sufi teachings were gradually introduced to them. During this early seventeenth century frontier era, Islam began to exert a more significant penentration than it had during the previous era, when the majority of people had embraced Yarsanism. Given its location along the porous border between linguistic, cultural, and imperial intersections, it was inevitable that the Kuranis would be identified as part of the Kurdish tribes, which had developed polyglot skills as a result of their longstanding presence within the manifold intersections of different cultures and sovereignties. To summarize, Fuccaro asserts that the Ottoman-Safavid frontier was a dynamic zone of transition, conflict, and imperial governance. It was a region characterized by economic

[44] In another version, *Shahr-i zor* means the city of Zor ibn Dahhak, the classical king of Shahrizor's people; another version mentioned that Shahrizor is one of the names of Azerbaijani rivers. See Ibn Tayyib, *Nashr al-mathānī*, vol. 3, 5.

[45] *Gūrān* or *Goran* is a word referring to nontribal, farming peasants (or *misken, rayat*) in the present-day Sulaymaniyya, northern Iraq, as a distinguished from tribal Kurds who are soldiers and seldom farm. Meanwhile, Gurani, is a Kurdish dialect or language related to but not automathically compatible with the *Gūrān*. See M. Gunter, *Historical Dictionary of the Kurds*, 100-101. For the linguistics, historical origins of the word *Goran* and the literary production of the region see Vladimir Minorsky, "The Guran."

[46] Shreerin Ardalan, *Les Kurdes Ardalan entre la Perse et l'Empire ottoman*, 23.

[47] Sheerin Ardalan, *Les Kurdes Ardalan entre la Perse et l'Empire ottoman*, 24. More on *ahl-i haqq* among the Guran in southern Kurdistan, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Ahl-i haqq"; ibid, "Veneration of Satan among the Ahl-e Haqq of the Gûrân region".

and cultural exchange, situated within a challenging natural world.[48] The Kurds, with their inclination towards mysticism, inhabited this area, which was marked by fluid boundaries and a parallel reshaping of cultural borders.

Murtada al-Zabidi, the eighteenth-century lexicographer and commentator, citing the common designation of the mountainous region of Kurdistan with abundant foliage, associates the area where Kurani is believed to have matured as a figure "connected with the scholarly community."[49] Zabidi, moreover, mentions several prominent Kurdish scholars, including the hadith scholar of Shahrizor Ibn al-Salah (d. 1245), as well as numerous scholars from the pre-early modern period. In his encyclopedic work, Zabidi mentions only one of the later Kurdish scholars, namely Ibrahim al-Kurani, due to the latter's significant tole in the intellectual genealogy of this Hadrami-Indian scholar, who constituted one of the primary networks networks of Zabidi himself, as well as the prominent Kurdish scholars in the scholarly networks of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[50] Consequently, the Kurdish *mullā* was able to communicate and express himself in a multitude of languages, including his native tongue, Turkish, which held significant importance throughout the Ottoman Empire; Persian, due to its geographical proximity and historical connections to the Persian influence within and surrounding Kurdistan; and Arabic, which became the primary language of religious education and a widely used *lingua franca*. Indeed, all of these languages attest to their interdependence, particularly the primacy of Arabic, which has exerted a pervasive influence on the vocabularies of numerous Islamicate languages. This cultural milieu provided a fertile ground for the upbringing of Ibrahim al-Kurani, a prodigious student of Arabic philology. Furthermore, the nobility of the Kuranis was demonstrated by their elevated status as descendants of scholars, which encouraged Kurani to capitalize on his own ancestral heritage. His father, Hasan b. Shihab al-Din, is documented as having instructed Kurani in the teachings of Qadi ʿIyad (d. 1149) on the virtues of the Prophet. The transmission of this book originated with Arab scholars, which suggests that the father traveled to Ottoman Arab lands. Kurani also received instruction from his uncle, namely Husayn b. Shihab al-Din, who was taught by ʿAbd al-Karim al-Husayni al-Kurani (d. 1641), who, in turn, taught Ibrahim al-

[48] Fuccaro, "The Ottoman Frontier in Kurdistan in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 237.
[49] Murtada al-Zabidi, *Tāj al-ʿarūsh min jawāhir al-qāmūs*, section "Shahrazūr."
[50] For his network see Stefan Reichmuth, *The World of Murtada al-Zabidi*; Nehemia Levtzion & John Voll (Eds), *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*.

Kurani.[51] No records exist that document the specific teachings Kurani received from his uncle. In light of the fact that Kurani's certificate lists the most significant teachers and books he studied, it can be surmised that his early education encompassed the fundamental tenets of Islamic faith, including the manuals of the Shafiʿi School of Law, creed, history, and other related subjects. It seems likely that ʿAbd al-Karim also played a significant role in the religious teachings of Kurani's youth. This would imply that he received some basic religious instruction at an early age, before engaging with more advanced philosophical sciences. According to one source in Medina, Ibrahim al-Kurani was attached to the forum of the Kurdish nobles, as he himself claimed.[52]

The overall idiosyncrasy of Shahrizor during the postclassical period is not readily discernible, as a multiplicity of factors, including social, economic, and political ones, collectively shaped the region in significant ways. Therefore, it is not feasible to present a concise, comprehensive account of the cultural and intellectual trajectory that unfolded in the region. Rather, it should be considered as relatively dynamic due to the mobility of ideas and powers surrounding it. As a frontier between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, Shahrizor witnessed a shift in power dynamics. In the seventeenth century, it emerged as one of the most prominent Kurdish emirates, engaging in conflict with the Safavids. Additionally, the region demonstrated a unique capacity to circumvent the conventional process of social and intellectual encounters. By becoming a cultural sphere without clear borders, it absorbed, appropriated, contested, and reformulated ideas from different streams of Islamic thought and movements. From the time of the Ishraqi philosopher, historian, and physician Shams al-Din al-Shahrazuri (d. 1288) until approximately five hundred years later, Shahrizor witnessed an uninterrupted trajectory of intellectual progress among its community members. This progress extended beyond the confines of the region's interconfessional identities, as evidenced by the contributions of Molla Gürani and Ibrahim al-Kurani, the latter of whom is the *mullā* highlighted here. Due to its strategic location at the crossroads of two Islamic empires, Shahrizor evolved into a cosmopolitan nexus of artistic, cultural, and commercial activity. Subsequent accounts indicate that the region served as a significant hub for Kurdish culture, as evidenced by the numerous madrasas that were constructed there. Until

[51] Kurani, *al-Amam*, fol. 53a. See also Ömer Yılmaz, *İbrâhîm Kûrânî: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Tasavvuf Anlayışı*, 120-1.

[52] Ibn ʿUjaymi, MS F 1744 Dar al-Kutub, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*, fol. 37a.

the nineteenth century, there were even a few Kurdish-speaking communities of Jews, Nestorians, and Armenians who coexisted with the existing Kurdish Muslims.[53] Similarly, the enduring presence of religious dissent, manifested in Sufi or other mystical heterodox beliefs and movements, cannot be overlooked in the broader context of this area.

In the wake of the tumultuous period during which numerous nomadic empires transformed the Kurdish region, particularly between the eras of the Qara Qayunlu and Aq Qayunlu to the nascent Safavid state in the early sixteenth century, the Ottomans exerted control over the majority of Kurdistan and the entirety of the Iraqi region. As Sheerin Ardalan notes in her historical account, Shahrizor has a long history of attracting a diverse array of rebels and schismatics.[54] The uninterrupted confrontation between the Ottomans and the Safavids reached its zenith with the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514, resulting in a challenging situation for the Kurdish local sovereigns. Consequently, they opted for the Ottomans as a means of navigating the complexities of the political landscape. The legal-political disputes between the Sunni Kurds and the Shiʿi Safavids partly encouraged the Kurds to choose their partisanship to the Ottomans.[55] The Kurds gained a special degree of autonomy as a result of their political recognition of Ottoman suzerainty and their engagement in military campaigns against the Qizilbash of the Safavids,[56] as previously mentioned. In the early seventeenth century, the conflict between the Ottomans and the Safavids resulted in a significant and violent depopulation of the border zones. This led to the mass deportation of various ethnic groups, including Kurds, Azeris, Armenians, and Georgians, to the regions of eastern Iran. Furthermore, the Safavids were victorious in quelling a Kurdish revolt in the region of Lake Urmia, an event that was commemorated in the traditional Kurdish ballad, the aforementioned *Bayt-i Dimdim*. Khaled El-Rouayheb[57] then speculates that these bitter conflicts were the probable cause of the migration of numerous Kurdish Sunni scholars to Ot-

[53] Ahmad Muhammad Ahmad, *Akrād al-dawla al-ʿuthmāniyya. Tārikhuhum al-ijtimāʿī wa-l-iqtiṣādī wa-l-siyāsī*, 78-79; cf. Serhat Bozkurt et al., *Osmanlı Kürdistan*, 278-279. On the Syriac Christians under the Kurdish confederacies during the early modern Ottoman Empire, see for instance some information in Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures: The Church of the Eastern Ottoman Provinces (1500-1850)*.

[54] Sheerin Ardalan, *Les Kurdes Ardalan entre la Perse et l'Empire ottoman*, 27-29.

[55] Kazim Habib, *Lamaḥāt min ʿIrāq al-qarn al-ʿishrīn. Al-ʿIrāq mundhu al-iḥtilāl al-uthmānī ḥattā nushūʾ al-dawla al-ʿirāqiyya al-ḥadītha*, 244.

[56] Martin van Bruinessen, *Mullas, Sufis and Heretics: the Role of Religion in Kurdish Society*, 42; Bruinessen (ed.), *Evliya Celebi in Diyarbakir*; Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: the Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*.

[57] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*.

toman Arab territories, particularly Damascus, where Mulla Mahmud taught philosophical sciences transmitted from the Persianate world. In the seventeenth century, a number of Kurdish scholars produced polemical writings that promoted anti-Shiʿite sentiments. These included al-*Yamāniyyāt al-maslūla* by Zayn al-Din al-Gurani (fl. 1659) and *Ghusl al-rijlayn fī radd madhhab al-shīʿa* by Ahmad b. Haydar Husaynabadi (d. 1669) and *al-Nawāfid li-l-Rawāfiḍ* by Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Rasul Barzanji (d. 1691). This genre emerged in response to the Safavid Empire and its politico-ideological proliferation, with the prototype being written by the Persian scholar Mirza Makhdum Sharifi (d. 1587), an intellectual exile from Shiraz who authored *al-Nawāqiḍ li-bunyān al-rawāfiḍ*, at least as manifestly stated in the preamble of Barzanji's polemical work (see also Chapter Four).

The most salient feature of the rational sciences (*funūn al-maʿqūlāt*), which was pervasive in the traditional education in Shahrizor, can be discerned through a multifaceted examination the books of the Persians (*kutub al-aʿājim*),[58] underlining the pinnacle of classical philosophy, popularly known in the post-classical era as *ḥikma* or, to put it completely, *al-ḥikma al-falsafiyya*, in the Persophonic sphere. In northern Iraq, the region of the Kurds saw an increase in the number of Kurdish scholars who were popularly known as philosophical verifiers (*al-muḥaqqiqūn*). An exemplar of this phenomenon is Mulla ʿAli al-Kurani (d. 1664), the imam of the Prophet Jirjis Mosque in Mosul, regarded as one of the most prominent Kurdish verifiers. His contributions to the rational sciences include a gloss on Qutb al-Din al-Razi's (d. 1365) commentary of Qazwini's (d. 1277) *Shamsiyya*, a gloss on the commentary of Saʿd al-Din Taftazani's (d. 1390) *ʿAqāʾid al-Nasafī* on Avicennian logic and theology.[59] This presence represented a diverse cohort of scholars dispersed throughout Kurdistan. Ibrahim Kurani demonstrated an early proclivity for rational theology (*kalām*), logics (*manṭiq*), and philosophy (*falsafa*), as well as geometry (*handasa*), astronomy (*hayʾa*), and other fields of study. In this regard, Ibn al-ʿUjaymi, who designated Kurani as a distinctive scholar of multiple intelligences—rational, literary, scriptural, and spiritual knowledge—noted some details of how Kurani engaged with the rational sciences.

[58] The term *kutub al-aʿājim* introduced by Mulla Mahmud, a leading Kurdish scholar in early seventeenth-century Damascus, was chronicled by Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar fī aʿyān al-qarn al-hādī ʿashar*, 329-330; K. El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 27-28.

[59] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 3, 203.

These sciences were classified within the broader scope of *al-maʿqūlāt*.[60] With regard to geometry and astronomy, two subjects of great importance in the early modern Ottoman time, the Moroccan historian ʿAyyashi reports when he studied Abhari's logic book *al-Hidāya al-athīriyya* in Medina with Kurani, he found that:

> If he read geometry, he did not engage with other sciences until he had acquired its comprehensive understanding. Similarly, he devoted considerable time and attention to astronomy, immersing himself in the subject until he had gained a thorough grasp of its intricacies. This approach was consistently maintained as he pursued further studies in other fields, ensuring a thorough and rigorous examination of each subject.[61]

It is important to note that all branches of the rational sciences were attributed to the formal curriculum of Ottoman *medrese*. However, it is only the rational sciences that Kurani learned from the specific milieu of Shahrizor, especially in the Goran cultural environment.[62] Kurani's cultivation of this field of knowledge ultimately shaped his intellectual trajectory, establishing him as a prominent figure in the dissemination of rational sciences. One of Kurani's earliest and most significant mentors in the field of rational sciences was ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani, the author of a three-volume exegesis on Q. al-Nahl [16], along with numerous other notable writings. Kurani studies with with this scholar, for instance, *Sharḥ al-ʿAqāʾid al-Nasafiyya* by the Persian polymath Taftazani. In addition, ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani instructed Ibrahim al-Kurani the theological works of Mullazada al-Khitaʾi, Mulla ʿAbd Allah Yazdi (d. 1537), Mirza Jan Baghnawi (d. 1586), and Mulla Yusuf al-Kurani (the father of the second prominent teacher of Kurani, see below). ʿAbd al-Karim was the student of Ahmad Mujali whose intellectual genealogy connects to the Shirazi philosopher Jalal-Din al-Dawani (d. 1502). This genealogy establishes Kurani's connection to the primary authority of Islamic philosophy in the early modern period, linking him to the celebrated figure of Dawani. The genealogy can be viewed as follows:

Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1690) ← ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani (d. 1640) ← Ahmad al-Mujali ← Mirza Jan Baghnawi (d. 1586) ← Jamal al-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1554) ← Jalal al-Din al-Dawani (d. 1502)

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[60] For a broader discussion on the books read in the 17th century Islamic Near East, see Katip Çelebi's *Kashf al-ẓunūn.*

[61] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 383; Mustafa al-Hamawi, *Fawāʾid al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 55. *ḥattā yuḥīṭ ʿilmān bi-maqāṣid al-kutub wa-lam yakhtimhu ḥattā yuḥaqqiqahu wa yuḥaqqiqa maʿahu ʿiddata ʿulūm.*

[62] I thank Reza Pourjavady for this insight.

Ahmad Mujali, whose students subsequently engaged with Ottoman scholars, instructed ʿAbd al-Karim, for instance, in the teachings of Dawani's *Ithbāt al-wājib*, a commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn*, and ʿAdud al-Din al-Iji's (d. 1355) commentary on *Mukhtaṣar Ibn al-Ḥājib*.[63] The father of ʿAbd al-Karim, namely Abu Bakr b. Hidayat Allah al-Husayni (d. 1606), penned numerous books, including a three-volume commentary on al-Rafiʿi's (d. 1226) *al-Muḥarrar* in the Shafiʿi School of Law which was widely used in the Kurdish region. Abu Bakr, who was also renowned as a Sufi, authored two books in Persian namely *Sirāj al-ṭarīq* which contains fifty chapters and *Riyāḍ al-khulūd* which contains eight chapters.[64] From this "post-Timurid intellectual lineage," Kurani absorbed "the books of Persians," particularly those from Shirazi contexts in the late medieval era. This Persian lineage is not the sole inheritance ʿAbd al-Karim bequethed to Kurani; the former's genealogy also linked him to Arab scholars, such as the Palestinian-Egyptian scholar Shams al-Din al-Ramli (d. 1596), thereby connecting him to the "post-Mamluk intellectual legacy." Despite its strong connection to the Persianate legacy, the picture of scholarly networks in Kurdistan could not be separated from the Arab regions. This is because scholars traveled and exchanged ideas across different regions in the early modern Ottoman milieus. It can be observed that ideas tend to traverse geographical boundaries in accordance with the movements of scholars and books. In this context, Ibrahim Kurani pursued two distinct lines of genealogy, drawing on either the post-Timurid Persian tradition or the post-Mamluk era, as exemplified by the scholarly transmission of ʿAbd al-Karim Kurani.[65] This circumstance provides an illustration of how a scholar was able to attain a range of credentials that likely enabled him to converge different fields and scholarly authorities. Such credentials subsequently shaped his audacious intellectual persona, which was further elevated by his pursuit of intellectual transmissions from other scholars.

[63] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 474.

[64] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 1, 110. Ibrahim al-Kurani, *Al-Amam*, 129.

[65] Cf. Kurani's genealogy from Ahmad al-Qushashi. For further details regarding Kurani's genealogy from Qushashi, please refer to Chapter Two. I concur with Harith Ramli's assertion that Kurani's intellectual lineage was shaped by influences from multiple directions, extending beyond the conventional East-West movement of intellectual reinvigoration postulated by Khaled El-Rouayheb. It also encompasses the intellectual developments that occurred within Arabic-speaking lands. For further details, please see Ramli, "Ashʿarism through an Akbarī Lens," 375-376. While Ramli mentions Timurid and post-Timurid intellectual developments after analysing El-Rouayheb's book, he does not discuss Mamluk and post-Mamluk intellectual developments.

The second most prominent teacher from Shahrizor in the philosophical sciences is Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani (d. 1667). Muhammad Sharif was closely associated with Kurani, not only in Kurdistan, but also until the latter's advanced career in Medina. Muhammad Sharif made repeated journeys to the Holy Cities from Shahrizor before ultimately settling in an arid-fertile Yemeni city, Ibb, where he continued to instruct students for the remainder of his life.[66] It is likely that he was the individual who inspired Kurani to embark on his own intellectual journey to the Ottoman Arab lands. In addition to teaching in Kurdistan, Muhammad Sharif instructed Kurani in Baghdad and Medina, thereby exemplifying the active mobility of an itinerant Kurdish scholar. Muhammad Sharif authored several important commentaries, including glosses on Nasir al-Din Tusi's (d. 1274) commentary of Ibn Sina's (d. 1037) *al-Ishārāt*, a commentary on Khojazade's (d. 1488) *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, a work trying to arbitrate the philosophical conflicts between Ghazali and the Islamic Neo-Platonists. A commentary tradition on Tahāfut al-falāsifah constituted one of the intellectual projects that stimulated the study of philosophy in the second half of the fifteenth century. This project was endorsed by Emperor Mehmed II the Conqueror and generated further debates in the Ottoman intellectual culture of the sixteenth century.[67] Muhammad Sharif also authored glosses on ʿAli Qushji's *Sharḥ al-tajrīd al-jadīd* and commentaries on Baydawi's (d. ca. 1286) *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-taʾwīl*. His exegesis on Baydawi's *Anwār al-tanzīl* was co-authored with a certain Saʿdi Çelebi al-Rumi al-Makhshi from the first sura until sura Al-Kahf and a certain Mazhar al-Din al-Kaziruni contributed to the remaining suras. It is currently difficult to locate any extant manuscripts of these works in today's manuscript libraries.[68]

Muhammad Sharif's intellectual genealogy, similar to that of other leading Kurdish intellectuals, is rooted in the philosophy of Jalal al-Din Dawani. Kurani devoted himself to studying Dawani's *Sharḥ al-ʿaqāʾid al-ʿaḍudiyya* with two glosses by two prominent inheritors of Dawani, namely Yusuf Kawsaj al-Qarabaghi (d. 1625) and Husayn al-Khalkhali (d. 1604). In his praise of the work, Kurani states that Dawani composed the treatise in accordance with the plain truth, despite the author's contradiction of major opinions. Dawani's success in this endeavour

[66] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athār*, vol. 2, 158; ibid, vol. 4, 280-1; Kurani, *al-Amam*, 16.
[67] Özervarlı, "Arbitrating between al-Ghazalī and the Philosophers: The *Tahāfut* Commentaries in the Ottoman Intellectual Context."
[68] Al-ʿUjaymī, MS D 1744 Dar al-Kutub, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*. I could not trace Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani's manuscripts except one in the Suleimaniyye pertaining to his commentary of Baydawi's *Asrār al-taʾwīl.*

can be attributed to his adeptness in philosophical verification (*tahqīq*).[69] The corpus of Kurani's texts also demonstrates his inclination to challenge the prevailing opinions of previous scholars, exemplifying his commitment to scholarly verification, a stance explicitly reflected in the titles of his works. Both of Dawani's commentators, Qarabaghi and Khalkhali, were the students of Mirza Jan Baghnawi (d. 1587). Baghnawi observed himself as a student of Dawani, with direct tutelage from Jamal al-Din Mahmud al-Shirazi (d. 1554). In his writings, Baghnawi refers to Dawani as his master (*ustādh*).[70] The links between Dawani and Kurani additionally reveal the close connection between Shiraz and the Hijaz, facilitated by the involvement of Kurdish philosophers. This link, in addition to ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani's scholarly lineage, reinforced Kurani's affiliation with the Shirazi philosophical tradition, which is closely aligned with the Avicennian philosophical tradition. Kurani's subsequent journey to Medina served to reinforce this link by enabling him to pursue further valuable credentials, as will be demonstrated. This Shirazi philosophy also exerted a pervasive impact among the Ottoman scholars in Iranian, Ottoman, and Mughal settings during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[71] The genealogy is illustrated as follows:

Ibrahim al-Kurani ← Muhammad Sharif b. Yusuf al-Kurani (d. 1670) ← Yusuf al-Kurani ← Ibrahim al-Hamadani (d. 1617) ← Mulla ʿAbd Allah Yazdi (d. 1537) ← Jamal al-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1554) ← Jalal al-Din al-Dawani (d. 1502)

In 1643 while still in Shahrizor, Muhammad Sharif introduced Ibrahim al-Kurani to a plethora of books including *Risālat al-ithbāt* of the renowned Mulla Sadra (d. 1635), *Risālat ithbāt al-wājib al-jadīda* of Dawani, and *Risālat al-ithbāṭ al-wājib* of Husayn al-Khalkhali.[72] Muhammad

[69] Kurani, *Ḥāshiyya ʿalā sharḥ al-ʿaqāʾid al-ʿaḍudiyya*, MS Nurosmaniye 2126, fol. 1b. *Bi-annahu ittabaʿa fīhi al-ḥaqq al-ṣarīḥ wa-in khālafa al-mashhūr wa-akhadha bi-muqtaḍā al-dalīl wa-in lam yusāʿidhu maqālāt al-jumhūr wa-hādhā lā yataʾtī illā li-man ruziqa al-taḥqīq.*

[70] Habiballah Baghnawi, known as Mirza Jan, was an Ashʿari theologian, logician, and mathematician from Baghnaw, Shiraz, Iran. See Reza Pourjavady, "Baghnawī, Ḥabīballāh."

[71] Reza Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran*, especially "Introduction"; Reza Pourjavady, "Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī (d. 908/1502), Glosses on ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Qushjī's Commentary on Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's *Tajrīd al-Iʿtiqād*"; Judith Pfeiffer, "Teaching the Learned"; Rosabel Ansari, "Ibn Kemal, Dawanī, and the Avicennian Lineage"; see the Catalogue of Library belongs to Sultan Bayezid II, MS Török F. 59, fols. 56a-68a.

[72] *Al-Sayyid* Husayn al-Khalkhali, called as one of the verifiers (*muḥaqqiqūn*), taught a Kurdish scholar namely ʿAbd al-Karim b. Sulayman b. ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Kurani (who was different from ʿAbd al-Karim, Kurani's

Sharif also taught Kurani in a range of significant canons within the post-classical Islamic curriculum, including the commentary of *Adāb al-baḥth*, the commentary of Abhari's (d. ca. 1262-1265) *Hidāyat al-ḥikma* and the related commentaries written by Mullazade and al-Mubidi, the commentary of *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* by Khojazade, al-Samarqandi's (d. 1310) *Ashkāl al-taʾsīs*, the commentary of al-Jaghmini (d. 1344), *al-Zawrāʾ* and its glosses by Dawani, the entire commentaries of *Eisagoge* by Molla Fenari and the glosses upon it, Qutb al-Din al-Razi's commentary on *al-Shamsiyya* along with its glosses by Sharif al-Jurjani and other authors, the commentary of *al-Mawāqif*, Ghazali's (d. 1111) *al-Iḥyā*, and Ibn ʿArabi's (d. 1240) *al-Futūḥā al-Makkiyya.* From this example of books that Kurani learned, it is evident that Muhammad Sharif was the most influential, having likely sparked Kurani's enduring fascination with Islamic philosophy and theology, particularly during his formative years in Kurdistan and throughout his time in Medina, where their relationship persisted until the 1660s. One of Mulla Sadra's works, the prominent Safavid philosopher in the early seventeenth century, seems to have been read through Muhammad Sharif, despite the scarcity of evidence. The precise nature of the intertextual connection between Mulla Sadra and Kurani remains uncertain. Meanwhile, both have been regarded as two giants, one in the context of Shiʿi thought and the other in Sunni theology. From the second distinguished teacher, Kurani also acquired knowledge of Quranic exegesis, probably that of Baydawi and other *tafsīr* traditions, particularly with its rational explication, since the teacher also composed glosses on the medieval Persian exegete.[73] Kurani followed in the footsteps of his scholarly mentor and the inner networks of the Kurdish diaspora.

In addition to Islamic philosophy and theology, other fields are mentioned in the early formation of Kurani's education. Kurani, for instance, studied Arabic, rhetoric (*maʿānī*), semantics (*bayān*), and the philosophy of Islamic law (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). With ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani, he read all branches of Arabic language, logics, and Islamic theology. Moreover, he studied Quranic exegesis with high praise and pursued certificates. Regarding Muhammad Sharif, he is reported as "The shaykh that he (Kurani) frequently referenced and relied upon in the exoteric sciences" and under whom "he studied numerous books in the rational sciences."[74] In addition to theoretical

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teacher). Khalkhali's books include *Ḥāshiyya al-ʿIṣām ʿalā al-Bayḍāwī* in addition to *Risālat al-ithbāt al-wājib*. See Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 122.

[73] Note that the father of Muhammad Sharif, namely Yusuf al-Kurani (d. unknown), also penned *Ḥāshiya ʿalā tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*. He learned in Hamedan and among his works include *Ḥashiya ʿalā ḥāshiyat al-Khiyālī ʿalā sharḥ al-ʿaqāʾid, and Ḥāshiya ʿala al-Khiṭāʾī, and Ḥāshiya ʿalā tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*. He also authored books on logic and other disciplines. See, Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 4, 508.

[74] ʿAyyashi, *Itḥāf al-akhillāʾ*, 130; Harith Ramli, "Ashʿarism through an Akbarī Lens," 377.

aspects of knowledge, Kurani learned the Shafiʿi School of Law, which certainly was widely disseminated among the Kurds, as evidenced by the commentary of *al-Muḥarrar*, authored by ʿAbd al-Karim's father, which served as a standard reference for Kurdish students seeking to comprehende the minutiae of the legal tradition. An examination of these fields, including the Shafiʿi legal tradition, in Kurani's intellectual accounts in Kurdistan reveals a less pronounced emphasis compared to his tendency to stress the philosophical tradition in the region. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to assume that the absence of detailed emphasis on these rational fields indicates a lack of interest or understanding. It is probable that all these fields were introduced as part of the common curriculum. However, only the philosophical sciences have been relatively well-documented in archives and manuscripts and have become a crucial point of intellectual recognition.

In contrast to the rational and transmitted sciences emphasized by Kurani, two domains of knowledge in early modern Kurdistan are comparatively inconsequential, if not entirely irrelevant. These are hadith and Sufism. Kurani's scholarly memoir and credentials illustrate his youthful skepticism regarding these two fields, which he paradoxically pursued with the guidance of high authority at a later stage of his career. With regard to hadith, for example, Kurani is on record as stating, "I did not think that the study of would yield tangible results in this worldly life – someone could even proclaim *ḥaddathanā wa akhbaranā* – until I had the opportunity to gain first-hand experience in the Arab regions including Levant, Egypt, and Hijaz."[75] Prior to pursuing knowledge outside of his hometown, Kurani's lack of experience with the particulars of hadith sciences reflects the relative triviality of the advanced transmitted sciences (*al-manqūlāt*) within the entire curriculum in early modern Shahrizor. Another illustration of his uncertain attitude towards Sufism can be reflected as follows: "I believe that no one studies, writes, or practices it except in accordance with what is written in books or what is believed by those who live in the mountains (the Kurds)." [76] This reference is to the mystical belief of *ahl-i haqq* that the Kurds espoused, though it was not embraced by the learned in Shahrizor. In conclusion, this evidence supports the hypothesis that the development of the transmitted sciences and Sufism in classical Kurdistan remains uncharted territory. As demonstrated in the following list, Kurani's reading of Sufi texts by Ghazali and Ibn ʿArabi could yield disparate interpretations. Yet, these

[75] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 384; Hamawi, *Fawāʾid al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 55.

[76] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿasyyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 384. *Illā mā fī buṭūn al-dafātir aw mā ʿinda al-munqaṭiaʾa fī ruʾūs al-jibāl*.

texts primarily address a rational tradition, not always connected to Sufi practices or rituals. The provenance of Muhammad Sharif's teachings is not always evident, for instance, the precise location where Kurani acquired Ghazali and Ibn ʿArabi Sufi texts, whether in Kurdistan, Baghdad, or Medina—the convergence points between the two traditions.

During the late Mamluk and early Ottoman periods, there is a paucity of documented evidence attesting to the existence of Kurdish scholars who were regarded as authoritative in the fields of hadith and Sufism. They primarily engaged in the pursuit of rational sciences, which Kurani had the opportunity to experience and train in during his youth. Despite his remarkable memory, which enabled him to recall entire books' worth of information,[77] Kurani did not prioritize the memorization of hadith and Sufi lineage, which were not considered significant areas of interest among Kurdish scholars, at least in Shahrizor. This does not imply that hadith should be disregarded entirely. It remains a crucial source of Islamic law, the second most important after the Quran, thoughout the Islamic lands. One indication that Kurani engaged in the study of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* with the guidance of Kurdish scholars is evident in his contemporary, hadith scholar Salim b. ʿAbd Allah al-Basri's account,[78] particularly in his *al-Amam* that Muhammad Sharif taught the hadith canon with a certificate from the Yemeni jurist Muhammad b. ʿAli al-Hakami, who was himself a student of the Meccan Shafiʿi scholar Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 1566). Nevertheless, the people of Shahrizor did not prioritize the in-depth study of hadith or its transmission to the early community of believers. The situation was markedly distinct from that of Damascus, Cairo, and Medina, which constituted the most significant triangle of the post-Mamluk tradition in the study of hadith up to the early modern period and beyond. Kurani's confession during his three-decades experience in Kurdistan evidently prompted him to pursue the knowledge he had not acquired during his formative years.

At approximately twenty-nine years of age, Kurani set out to perform the Hajj, a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, in gratitude for his achievements in education and personal life. This was a symbolic gesture of gratitude to God with his pursuit of advanced degrees and the establishment of a successful personal life. His itinerary included a visit to the tomb of the Prophet in Medina, after which he planned to return to his hometown. It appears that he had no substantial intention

[77] This assertion was made by Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani as told by Kurani's student and close circle, Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Rasul al-Barzanji (d. 1691), see ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿasyyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 384.

[78] Salim b. ʿAbd Allah b. Salim al-Basri, *Kitāb al-imdād bi-maʿrifat ʿuluww al-isnād*, 48-9.

of pursuing further studies or employment opportunities outside of his hometown. This itinerary permitted him to embark on his journey to Baghdad, the most proximate urban center, situated in the southern region of Shahrizor, a distance of less than three hundred kilometers. The hajj travel plan occurred in 1645, probably with the caravan of Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani, who was traveling in 1645. Kurani and his brother followed him, although it will be demonstrated shortly that they did not follow Muhammad Sharif directly. Meanwhile, in that year, Muhammad Sharif resided in the Holy Cities for two years before returning to Shahrizor.

NAME OF TEACHERS	BOOKS	GENRE
ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani	1. His three volume-glosses of Baydawi's Quranic *tafsīr*	Exegesis
	2. Works of al-Taftazani (including *Sharḥ al-ʿaqāʾid al-nasafiyya* and *Sharḥ al-mukhtaṣar li-l-talkhīṣ*) and the glosses of Mullazade al-Khitaʾi and ʿAbd Allah al-Yazdi and Mirza Jan Baghnawi and Yusuf al-Kurani	Rational theology
	3. not listed	Various books on Arabic linguistics, rhetoric, logic, rational theology, and legal philosophy
Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani	1. Sadr al-Din Muhammad al-Shirazi's *Risālat ithbāt al-wājib*	Philosophy
	2. Jalal al-Din al-Dawani's *Risāla ithbāt al-wājib al-jadīda*	Philosophy
	3. Husayn al-Khalkhali's *Risāla ithbāt al-wājib*	Philosophy
	4. Jalal al-Din al-Dawani's *Sharḥ al-ʿaqāʾid al-ʿaḍūdiyya* and two glosses by Yusuf al-Qarabaghi and Husayn al-Khalkhali	Philosophy
	5. *Sharḥ adab al-baḥth*	Art of disputation
	6. *Sharḥ hidāyat al-ḥikma*	Logic
	7. Sharḥ *Mullāzāde*	Rational theology
	8. *Sharḥ al-Mubīdī*	Rational theology
	9. *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* by Khojazade	Philosophy
	10. *Ashkāl al-taʾsīs* by al-Samarqandi	Geometry
	11. *Sharḥ al-Jaghmīnī*	Geometry

12.	*Al-Zawrāʾ* and its glosses by Jalal al-Dawani	Philosophy
13.	Mulla Fanari's *Sharḥ Īsāghūjī* and its *Ḥāshiya al-Burhān*	Logic
14.	*Sharḥ al-Shamsiyya* with glosses by Jurjani and other scholars	Logic
15.	*Sharḥ al-mawāqif*	Rational theology
16.	*Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*	Ethics, jurisprudence
17.	*Al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*	Philosophical Sufism
18.	*Al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*	Hadith
19.	*Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-taʾwīl*	Exegesis
20.	His own writings	Rational theology
21.	Jurjani's *al-Maṭāliʿ al-anwār* and its glosses, a commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn*, and *Ḥāshiya Mullā Dāwud al-Harwī*	Rational theology
22.	Other works by Juwayni, Ghazali, Iji, Taftazani and Jami	Rational theology

Table 3. Reported books read by Kurani in Kurdistan[۞]

1.2. Baghdad and the "Mystical Turn"

Hamawi's biographical information indicates that Ibrahim al-Kurani initially sought only to perform the hajj pilgrimage through the gate of Baghdad. His plan entailed a return to Shahrizor. This phase eventually determined Kurani's spiritual linchpin for the remainder of his life. The narrative subsequently asserts that: Kurani took a brief respite in Baghdad, where he and his younger brother, ʿAbd al-Rahman,[79] awaited the arrival of any caravans destined for Mecca. One

[۞] The books read by Ibrahim al-Kurani from his teachers, as detailed in this chapter and the longer list in Appendix 1, have been extracted from Kurani's *Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam* and *Ijāzatnāme,* as well as Ibn ʿUjaymi's *Khabāyā al-ẓawāyā*, MS F 1744 Dar al-Kutub, fols. 37a-37b.

[79] ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Shihab al-Din al-Kurani learned from his brother, Ibrahim al-Kurani, Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani, and several others. He subsequently undertook further studies in Syria and Egypt, following in Kurani's footsteps. In Cairo, he engaged in studies at the Azhar Mosque's study circle, including the forums of Shihab al-Din al-Qalyubi and Sultan al-Mazzahi, the latter of whom also transmitted hadith to Kurani. He subsequently undertook a journey to the Haramayn, where he engaged in studies under the tutelage of ʿIsa al-Maghribi, among other prominent scholars in Medina. It is reported that ʿAbd al-Rahman led an ascetic lifestyle, foregoing any form of financial gain through teaching or other professions. Consequently, his friends visited him at regular intervals, approximately

day, the two siblings joined a caravan, but then ʿAbd al-Rahman fell ill unexpectedly. The brother encouraged Kurani to return to Baghdad. Upon observing his sibling's diminished strength and resolve to return to Baghdad, Kurani was reluctant to depart, particularly given the latter's weakened state and illness. Consequently, they opted to return to Baghdad, effectively precluding the possibility of undertaking the hajj that year.[80] This decision led to a two-year period of residence in the city.

Kurani seems to have been famous among the local inhabitants of Baghdad. They acknowledged the educated person coming from northern Iraq, which was renowned as an area of scholars and mystics. Hence, the people requested him to teach. He honestly confessed that he was not an Arabic native, but he could give diglossic lessons either in Persian or Arabic. Even if there were Turkish students asking him to teach them, he would read books written in Ottoman Turkish with them. The ability to traverse this multilingual culture helped him to adapt to many different people and enabled him to teach in different cultural settings depending on the audience or students he encountered or invited. However, the Arabic language is more attractive to most Muslims because of its eloquence and its central place in Islam. This context is not different from what Kurani thought about the Arabic language as he tried to improve its subtlety since his upbringing in Kurdistan. A temporary teaching invitation from Baghdad residents, despite the dearth of information about the institutional and cultural circumstances of learning in the city, reaffirmed his deep engagement with Arabic linguistics and philology. Hamawi recounts Kurani's testimony, "There is nothing more enchanting to me than the Arabic language."[81]

The importance of Arabic for Kurani not only related to the necessity of compelling himself and his contemporaries for learning and writing scholarly books, but also to the deep process of edification, which in Islam closely enacts the essence of *tahdhīb* 'ethical refinement' rooted in the classical Islamic tradition. This can be perceived primarily from his earlier trainings in almost all obligatory instructions in Arabic language, aspects of its semantics, rhetoric, logics, etc., including perusing the works of the doyen in Arabic such as Ibn Hajib's (d. 1249) *Kāfiya* and

every two days, to deliver daily provisions. He eventually married the daughter of ʿAli b. al-Jamal, yet the couple did not have any children until his demise. See Ibn ʿUjaymi, MS F 1744 Dar al-Kutub, *Khabāyā al-ẓawāyā*, fol. 75a.

[80] Mustafa al-Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*, 56.

[81] Mustafa al-Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*, 57.

Jurjani's (d. 1414) *ʿAwāmil*—based on which Kurani later penned an eloquent commentary.[82] Kurani's mastery in the language is mostly articulated with his prolificity to pen oeuvres on many linguistic aspects of the Arabic language, even intermingled with his theological and hadith points of view. He did not specifically engage with Arabic prosody but maintained his abiding interest in the linguistic thought of Arabic traversed from the schools of classical Baghdad until its dynamic, yet underexplored, discourse in the post-classical period, around the thirteenth century onwards. In the later period of his scholarly commitment, Kurani, for example, composed some commentaries on the classics of Arabic linguistics. One of his earlier writings even advocated a novel approach to the meticulous reading of *lā ilāha illallāh*, a thorough examination of the linguistic aspects and polyvalence of perspectives from other branches of knowledge including hadith and a theological framework. Dawani's short treatise on this topic probably encouraged Kurani to expand on it extensively. The manuscript is entitled *Inbāh al-anbāh fī iʿrāb lā ilāha illallāh*, which was the first manuscript-book project he ever had and began after much reflection during this Baghdad period.[83] Kurani's unobjectionable dedication to Arabic tradition formed his cultural capital, in the Bourdieusian perspective, during his first stint teaching career in Baghdad. He continued to teach until his intellectual journeys took him further afield.

In lieu of a relatively stable city, Baghdad was fairly "peripheral" in the seventeenth-century Ottoman world, especially when compared to other Arab urban landscapes such as Cairo and Damascus. The city could not be separated from the conflicts along the borders of Islamic empires, especifically from the situation of the northern Kurdish borders which were fiercely contested between the Ottomans and the Safavids during the sixteenth century. It was only permanently recaptured in 1638, seven years before the arrival of Kurani in the city. Along with Shahrizor and other Kurdish areas in northern Iraq, Baghdad fomally attained official recognition as the boundary between the Ottomans and the Safavids after the signing of the Treaty of Zohab (also known as the Treaty of Qasr-i Shirin/Kasr-ı Şirin) in 1639.[84] Despite the series of Ottoman attempts to finally wrest control of most of southern Iraq from the Safavid Empire, Baghdad's enormous

[82] Al-ʿAyyashi, *Al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, I, 383. The extant manuscript of this work is recorded at Markaz-i Mutalaʿat-i Qumm, jild-i avval, completed in 1100/1689 (see aghabozorg.ir). This codex was copied during Kurani's life.

[83] Al-Shilli Baʿalwi, *ʿIqd al-jawahir wa-l-durar*, 385.

[84] For a general discussion of Iraq under Ottoman rule, see some chapters in Kazim Habib, *Lamaḥāt min ʿIrāq al-qarn al-ʿishrīn*. On the impact of the treaty of Zohab to Shahrizor's polity, see Sheerin Ardalan, *Les Kurdes Ardalan entre la Perse et l'Empire ottoman*, 49-55.

heritage as the grandiloquent city in antiquity and the classical Islamic period endured only in a minor role. The ruins of its ʿAbbasid legacy, moreover, could not be revived in an age of a different culture and mentality. The Sufi tradition, by contrast, helped to transform this imperial periphery of the Ottoman Empire significantly into a Sufi center, or axis mundi. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Gilani (d. 1116), originally a conventional Hanbali scholar, was remembered posthumously as an axis mundi of his time, even after the infamous Mongol sacking of Baghdad.[85] His tomb continued to play a crucial role in transforming the social topography of Baghdad, appealing to followers of either the Qadiri fraternity or other Sufi networks to visit his grave, commemorating his hagiographic life, namely *manāqib*, which spread across cultures and languages, or creating the tradition of intercession for the pursuit of God's blessings. Nevertheless, Gilani's sainthood is certainly not the sole factor determining the enduring process of the Sufi tradition.

During his time in Baghdad, Kurani took advantage of the opportunity to learn more from Muhammad Sharif. In 1645, it is mentioned that he further studied Baydawi's *Anwār al-tanzīl* upon the guidance of its commentator, namely Muhammad Sharif himself. He eventually read it with a certain Ahmad al-Sanadi, who was called *imām al-ʿāqūliyya*, or the leader of the rational sciences in Baghdad. Besides his fondness for reading and perusing books, Kurani benefitted from his short residency (*mujāwara*) near Gilani's tomb. This phase revealed the change of Kurani, who embarked on a novel interest to fall in love with Sufism of which he had never profoundly immersed himself in before his arrival in Baghdad. "In one night," Kurani admits, "I pondered my life and solitude to be part of the Gnosis (*ahl al-ḥaqq*)… until I asked God in the tomb of Shaykh Gilani to illuminate myself by reforming my soul."[86] Gilani's intercession to God, like the Sufi tradition in general, was crucial to the process of seeking guidance from spiritual forebears. Kurani was assisted to ascertain the path of the truth (*ṭarīq al-ḥaqq*). His perusal of books and his encounter with Gilani's Sufi tradition empowered his intellect to follow a mystical motivation, the very powerful moment that reshaped Kurani's further intellectual steps. This moment gave Kurani pause and directed him toward a radical shift during his intellectual inquiry.

[85] For the depiction of ʿAbd al-Qadir Gilani as the conventional Hanbali scholar and his posthumous portrayal of high Sufi rank, see Pascal Held, *The Hanbali School and Mysticism in Sixth/Twelfth-Century Baghdad*.

[86] Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*.

Kurani's effort to learn from Gilani's Sufi tradition was further reflected in what the Sufi tradition perceived as very intimately personal, yet central notion of dreaming. On dreams and visions, the two-essential process of a spiritual quest, Dina Sajdi, among other scholars, proclaims that "a dream is considered a manifestation and a means of spiritual attainment and functions as a private passageway between the mystic-dreamer and the sources of spiritual authority."[87] Dreaming here can be viewed as visionary intellect that urges its dreamer to attain inspiration in life. After visiting Gilani's tomb, he fell asleep and met Gilani in his dream. He saw that Gilani walked westward from Baghdad. Dreaming is symbolic guidance which produces the bridge of truth, namely *iʿtibār*. In the words of Ibn ʿArabi, "The only reason God placed sleep in the animate world was so that everyone might… know that there is another world similar to the sensory world… Dreams have a place, a locus, and a state. Their state is sleep."[88] On the basis of this dream inspiration, Kurani considered that he should travel westward to Damascus, the city which he identified as "the furthest civilization" (*aqṣā al-ʿumrān*), similar to the notion from Ibn Khaldun in the *Muqaddima* to denote the most prominent urban culture in the Ottoman Arab lands.[89] The philosophical training that Kurani pursued in Kurdistan did not conceal his desire to follow the symbolic apparatus of dreams. His very intention to visit Mecca, hence, was entirely suspended by a series of coincidentally unintentional events which further generated the production of Sufi-based inspirations through visions in dreams, which Marshall Hodgson interpreted as "personal mythic formation."[90] Kurani's travel from Baghdad to Damascus, around eight hundred and fifty kilometres, reflects the "mystical turn" during his brief, yet constitutive, period of sojourn in Baghdad. It was the determining time for him to ponder his intellectual and spiritual inquiries and ultimately enhance more encouragement to pursue advanced studies in Damascus. Seen as a temporary station in Kurani's inquiries, the Baghdad moment is deemed as a *barzakh*, a spiritual isthmus, that led him to a longer and more permanent terminus.

[87] See Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eigteenth-Century Ottoman Levant*, 55; cf. Felek and Knysh (eds.), *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies* and Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam.*

[88] See Knysh, "Introduction," in Felek and Knysh (eds.), *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, 1.

[89] Cf. Shah Wali Allah Dihlawi (d. 1762) in his *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha* employed a different term to denote this, i.e. *irtifāqāt*.

[90] Quoted in Knysh, "Introduction," 2.

1.3. Reaching Damascus, "the Furtherst Civilization"

The habits Kurani usually practiced in Baghdad such as teaching, meeting locals, and immersing in the Sufi life, confidently continued when he reached Damascus. He eagerly practiced teaching and interacted with Damascene natives, in addition to finding a new enclave of Sufi traditional repertoire, namely Ibn ʿArabi (d. 1240), the most celebrated Murcian Sufi master, the resource of emulation for the seekers of divine esoteric truth. Kurani's intellectual appeal during this Damascene moment strongly stimulated his interest to inspect the writings of Shaykh al-Akbar. Similarly, he also learned the fundamental principles of how to catch the utmost desire of people through their utterances, most likely connected to an attempt to relate his scholarly and spiritual station to the way people speak. The rationale of this can be summed up as follows: if someone understands Ibn ʿArabi's treatises, he or she can solve the problem of the people. At least this is what Kurani read from the sayings of earlier Akbarian Sufi masters as quoted by ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Shaʿrani (d. 1565),[91] an Egyptian Shafiʿi scholar and Sufi master, who mentioned that someone who persistently observes Ibn ʿArabi's perpetual teaching would be bestowed with a better understanding of people's utterance and the very solution to their problems. It seems that comprehending the subtle language of the master's obscure writings automatically helps any active readers catch the language of ordinary people. Shaʿrani's utterance at least became a supplementary leitmotiv for Kurani to engage vigorously with the texts, as well as the spirits of Akbarian philosophical Sufism. One who masters the subtlety of mystical-poetical texts, in other words, uncovers both the hidden and the obvious meanings.

Hamawi, himself a resident of Damascus and a student of Kurani, recounted his teacher's attempt in the context of his scholarly activities. It is told that Kurani was one of the ardent readers in discussing both great canons or lesser-known canons of (Arabic) literature, which today should be considered as "the great unread"[92] of post-classical Islamic literature, to describe a body of texts that have, since the time of production, become forgotten, unavailable, less accessible, or underexplored. In addition to his gifted ability in decoding Sufi terminologies, he was able to comprehend Sufi signifiers, uncover their divine secrets, and distinguish their experiential

[91] It probably attributes to the saying of a fifteenth-century lexicographer-cum-Akbarian scholar, Fayruzabadi (d. 1414); see Shaʿrani's *Kibrīt al-aḥmar*; Fayruzabadi, *Al-Ightibāṭ bi-muʿālaja Ibn al-Khayyāṭ*, in *al-Nūr al-abhār fī al-difāʾ ʿan al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, 388. Thanks to Azam Bahtiar for pointing this reference out.

[92] See Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading*, for the context of this terminology in reading the neglected literature in European contexts.

tastes (*adhwāqahum*). This multitalented persona encouraged Hamawi to admit his personal confession, somewhat hyperbolically, that no one in the East or the West was someone like Kurani in the eleventh Islamic century (the seventeenth century AD).[93] The followers and students of Ibn ʿArabi's teachings in the seventeenth century, especially in the Ottoman Arab lands, spread throughout the learning centers, including Cairo, Damascus, and the Holy Cities. Though Ibn ʿArabi died in Damascus, by the seventeenth century the intellectual and spiritual legacy had spread through books and human mobility, as far west as the Maghreb and as far east as *bilād Jāwah*—a popular appellation for Islamic maritime Southeast Asia, or what was interpreted by Snouck Hurgronje as "de Oost-indische Archipel".[94] The circumstances certainly shaped the formation of unity within the geographical complexity of early-modern *umma*, not long before Kurani joined the community of Medina in 1651 where Muslims across Islamic regions flocked. One of the leading masters who was celebrated throughout this multifaceted area was Ahmad al-Qushashi (d. 1661), who gained fame everywhere and whose teachings became a trending topic of casual meetings among the students of Sufism in Damascus. Through the study circle in the city, Kurani developed his endless willingness to deepen Ibn ʿArabi's treatises firsthand with this leading interpreter. Qushashi is chronicled in this period as the savior of the age (*ghawth al-zamān*) and the possessor of gnosis (*ahl al-ʿirfān*).

Kurani's path to meeting Qushashi, whose brief biography and impact will be examined in detail in the following chapter, started from intellectual parlance that took place in Damascus. During the usual *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* study club that Kurani and his colleagues continuously held, a friend of his responded, "I know about this problem [Ibn ʿArabi's texts] from a contemporary scholar in Medina, namely Ahmad al-Qushashi, and he wrote eloquently about this problem. When I came to him, I was astonished." Hamawi's account, though, does not tell us about any Damascene Sufi masters who guided Kurani and his fellows in understanding the *Futūḥāt*. A possible clue related to this problem inclines to address the name of Badr al-Din al-Ghazzi who was the Sufi master and hadith scholar in the city. Another possibility is that Kurani read the texts with his fellows in a more informal fashion. Qushashi's fame as the prominent interpreter of Ibn ʿArabi widely circulated through the study circle, even in Damascus, the center of Ibn

[93] Mustafa al-Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 57. While the hyperbolic nature of Arabic biographies are well-known, but reading Hamawi's reports on Kurani's reading habit implies it is real as it is.

[94] Snouck Hurgronje, "Een Mekkaansch Gezantschap naar Atjeh in 1683," 546. More on this terminology, see Chapter Five.

ʿArabi's legacy itself. In due course, Kurani endeavored to ask those who were familiar with Qushashi's oeuvres. Someone came to Kurani and finally exposed a manuscript copy of Qushashi's *Ḍawʾ* al-*ḥāla fī dhikr Huwa al-jalāla* ("The light of nimbus on remembering Him the Ultimate Sublime"; hereafter: *The Light of the Nimbus*) on how to achieve spiritual enlightenment which was initially treated with his doubts and skepticisn. "When I read it," Kurani favourably responded after reading the writing, "it jolted my intellect… what a bestowal to the shaykh being inherently grasped by the sciences of divine disclosure;[95] therefore, I returned to my soul with censure."[96] Qushashi's manuscript, *The Light of the Nimbus*, impressed Kurani during his deep reading[97] and made him realize that spiritual enlightenment could only be pursued by suspending his suspicious intellect.[98] He even examined the manuscript and copied and collated it with his own hands. Finally, he practiced it. Hamawi, who also consulted the manuscript copied with Kurani's handwriting—in a Damascene scene—witnessed a quire (*kurrāsa*) filled with Kurani's notes. The note explicitly records:

> I performed remembrance, *Huwa Allāh*, "He is the Only God" with the way according to his [Qushashi's] treatise, between the time of Maghrib and ʿIsha, and I was sunk in remembrance, until I reached absence in my heart (*ghayba*) around four hours and uncovered at that time the secrets of angels and their angelic realm, the meanings of names and attributes of God, and a bestowal of spiritually gifted knowledge (*al-ʿulūm al-wahbiyya*), what has overwhelmed intellects by learning it… After observing this treatise, no doubts remain that the author is the only unrivalled one in his age, and this is what I want to seek, as signified by ʿAbd al-Qadir Gilani. Because of this signifier I know the state of his existence.[99]

After recognizing Kurani's experience, Hamawi the reporter consequently read Qushashi's treatise. The endorsement tells the summary of the book that is precisely similar with Kurani's experience on the gradation of sainthood (*walāya*). In short, if someone is bestowed the state of absence (*ghayba*), the result would be divine disclosure (*kushūfāt*) and ultimately spiritual journeys (*al-isrāʾāt al-rūḥāniyya*) occur. According to the text itself, the manual, which contains five ways of dhikr, was created according to the Shattari method practiced by those experiencing the

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[95] *Al-ʿulūm al-laduniyya wa-l-mawāhib al-qudsiyya wa-l-kushūfāt al-ghaybiyya*.

[96] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 386; Hamawi, *Fawāʾid al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 58.

[97] For the meaning of *muṭālaʿa* as "deep reading" see Khaled el-Rouayheb in Sheldon Pollock (ed), *World Philology*.

[98] Ahmed El-Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*, 56.

[99] Hamawi, *Fawāʾid al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 58

divine attraction (*jadhb*), the citation of *Jawāhir-i khams* written by a sixteenth-century Shattari mystic, Muhammad Ghawth Gwaliyori, and Ibn ʿArabi's *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*, then ends with the octagonal diagram of the dhikr *Huwa Allāh* signifying an occultic function.[100] "This is a sign-post from ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Gilani," Kurani murmured about his Sufi inspiration to travel west-ward from Baghdad to Damascus.[101] He further exchanged letters with Qushashi and motivated him to join the Medinan Sufi master.

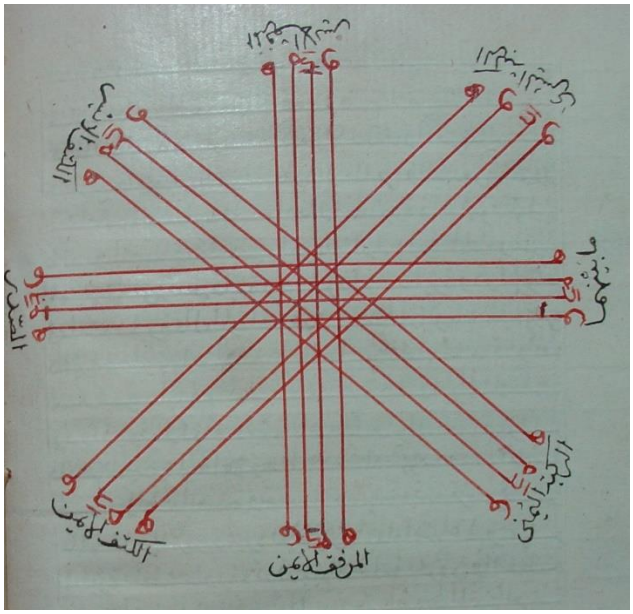

Figure 2. Octagonal diagram in the end of Qushashi's *Ḍawʾ al-hāla fī dhikr Huwa al-jalāla*, MS Medina's Mosque Library nn.

This resilient Sufi narrative of Kurani's Damascus chapter often obsures the alternative narra-tive[102] of how he also benefited from Najm al-Din al-Ghazzi, the son of Badr al-Din al-Ghazzi, for instance, in the study of the hadith canon of Bukhari in addition to other *ijāzas* from ʿAbd al-Baqi b. Faqih Fissah (d. 1661), a prominent Hanbali scholar in the seventeenth century, and his circle. Najm al-Din al-Ghazzi was long known as a Shafiʿi mufti in with high level of transmis-sion to several leading hadith scholars during the post-classical period, including Ibn Hajar al-

[100] Ahmad al-Qushashi, MS Medina's Mosque Library (nn), *Ḍawʾ al-hālah*, fols. 3b, 5b. *Fahādhihi kham kay-fiyyāt min kayfiyyāt al-ʿamal ʿalā mashrab al-shaṭṭār min ahl al-jadhba al-ilāhiyya.*

[101] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿAyyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 386.

[102] See Ibn ʿUjaymi, MS F 1744 Dar al-Kutub, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*.

ʿAsqalani (d. 1449). Ghazzi died in 1651, by which time Kurani had entered Egypt and eventually heard the news.[103] It was between 1649 and 1650 that Kurani had the opportunity to study with Ghazzi.

Originally from Baʿalbek, ʿAbd al-Baqi is of critical importance because through his association with him, Kurani pursued the highest authority of the Hanbali School of Law. In his later writings, Kurani's engagement with the texts of the founder of the school Ibn Hanbal and the Hanbalisis evident. ʿAbd al-Baqi's intellectual and ancestral lineage was entirely affiliated with the Hanbali School of Law. He learned comparative laws, specifically the Hanbali and Shafiʿi Schools of Law among other scholarly forums in Damascus, from a certain Mahmud b. ʿAbd al-Hamid, the descendant of a renowned figure, and was appointed as deputy to a prestigious judgeship (*khalīfat al-ḥukm al-ʿazīz)* in Damascus. ʿAbd al-Baqi also learned and practiced Sufism from his cousin, a certain Nur al-Din al-Baʿli. His intellectual lineage is connected to Ibn Taymiyya, although it is not certain that Kurani began reading Ibn Taymiyya's works from him. In addition to the works of Shaʿrani (d. 1565), ʿAbd al-Baqi is recorded to have taught Kurani a few books penned by Ibn Najjar al-Hanbali (d. 1565), including the voluminous *Muntahā al-irādāt fī jamʿ al-Muqniʿ maʿa al-tanqīḥ wa-ziyādāt* and its commentary. In addition to Kurani, ʿAbd al-Baqi's other prominent students included Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji and his own son, mufti of the Damascene Hanbalis, namely Muhammad Abu al-Mawahib (d. 1714).[104] Clearer evidence demonstrates that Kurani maintained contact with ʿAbd al-Baqi when he resided in Medina and exchanged letters with him. One of the inquiries Kurani asked of this Hanbali teacher was to pen a complete certificate that he taught and transmitted hadith, Quranic readings (*qirāʾāt)*, and legal philosophy, as well as Islamic law. The direct request was taken by Kurani when he revisited Damascus from Medina in January 1654, because his focal point was to inherit a vital assemblage of scholarly credentials from renowned teachers. Hence ʿAbd al-Baqi wrote his book *Riyāḍ al-janna fī āthār ahl al-sunna*.[105] From this book, Kurani is reported to have experienced his Damascene years from 1647-1651 in a college, namely "al-Madrasa al-Badrāʾiyya", where he mingled with a lot of renowned people. The college is mentioned as a

[103] Kurani, *al-Amam,* 130.

[104] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 283-4.

[105] MS Princeton, Garrett 993Y; MS Leipzig, Vollers 727-01 (the Refaiya collection). This *sanad* is of importance especially in the Ottoman Arab lands so that the Damascene prominent scholar ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d. 1731) wrote his note in the end of the MS Princeton, Garrett 469Y, fol. 67a. Other works include an incomplete commentary of Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ* and poems; see Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 283-4.

main locus for training many nobles. Fuller information as to whether Kurani was also socially linked to the Kurdish connection in Damascus, as the presence of Mulla Mahmud in the early seventeenth century proved to be one of the established relations, is not easy to attest. Nevertheless, ʿAbd al-Karim al-Qutbi was a Kurdish scholar in Damascus with a direct relationship to Kurani's teachers including Muhammad Yusuf al-Kurani.[106] Later, in the second half of the seventeenth century, a junior contemporary Gurani scholar working on *falsafa*, namely Ilyas al-Kurani (d. 1726), recognized Ibrahim al-Kurani. Nevertheless, ʿAbd al-Baqi would become an intellectual inspiration for Kurani to write his magnificent intellectual pedigree in the 1670s, *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam*, the assemblage of scholarly credentials unsurpassed in his time and attested to by many scholars.

The saintly signpost after reading Qushashi's *Light of the Nimbus* accordingly invigorated Kurani to travel to Medina and conclude his intellectual curiosity in Damascus. Kurani hence aimed to meet the offices of a certain scholarly institution, *makātibat al-shaykh,* to have some books including certain documents related to his residency and travel dossiers. The road to Mecca, through Damascus, was now rerouted with a more specific direction: encountering Qushashi in Medina. Kurani departed from Damascus and went to Egypt in 1651 by way of Jerusalem and Galilea where he was encouraged to visit sacred sites. In Jerusalem, he met the Ottoman shaykh Minkarizade Yahya Efendi (d. 1678) from whom he gained some knowledge during his brief visit to the city[107]—this event was not mentioned by Kurani in his books, but by oral witness as told to Minkarizade's student Carullah Efendi before his death in 1690. Upon his arrival in Egypt, Kurani had no other purpose than his great passion to meet Qushashi. Consequently, he stayed temporarily for three months, when he honestly declared that he did not meet

[106] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 474. There were certainly Kurdish scholars and communities in Damascus in the second half of the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century that sosiologically helped widen Kurani's networks, including the younger contemporary Mulla Ilyas al-Kurani who also wrote some works on the rational sciences. Ilyas al-Kurani in 1127/1715 noted after following the colophon of Ibrahim al-Kurani's *Ijāzatnāme*, MS Esad Efendi 3626, fols. 23a-23b, his short scholarly vitae one of which was connected to Mulla Ibrahim. *Ijāzatnāme,* which was written in Medina in December 1675, was probably the first version of scholarly credentials he wrote before completing *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam* in October 1684. The name of the codex was derived in an Ottoman-Persian culture as embedded in the front page: *Ijāzatnāmah-i Effat Efendi*. However, MS Wetzstein II 1807, fols. 32b, contains information why Kurani wrote his *Ijāzatnāme*. Kurani wrote, "A hadith scholar and jurist, Wajih al-Din ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Sijilmasi looked for certificates of me, and I said: I gave him *ijāza* with the delineation of all my *ijāzas* and studies from the books of hadith, exegesis, jurisprudence, theory of Islamic law, as well as the books of theology and its varied disciplines and the books of Sufism with all variants."

[107] See marginalia of Carullah Efendi in MS Carullah 2069. For the portrayal of Kurani's Ottoman connections, see Chapter Three.

many teachers in the country. The few he did meet established further admiration for hadith scholarship.

From the point of view of Kurani's experience in Ottoman Baghdad and then Damascus, the mystical turn of this Kurdish scholar coincides with his first admiration for hadith scholarship, as is particularly evident from his vitae in Ottoman Syria. It was not only scholars in Damascus that Kurani learned hadith and other religious texts, especially under the tutelage of the aforementioned Ghazzi and ʿAbd al-Baqi, both Shafiʿi and Hanbali jurists and hadith scholars accordingly, but also later, as will be explained in the following discussions, those scholars in Cairo and Medina – the period in which Kurani did not rely heavily on the tradition of the rational (*al-maʿqulat*) alone. Baghdad and then Damascus gave Kurani the opportunity to study the transmitted sciences (*al-manqūlāt*) in a more comprehensive way, thereby enabling him to transform himself from a mere rational theologian, as Kurdish scholars were popularly known for their expertise, to a Sufi and Hadith scholar. Mystical inclinations were undoubtedly compatible with a persistent interest in hadith, as demonstrated by post-canonical hadith scholarship. Garrett Davidson's significant discussion of the post-canonical hadith tradition rightly identifies the Sufis as the transmitters of the hadith. This is not only because the transmitters are the true heirs of the Prophet, but also because of the key concept in the chain of transmission as a channel for the spiritual charisma (*baraka*) of the Prophet and the great scholars of hadith transmission. Davidson examines how, in line with the initiatic chain of Sufi masters connected to *baraka*, numerous hadith scholars at least from the fourteenth century onward explained their involvement in hadith tradnsmission for the sake of *baraka*. Thus, it is no wonder why many Sufi lodges became the conduit of transmission; numerous *fihrist* or *thabat* works presented their chains of transmission to the Sufi orders in addition to the Sunni schools of law.[108] This post-canonical hadith tradition represents a significant aspect of Kurani's engagement with Sufi and hadith scholarship, situated within the broader context of Islamic learned culture that held considerable value in Ottoman Arab lands. The following subchapter will present a more detailed account of how Kurani sought hadith transmission, along with his philological doubts regarding specific linguistic and theological matters.

[108] G. Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 11, 90, 194, 274.

1.3. Seeking Manuscripts and Hadith Transmissions in Cairo

Kurani had not initially formulated a specific intention to engage in scholarly discourse with Egyptian scholars. During this period, the Kurdish scholar began work on his linguistic treatise, the aforementioned *Inbāh al-anbāh*. He was prompted to consider a linguistic issue that he needed to address in his inaugural treatise, and thus he undertook to consult Sibawayh's *al-Kitāb* (The Book), which had been previously described by the bibliographer Ibn Nadim (d. 998) as 'unequeled before his time and unrivalled afterwards'.[109] Kurani unexpectedly encountered a significant challenge while examining a manuscript associated with *The Book*. He expressed suspicion about the text removal, which he identified as a potential instance of forgery (*taḥrīf*) in *The Book*'s recension. To collate and verify the manuscript, he consulted *The Book* and asked a learned man regarding extant manuscripts of Sibawayh in Egypt. The response indicated that the most appropriate individual to contact was Ahmad Shihab al-Din al-Khafaji (d. 1659), a distinguished Cairene litterateur. Kurani's rationale can be summarized as follows:

> At that time [1651] I commenced writing *Inbāh al-anbāh ʿalā iʿrāb lā ilāha illā Allāh*, then I faced a philological problem. I found the problem when reading *The Book* of Sibawayh, and I supposed that there was a forgery, so I wanted to make a correction with the same book. I asked [someone] in Egypt, there was an answer, "No one has the book except Khafaji." Therefore, I sought him and he welcomed me. And I proceeded to rectify the issue based on the original exemplar (*al-naql*). I was pleased because of that purpose, and it was my original inquiry. Indeed, I had no intention previously to study hadith's chains of transmission. [110]

Khafaji was not only an expert in hadith and other disciplines but was also renowned as an acclaimed poet. His vitae include a fascinating record of studying logic, philosophy, mathematics, and medicine with a blind Syrian physician and pharmacist in Cairo, namely Dawud al-Antaki (d. 1599). Dawud al-Antaki, of Antioch origins, was famous for his rebellious acts and thought towards the Ottoman Turks. He critiqued Ashʿari theology and proposed Muʿtazili thought, as well as endorsing *falsafa* from the traditions of Ikhwan al-Safa, Ibn Sina, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, and Suhrawardi. His erudition encompassed a multitude of disciplines, including philosophy, medicine, and mathematics. It is reported that if he was asked about these

[109] Bayar Dodge (ed.), *The Fihrist of al-Nadim A Tenth Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, 111.
[110] Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 60.

disciplines, he was not content with providing a short answer; [111] rather, he was generous in clarifying the issues that were requested. In addition to the intriguing and enigmatic figure of Antaki,[112] Khafaji's intellectual pursuits encompassed the field of linguistics. This led to his assembling an unparalleled personal collection of manuscripts during his lifetime. Many of these were subsequently inherited by his renowned disciple, the literary figure Abd al-Qadir b. ʿUmar al-Baghdadi (d. 1683), the author of the encyclopedic work of Arabic belles-lettres, namely *Khizānat al-adab wa lubb lubāb lisān al-ʿarab* – the grandchildren of Kurani composed a commentary upon one of Baghdadi's works, linking the unbroken literary chains between Khafaji and the grandchildren.[113]

The story then continues. Kurani proceeded to consult with Khafaji regarding the extant manuscript of *The Book*. Khafaji extended a cordial welcome to Kurani. Upon examination of the manuscript, Kurani identified the purported forgery. The requisite correction was duly implemented, and Kurani expressed satisfaction with this outcome. In *Inbāh al-anbāh*, the precise issue is elucidated in comprehensive detail:

> I searched the vowelization of the alleged expression to Sibawayh, i.e. their expression to analyze the cause of construction of an example *Lā rajulun fī-l-dār* relates to the noun phrase (*tarkīb al-ism*) and particle (*ḥarf*) as can be seen from the construction of two nouns such as *khamsat*^{a} *ʿashar*^{a}. Then, I observed at the opinion of Ibn Hisham in *al-Mughnī* [i.e. *Mughnī al-labīb*] and other works which indicated that Sibawayh considered such a construction to be inapplicable to the noun as well, following the reasoning of inspection according to *The Book of Sibawayh*. Consequently, I conducted a search of *The Book* in Damascus, Syria, but was unable to locate it. Upon my arrival in Egypt, I then sought out the source and was successful in acquiring it. Upon examination of the text, it became evident that Sibawayh employs a grammatical discourse, as exemplified by the phrase *ʿashrat*^{a} *mawāḍiʿ*^{a} which illustrates the use of *ʿāmila* (to affect grammatically) in the noun. Additionally, it was discerned that his discourse tends to indicate the absence of a textual basis (*naṣṣ*) that definitively establishes the

[111] Muhammad Sabri, *Fuqahā wa fuqarā': Ittijāhāt fikriyya wa siyāsiyya fī Miṣr al-uthmāniyya*, 104. For the intellectual sketch of Khafaji see pp. 93-166. See also certain aspects of his texts in Nir Shafir, *The Road from Damascus: Circulation and the Redefinition of Islam in the Ottoman Empire, 1620-1720*.

[112] See his short biography and an aspect of his philosophical thought in Khaled Breiche, *Dâwûd al-Anṭâkî, Disciple d'Avicenne, Son commentaire de la Ḳaṣîda al-ʿAyniyya* (PhD diss.), Paris: Université de Paris I, Pantheon, Sorbonne, 5 July 1985.

[113] Joseph E. Lowry and Devin J. Stewart (eds), *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography, 1350-1850*.

construction of the noun with "*lā*." In light of these considerations, I deemed it appropriate to cite his original exemplar of discourse, as set forth in his own words, with a view to counterbalancing the errors, refreshing comprehension, clarifying the intentions, and finally verifying the point.[114]

After consulting the manuscript, Kurani had no auxiliary aim to study the transmission of hadith, which was the other specialty of Khafaji. Upon his intention to travel to Mecca, he was eventually prompted to recount the common prelude of the prophetic tradition, *ḥaddathanā wa akhbaranā*, which is a common opening of hadith reports. This prompted a swift interruption, during which he was urged to consider its meaning in depth. This occurred during his departure via the Red Sea to Mecca. As a result of this coincidence, he made the decision to return to Khafaji to learn the transmission of *ḥadīth*.

Both Khafaji and Kurani, yet, had the same line of philosophical tradition back to Dawani. While Kurani transmitted the rational theology of Jalal al-Din al-Dawani, mainly from his Kurdish intellectual genealogy and later from his Medinan contexts, Khafaji pursued it from an Ottoman link in the court in Istanbul. When he stayed in Constantinople, for instance, Khafaji learned mathematics (*riyāḍiyyāt*), Eucledian geometry, and the other rational sciences from Ibn Hasan, the student of shaykh al-Islam Ebussu'ud Efendi (d. 1574). Shaykh al-Islam, himself, transmitted from Müeyyedzade Abdurrahman Efendi (d. 1516), the Ottoman scholar and companion of Bayezid II, as well as a prominent student of Dawani.[115] Khafaji's intellectual peregrinations extended beyond Constantinople, encompassing visits to Ottoman Skopje and Thessaloniki. Nevertheless, it appears that Khafaji did not transmit Dawani's works to Kurani, as Kurani's objective was solely to rectify a corrupted text and to engage in hadith studies. In comparison to Khafaji's intellectual lineage of rational sciences, Kurani's own intellectual pedigree to Dawani via Kurdish scholars is regarded as the most authoritative genealogy. Consequently, Kurani had no need to multiply his philosophical credentials through Khafaji.

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[114] Kurani, MS Laleli 2150, *Inbāh al-anbāh*, fols. 15a-16b; Gemi, *İbrahim Kûrânî'nin "İnbâhu'l-Enbâh 'alâ Taḥḳîḳi İ'râbi Lâ İlâhe İllallah" Adli Eserinin Tahkîki*, 90.

[115] See the transmission in Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, 332. Muhibbi quoted directly from Khafaji's manuscript of his *Rayḥāna al-alibbā wa zahrat al-ḥayāt al-dunyā*. On the Ottoman connection of Dawani and some philosophical discussion, see Reza Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran*; Pfeiffer, "Teaching the Learned"; Rosabel Ansari, "Ibn Kemal, Dawānī, and the Avicennian Lineage"; cf. the Catalogue of Library belongs to Sultan Bayezid II, MS Török F. 59, fols. 56a-68a, 167a-176b.

From this episode, Kurani strived to consult manuscripts in order to identify any issues that he considered worthy of further investigation. This was not the final occasion on which he sought to collate manuscripts and verify texts. In addition to Khafaji, another prominent Cairene scholar and collector of manuscripts, Sharaf al-Din b. Zayn al-Din (d. 1662), is also worthy of note. This descendant of the hadith scholar Zakariya al-Ansari (d. 1520) was renowned for his strictness to preserve his manuscript collections. Notwithstanding the considerable price that might be offered for a specific manuscript, he chose to refrain from venturing outside his residence in order to safeguard his collections. As documented by Mustafa al-Hamawi, the collection included eighteen different copies of *Ṭabaqāt al-Subkī al-kubrā* and twenty-eight copies of commentaries on Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Moreover, he possessed forty copies of exegesis of the Quran. Upon his death, his books were dispersed. Additionally, it is reported that Ibrahim al-Kurani, at one point in Damascus, sought a copy of a treatise authored by Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani, in which he compiled the *aḥkām* of al-Shafiʿi that he deemed to be correct, meanwhile Sharaf al-Din owned the pertinent manuscript. In the mid-1650s, Kurani sought assistance from Hamawi when he was directed to Egypt to borrow and copy the text. After two months of unsuccessful attempts, Sharaf al-Din apologized.[116] This practice of searching for manuscripts corroborate Kurani's philological doubt and meticulous exploration of the original dictums or Ur-texts of the pious forebears, or more broadly, the classic scholars. It also validates his concern about the possible corruption that appeared in the reception, recension, and transmission of these texts by later generations of scholars, whether in the domains of linguistics, hadith, law, or theological-philosophical matters.

Furthermore in Cairo, Kurani studied with Azhari doyens including Muhammad ʿAlaʾ al-Din al-Babili (d. 1666) and Sultan b. Ahmad al-Mazzahi (d. 1664), whose transmission back to Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani (d. 1448) and post-Mamluk scholars including Shams al-Din al-Ramli and Zakariyya al-Ansari. The first, Babili, spent a considerable time of his life, two decades, as a foreign resident in Mecca where he taught many Islamic sciences before making a lifelong career at al-Azhar. He was known to deliver his lessons with his sheer rhetoric attracting auditors, even his sermons, affected them to sob. His persistence and passion to teach enforced him to teach lessons carefully, so that he interrupted students who fastly read texts while other listeners did not understand.[117] Mazzahi, accordingly, was very popular among Azhari professors. He was the

[116] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 223. I thank to Konrad Hirschler for the correct translation of this text.
[117] Al-Shilli Baʿalwi, *ʿIqd al-jawāhir wa-l-durar*, 325.

student of a popular Shafiʿi scholar, Ahmad al-Khatib al-Sharbini (d. 1570), the author of the Shafiʿi legal treatise *al-Iqnāʿ*. Mazzahi is reported to have had to travel regularly in the predawn times from his house far away to Azhar. He was also known as one of the most sought-after teachers among scholars in his time. For sixty years he annually read legal books such as *Sharḥ al-manhaj* and *Sharḥ al-minhāj* written by al-Hilli. Moreover, he also taught other disciplines and every year he completed teaching ten books. Popular among gnostics was a saying, "whomever aspires to knowledge must attend his classes."[118] Kurani heard the perceptible figure of Mazzahi from his close friends who were also the latter's mutual friends. One of his friends advised him, "It is unfortunate if you visited Cairo without meeting him and taking benefits from his scholarship. He has not only high transmission (*ʿuluww sanad*), but also is prodigious in the sciences of *riwāya* and *dirāya*—'connected narration' and 'deep comprehension'; He is one of the leading scholars!" From Mazzahi, Kurani subsequently transmitted some hadith of *al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* and some parts from *al-Minhāj*, accompanied by the licentia docendi, inscribed by the teacher's own hand.[119] In an unexpected turn of events, Kurani came across a note written by Mulla ʿAbbas, the brother of ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani, on the title page of *Kitāb al-anwār fī-l-fiqh al-Shāfiʿiyya* belonging to Husayn b. Shihab al-Din, Kurani's uncle. Subsequently, Mazzahi assumed ownership of the codex. Kurani then became aware that Mazzahi had studied under his uncle.[120] This finding fostered a deeper affinity for this Cairene scholar. The note was written in 1679 as a supplementary addendum (*tadhyīl*) to the draft manuscript of his curriculum vitae, the *Amam*, originally completed four years earlier, emphasizing some important teachers of Kurani. In 1653, Mazzahi became the grand shaykh of al-Azhar until his death in 1664.[121] One among Kurani's close circle in Mecca, Ahmad al-Nahli (d. 1702) obviously studied with these Azhari scholars, as well,[122] revealing that pursuing knowledge from their authority represents a highly commendable standard of education.

During the Ottoman time, students at al-Azhar enjoyed considerable autonomy in selecting their teachers or professors, as well as the specific disciplines of knowledge that they wished to

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[118] Al-Shilli Baʿalwi, *ʿIqd al-jawāhir wa-l-durar*, 315.

[119] Hamawi, *Fawāʾid al-irtiḥāl*, vol. 3, 60.

[120] Kurani, *al-Amam,* 130.

[121] Hussam Muhammad ʿAbd al-Muʿti, *Shaykh al-jāmiʿ al-Azhar fī-l-ʿaṣr al-ʿuthmānī, 549-1227/1538-1812.* I thank Adam Sabra for this reference. Mazzahi wrote many works including *Ḥāshiya ʿalā sharḥ al-minhāj li-l-qāḍī Zakariyyā*, *Sharḥ al-shamāʾil*, *al-Qirāʾāt al-arbaʿ al-zāʾidah ʿalā al-ʿashr*.

[122] In addition to Sultan and Mazzahi, Nahli studied with Ibn ʿAllan, Qushashi, and Kurani, as well. See Ahmad al-Nahli, *Bughyat al-ṭālibīn li-bayān al-mashāʾikh al-muḥaqqiqīn al-muʿtamadīn.*

pursue. In general, hadith became the most favored and the first subject to learn. Following this, students typically elected to pursue studies in grammar, philology, and the others disciplines including logic and mathematics. After this, they devoted themselves to the study of different schools of Islamic law, legal responsa, and deductive analogy (*qiyās*) according to the four Sunni schools.[123] Kurani own genealogical bibliography, *al-Amam* and *Ijāzatnāme,* indicated that these teachers were instrumental in instilling in him the six canonical books of hadith, along with other works that were less well-known in the field. He pursued credentials of this exoteric science directly from them and was connected to the chain of transmission, including Shams al-Din al-Ramli (d. 1596) and then Zakariyya al-Ansari (d. 1520). Table 4 below reveals the vitae of Kurani from his three principals teachers at al-Azhar, delineating the foundational texts on transmitted science in the post-Mamluk era, which were pivotal in the formation of any Sunni scholar. This post-Mamluk intellectual tradition, as was also obvious in the transmission of the rational sciences pursued by Kurani when he studied later with Ahmad al-Qushashi in Medina, enriched his credentials and became an important factor in expanding the intellectual networks he had established in the triangle of Damascus, Cairo, and finally Medina, where he become a highly sough-after Sunni scholar, following the footsteps of his prominent teachers.

NAME OF TEACHER	BOOKS	GENRE
Sultan al-Mazzahi	• His works	
	• *Ḥāshiya sharḥ al-minhāj*	Jurisprudence
	• *Tafsīr al-ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī Al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*	Hadith commentary
	• *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*	Hadith
	• *Sharḥ mukhtaṣar khalīl al-thalātha* of al-Damiri	Hadith
ʿAli al-Shabramalisi	• *Ḥāshiyat al-nihāya li-l-Ramlī*	Jurisprudence
Ahmad b. Ahmad al-ʿAjami al-Azhari	• *Sharḥ al-jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr* of al-Hijazi and his student	Hadith
	• Works of Khafaji	Literary and hadith
	• *Works of Hasan Shurunbulali*	Jurisprudence

[123] Hussam Muhammad ʿAbd al-Muʿti, *Shaykh al-jāmiʿ al-Azhar fī-l-ʿaṣr al-ʿuthmānī, 549-1227/1538-1812*, 58.

• *Al-Mudawwana* of Sahnun • *Sharḥ al-muntahā al-irādāt wa al-iqnāʿ*	Jurisprudence

Table 4. Reported books read by Kurani in Cairo (source: Kurani, *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam)*

Ensuing three months of fruitful encounters examining a philological problem and pursuing hadith certificates in Cairo, Kurani consequently continued his journey to Jeddah via Suez in a rapid decision before the hajj season. Then he toured Mecca and performed both the hajj and ʿumrah. Furthermore, he traveled to Medina and dwelled in the holy city for the rest of his life, mainly due to his admiration of Qushashi, who he had wanted to meet since his Damascene experience. During his earlier residency in the city, he continued to write his lengthy oeuvre on the study of linguistics and theology*, Inbāh al-anbāh*, in 1062/1652, which he started to ponder when he was in Baghdad.[124]

1.4. Concluding Remarks

This chapter presents a comprehensive contextualization of Kurani's early education in Kurdistan and elucidates the intellectual pathways that shaped his intellectual pursuits. His initial profound immersion in the rational sciences in Shahrizor ultimately shaped his future trajectory as a prominent scholar in this domain. The cultural terrain of the region, situated at the intersection of the Ottoman and Safavid imperial frontiers, fostered the growth of Kurani's intellectual pursuits through the exchange of knowledge transmitted through the conduits of post-Timurid intellectual culture, which was predominantly Persianate in character. The region was marked by intellectual vibrancy, which influenced the development of Kurani's own inquiry. This was a period of significant philosophical development, which led to his becoming one of the prominent verifiers (namely: *muḥaqqiqūn*) or thinkers in the seventeenth century. His journey to Baghdad, however, constituted a pivotal phase that transformed his trajectory, shifting his focus from a purely rational approach to one that was deeply mystical. This mystical turn prompted Kurani to travel to Damascus, where he advanced his mystical practice and his reading of Sufi philosophical texts.

[124] Al-Shilli Baʿalwi, *ʿIqd al-jawāhir wa-l-durar*, 385.

Damascus, a center for the transmitted sciences, played a pivotal role in shaping Kurani's engagement with the chains of hadith in alignment with Sufi traditions, with the aim of attaining spiritual charisma (*baraka*). This phenomenon, as compellingly observed by Garrett Davidson, became prevalent at least from the fourteenth century onwards. During one reading session in the city, Kurani encountered the Sufi guidance of Ahmad al-Qushashi, which led to a transformation in his previously skeptical approach, enabling him to embrace mystical guidance. He subsequently planned to travel to Medina and departed Damascus via Cairo. There, he not only resolved a philological issue regarding his book project on the thorough analysis of *lā ilāha illā Allāh* but also met numerous scholars of hadith with whom he studied and transmitted major works in this field. This Cairene experience, despite its brief duration, prompted him to pursue further study of hadith. In sum, the Ottoman Arab landscapes presented Kurani with a substantial opportunity to engage with two previously unfamiliar fields in Shahrizor: Sufi practices and hadith discourse. This engagement further developed his interest in combining rational and traditional sciences, a pursuit that later positioned him as a role model in seventeenth-century Sunni intellectual culture. It was through the guidance of Qushashi in the Medinan scholarly culture, which will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, that Kurani pursued his equal qualifications, which ultimately shaped him into a leading Sunni authority and Sufi master.

Chapter Two

Encounter with Medinan Intellectual Culture:

Under the Shadow of Ahmad al-Qushashi

Surely the intellect is a light
Guiding whoever seeks what is upright
—**Ahmad al-Qushashi (d. 1661)**[125]

Since the Mamluk period, the two Holy Cities of the Hijaz gained a wide reputation as centers of Islamic learning. The Circassian Mamluk sultans established and funded a variety of institutions for education and Sufi activities.[126] After the Ottomans conquered the Mamluks in 1517, financial and political support in the cities strongly continued. When Ahmad al-Qushashi gained his fame as a renowned Sufi Master in the area, the generous deeds of the Ottomans as the guardian of the Holy Cities had been widely praised. Quoted by a Medinan writer Muhammad Kibrit al-Husayni (d. 1660), the mufti of the Haramayn Qutb al-Din al-Hanafi said: "The people of the Haramayn were not prosperous in any circumstances as much as under the rule of the Ottoman House".[127] This statement by a Hanafi mufti regarding his Ottoman connections in Istanbul may be viewed as an exaggeration. However, it suggests that the region's prosperity, in terms of both quantity and quality, increased. Nevertheless, the veracity of this assertion requires critical examination, particularly in light of the lack of available economic evidence. The coffee culture and trade indeed originated in the Hijaz region and the broader Arabian Peninsula, although it is challenging to ascertain whether the salon tradition (*majālis*) for literary and scholarly discussions existed there, as it did in numerous cities throughout the Ottoman Empire.[128] In addition to religious scholars, in Medina alone there are records on some well-noted litterateurs such as Ibrahim

[125] Qushashi, *Sāfir al-maḥyā li-man ṭāfa bihi waḥyā*, quoted in Umam, "Seventeenth-Century Islamic Teaching in Medina," 5.

[126] See for instance Hasan Ahmad Hasan Barkah, *Al-Madīna al-munawwara fī ʿaṣr dawlat salāṭīn al-mamālīk al-jirākisa (784-923 H./1382-1517 M.)*.

[127] Muhammad Kibrit al-Husayni, *al-Jawāhir al-thamīna fī maḥāsin al-Madīna*, 209; also quoted in Atallah S. Copty, "The Naqshbandiyya and Its Offshoot."

[128] See Helen Pfeiffer's "Encounter after the Conquest: Literary Salons in Sixteenth-Century Damascus."

al-Khayyari (d. 1672) the author of *Tuḥfat al-udabāʾ wa salwat al-ghurabāʾ* ("The gift of the litterateurs and the solace of the extraordinaires).[129] If we think literature in a broader framework, Ahmad al-Qushashi and other religious scholars who penned poetry or in the belletristic genre of writing can be also included within this literary tradition, such as the case of Shihab al-Din al-Khafaji in Cairo.[130] From around 1620 to 1661, Qushashi was known as the most prominent scholar, Ashʿari theologian, Sufi master, and hadith transmitter in the entire Hijaz. Qushashi rose to prominence in a time when Medina transformed into one of the central places of learning in the Ottoman Arab lands. This development followed the example of renowned Sunni scholars who had flourished during the late Mamluk and early Ottoman eras in the region. As the leading figure in Ibn ʿArabi's Sufi teachings, Qushashi's name and works were known to Kurani during his time in Damascus. Kurani's immersion in the depths of Sufi learning, encompassing both theoretical and practical aspects, prompted him to seek guidance from Qushashi in the late 1640s. This decision necessitated a suspension of his critical and philological faculties during his enlightening yet challenging training under Qushashi's tutelage.

This chapter is thus dedicated to a close examination of Ibrahim al-Kurani's engagement with Qushashi in Medina throughout the 1650s. It will explore how the former, relying on the authority of the latter, initiated the completion of some of his most influential writings. This chapter has two specific objectives. First, it continues to examine the continuation of Kurani's intellectual journey from Kurdistan to the Ottoman Arab regions up to Cairo, as discussed in the previous chapter. The Medinan episode of Kurani's residency in the 1650s, as will be argued here, represents the most critical moment for the expansion and advancement of his credentials in rational and traditional sciences, as well as spiritual involvement guided by Qushashi. Second, in the final section of this chapter, the completion of Kurani's theological treatise in the form of two commentaries was created based on his close study with Qushashi, which was a prerequisite for him to succeed the latter as a leading scholar in Medina in the subsequent decades. This section will examine how two commentaries by Kurani, as a particular frame of analysis in this chapter, reshaped his scholarly position by examining their wide reception. This will be demonstrated through an analysis of manuscript evidence. This chapter will initially elaborate on the understanding of the institutional and intellectual ecology developed by Qushashi, as this history is of

[129] I thank Feras Krimsti for this reference; cf. Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 1, 28.

[130] Such categorization is applied in Joseph E. Lowry and Devin J. Stewart (eds), *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography, 1350-1850*.

critical importance during the course of Kurani's prominent career in Medina, from 1650 to 1690.

2.1. The Sufi Academy of Qushashi

Ahmad al-Qushashi was born in 5 April 1583[131] and inherited the Sufi authority from his grand-grandfather, Ahmad al-Dajani. Dajani was regarded in his time as "the head of the gnostics" (*quṭb al-ʿārifīn*) and "the paragon of mystics" (*qudwa al-sālikīn*). Dajani and his followers were the custodians of the ex-Fransiscan church and endowment near David's Tomb following the issuance of a firman by Suleyman the Magnificent in 1546. This event marked the continuation of a series of Islamizations that took place in Jerusalem during the first half of the sixteenth century.[132] Dajani's authority as a Sufi was primarily derived from two prominent Sufi Masters in late Mamluk and early Ottoman Syria: ʿAli b. Maymun (d. 1511) and Ibn ʿArraq (d. 1526, in Mecca); the former were Maghribi, while the latter were Circassian.[133] Yunus, one of the sons of Ahmad al-Dajani, migrated to Medina, where his family settled at the time of the 1593 birth of Yunus's grandson Safi al-Din, who was later known as Ahmad al-Qushashi. The relationship between the descendants of Ibn ʿArraq and those of Ahmad al-Dajani persisted until the time of Qushashi. Both Qushashi and his father were instructed by the progenies of Ibn ʿArraq, thereby demonstrating an unbreakable affiliation between the two Sufi families. The eighteenth-century Sufi treatise, *al-Salsabīl al-muʿīn fī al-ṭuruq al-arbaʿīn*, authored by the renowned North African Sufi Muhammad ibn ʿAli al-Sanusi (d. 1859), the link was confirmed by citing the later son-in-law of Qushashi, Ibrahim al-Kurani, who corroborated the plurality of Sufi fraternities and the notion that their teachings are essentially unified.[134] This attestation demonstrates the pivotal

[131] 12 Rabiʿ al-awwal 991, see Kurani, *al-Amam*; R. Öngören, "Kuşâşî."

[132] On the study of *sijill* of the Shariʿa Court of Jerusalem and the confiscation of Christian properties after the Conquest of the Mamluk Empire by the Ottomans, see Aharaon Layish, "*Waqf* and Sūfī Monasteries in the Ottoman Policy of Colonization: Sulṭān Selīm I's *Waqf* of 1516 in Favour of Dayr al-Asad."

[133] On both scholars, see Ibn Tulun's *Ghuraf al-ʿaliyya*; Ignaz Goldziher, "ʿAlî b. Mejmûn al-Maġribî und sein Sittenspiegel des östlichen Islam: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte"; Michael Winter, "Sheikh ʿAlī Ibn Maymūn and Syrian Sufism in the Sixteenth Century"; Michael Winter, "Sufism in the Mamluk Empire (and in early Ottoman Egypt and Syria) as a focus for religious, intellectual and social networks"; al-Harithy, "Weaving Historical Narratives: Beirut Last Mamluk Monument."

[134] MS *al-Salsabīl al-muʿīn*, Library of King ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, nn.

role of the Sufi tradition in the early modern Hijaz in shaping the 'orthodox' perspectives of the 'forty distinguished fraternities' defined by Sanusi.

Qushashi's father, Muhammad b. Yunus, linked his scholarly tradition as far as Yemen. His father even caused Qushashi to preserve this Yemeni network—the intellectual network that endured until the era of the progressive scholar Muhammad al-Shawkani (d. 1839). It seems probable that this Yemeni network encouraged the young ʿAbd Allah al-Haddad (d.1720), the Baʿalwi Sufi Master and the author of a widely read text in the Indian Ocean *Rātib al-Ḥaddād*, to undertake studies with Qushashi when the former visited the Hijaz. A nineteenth-century Batavian mufti of the Hadrami origin Sayyid Uthman (d. 1913) shows his genealogical certificate,[135] implying the narrative of the religious authority embedded within the genealogy of the Hadrami scholars in the Indian Ocean that directly linked to the doyens of Sunni scholarship through Qushashi's linkage. Furthermore, the first physical encounter of Qushashi and his father with the Zaydi community and politics happened during the early studies of Qushashi, who in later few decades continued to pen some refutations to the foundations of the Zaydi theological doctrine bolstered since the early medieval time by the Muʿtazili thought and became an ideological cornerstone during the Zaydi-Qasimi imamate (see Chapter Four).

Qushashi's father was also known as a leading Sufi who commented on a standard grammar book that originated from Morocco, *al-Ājurrūmiyya*, following some epigones of such Sufi commentaries[136] to the Arabic grammar as early as the time of Ahmad Zarruq al-Fasi (d. 899/1493) who believed that Sufi tradition has no (legal) madhhabs.[137] The concept of madhhab-free affiliations among late-medieval and early-modern Sufis is of critical significance pertaining to the multiple affiliation of Sufi fraternities within the group of people with a variety of madhhabs. The works of the two prominent hadith scholars, ʿAbd al-Haqq Dihlawi's (d. 1642) *al-Ṣirāṭ al-*

[135] Nico Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and the Modern Age in the Netherlands East Indies: A Biography of Sayyid Uthman (1822-1914)*.

[136] Bilal Orfali, "Ghazal and Grammar: al-Baʿūnī's *Taḍmīn Alfiyyat b. Mālik fī al-Ghazal*." Other commentators after Qushashi and his father include Ibn ʿAjiba (d. 1828) and Muhammad al-Tarabulusi (d. 1888).

[137] Ahmad Zarruq, *Qawāʿid al-taṣawwuf*. On the biography of the author, see Ahmad Baba al-Tinbukti, *Kifāyat al-muḥtāj li-maʿrifat man laysa fī al-dībāj*, I, 126-8; ʿAli Fahmi Khashim, *Aḥmad Zarrūq wa al-zarrūqiyya*. In the seventeenth century, Moroccan Sufi Master in Mecca, Isa al-Maghribi (d. 1669), who was one of Kurani's teachers, is mentioned as *Zarrūq zamānihi*; see Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 3, 241-3. On Zarruq's explication of Ashʿari theology based on Ghazali's *Qawāʿid al-ʿaqāʾid*, see Kamran Karimullah, *Aḥmad Zarrūq and the Ashʿarite School*; cf. G. Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 274.

mustaqīm and Salih al-Fullani's (d. 1803) *Īqāẓ himam ūlū al-abṣār li al-iqtidāʾ bi-sayyid al-muhājirīn wa al-anṣār*, validate this idea.[138] Similarly, Sufi masters in seventeenth-century Medina also incorporated such multiple affiliations, the privilege that lay followers usually do not have. This practice bears resemblance to the legal problem of changing madhhab for those who are knowledgeable in Islamic law, namely *talfīq*.[139]

Qushashi pursued social prominence when he studied with an Egyptian Shafiʿi scholar of Medina Ahmad al-Shinnawi (d. 1619) and then married the latter's daughter. As a result of this marriage, Shinnawi bestowed upon Qushashi all of his scholarly certificates. Shinnawi's scholarly genealogy combines Egyptian and Indian links, including both hadith and Sufism, which in due time were transmitted by Qushashi to Kurani. The confluence between both links could happen in some settings in the entire Hijazi areas. Yet, only through Shinnawi did it firmly constitute the social capital of Sufi tradition, which empowered the future networks of Qushashi's heir. The account of Shinnawi's dialogue with the Prophet in a dream of Ahmad al-Qushashi's friend, namely Ahmad al-Qalqashandi al-Miqati, took place in 1626, is narrated by Ibrahim al-Kurani in one of his hadith works.[140] The narrative underlines Shinnawi's question addressed to the Prophet on who is the closest humankind to God; furthermore, the Prophet answers, "Those who discharge his essence and attribute into His Essence and Attribute" (*man istahlaka dhātahu fī dhātihi wa ṣifātahu fī ṣifātihi*). Shinnawi's Sufi authority was subsequently circulated and inaugurated as one of the important personages in early seventeenth-century Medina. He was recorded to have been acknowledged as "bumblebee" (*al-ṭanāna*) among the people of the Haramayn. His Sufi credentials encompass what the legal-leaning scholars perceived as 'infidel', i.e. the Hallajian utterance, "Those who saw me will not enter the gate of hellfire until the day of judgement (*lā yadkhul al-nār man raʾānī ilā yawm al-qiyāma*)." It is reported that his Sufi disciples disseminated his teachings throughout the Muslim world. However, his works remain relatively unknown and thus inaccessible to us. It appears that he did not set forth his ideas in written form to the same extent as Qushashi, although the biographer and poet Muhibbi recorded some

[138] Salih al-Fullani, *Īqāẓ himam ūlū al-abṣār liʾl-iqtidāʾ bi-sayyid al-muhājirīn waʾl-anṣār*. I thank Jonathan Brown for this reference. It is interesting that the title resembles Ibrahim al-Kurani's *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam*. Fullani's book probably was inspired by the broad scope of hadith credentials pursued by Kurani.

[139] Such Sufi-legal problem was raised by a Jawi (Southeast Asian) to a Sufi Master in nineteenth-century Mecca, see Sulayman Zuhdi al-Khalidi, *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil ʿalā uṣūl al-khālidiyya al-ḍiyāʾiyya al-naqshbandiyya*.

[140] Ibrahim al-Kurani, MS Garrett 2581Y, *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīṯh al-nabī al-mukhtār*, fol. 35b.

of his oeuvres.[141] One of his surviving rare writings, copied in 27 Safar 1033 or 20 December 1623, contains a monistic formulation on Sufism and numerology, entitled *al-Risāla al-wujūdiyya min al-ifāḍa al-jūdiyya*, rendering the famous doctrine on philosophical existences among the Shattari and Akbarian Sufi theosophy. The treatise is one of the fruitful works against the backdrop of the spread of the Shattari fraternity in the late sixteenth century, which circulated extensively through the cultural and economic routes of the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Peninsula. The seminal text within the Shattari tradition, *Jawāhir-i khams*, written by the Indian Shattari master Ghawth Gwaliyari (d. 1563), was disseminated within the Hijazi milieu due to the fellowship between Shinnawi and Sibghat Allah al-Baruchi (Arabic: al-Barwaji, d. 1606). The latter assisted in translating the original Persian text into Arabic.[142] In his formative years, Qushashi had the opportunity to study directly with both scholars. The popularity of this Shattari text has been attested to in numerous sources, even among other Sufi fraternities. The text was disseminated as far afield as Morocco and Indonesia through Qushashi's Medina forum. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, the circulation of manuscripts and ideas from the Eastern to the Western post-classical Islamic world was largely due to the pivotal role played by Qushashi, Kurani, and their supporters in Medina.

[141] These writings include a commentary on Ghawth's *al-Jawāhir al-khams*, *al-Sataʿā al-aḥmadiyya fī rawāʾiḥ madāʾiḥ al-dhāt al-muḥammadiyya*, *al-Taʾṣīl wa al-tafṣīl*, *Kitāb al-iqlīd al-farīd fī tajrīd al-tawḥīd* (ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi penned a commentary on this book, very likely to oppose certain thoughts of Kurani who was the heirs of Shinnawi and Qushashi; on his opposition to Kurani see for instance his *Taḥrīk silsilat al-wadād fī masʾalat khalq afʿāl al-ʿibād*, MS Garrett 469Y, fol. 74b), *Wasaʿat al-akhlāq*, *Fawātiḥ al-ṣalawāt al-Aḥmadiyya fī lawāʾīh madāʾiḥ al-dhāt al-muḥammadiyya*, *Risāla fī waḥdat al-wujūd*; see Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 243-4; see also earlier chronicle on Shinnawi by Qushashi's student from Hadramawt, Muhammad al-Shilli Baʿalwi in his work *ʿIqd al-jawāhir wa-l-durar fī akhbār al-qarn al-hādī ʿashar*, 148-153. In addition to this, his works numbered up to eighteen writings.

[142] Carl Ernst, "Jawāher-e Ḵamsa**."**

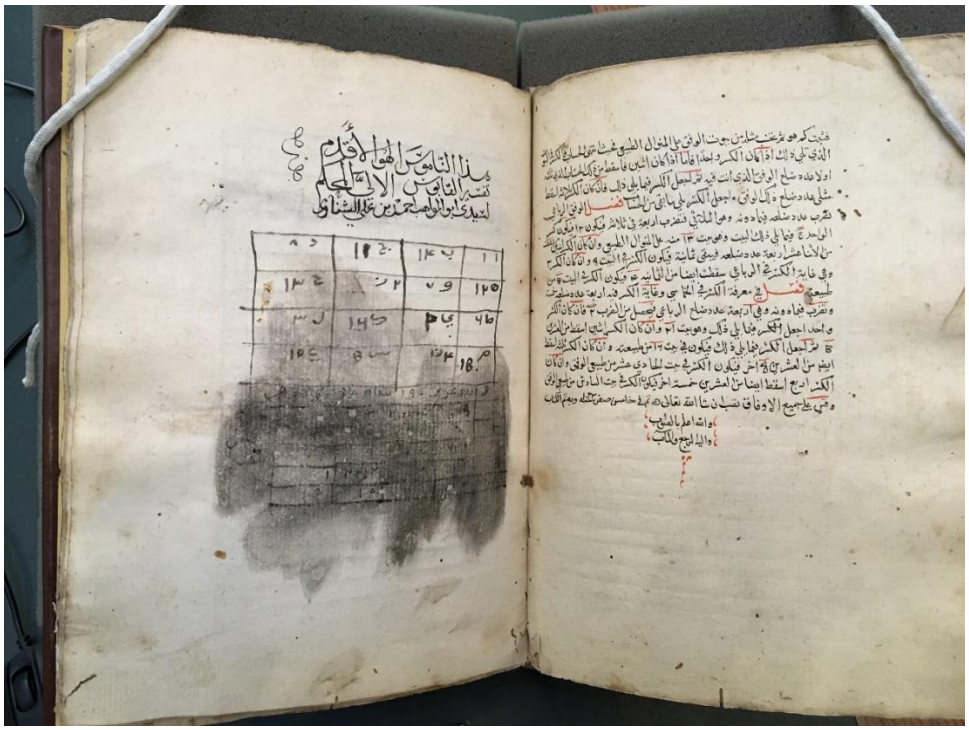

Figure 2.1. MS *Al-Risāla al-wujūdiyya min al-ifāḍa al-jūdiyya* penned by Ahmad al-Shinnawi. MS Third Series 871, Princeton,

No	Title	Collection	Genre
1	*Ḥāshiya ʿalā al-Insān al-kāmil li-ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī*	MS BIJ 400, the Brisith Library	Sufism
2	*Al-Kalima al-wusṭā fī sharḥ Ḥikam ibn ʿAṭāʾ*	Hüsnü Pasha 791, Istanbul	
3	*Al-Kamālāt al-ilāhiyya*	-	
4	*Miftāḥ al-raḥma fī idhāʿat karama min karamāt al-umma*	MS Kemankes 246, Istanbul	
5	*Kalimat al-jūd ʿalā al-qawl bi-waḥdat al-wujūd*	Resid Efendi 428, Istanbul	
6	*Ijābāt al-akh al-fāḍil al-kāmil bi-ḥall al-abwāb al-arbaʿa min kitāb al-insān al-kāmil*		
7	*Al-Mikyās fī nayl maʿrifat al-ʿurafāʾ bi-llāh al-akyās*		
8	*Ṣūrat al-saʿāda bi-tilāwat kitāb al-ibdāʾ wa-l-iʿāda*		

9	*Risāla fī tarjuman baʿḍ asrār al-dhikr*		
10	*Al-Simṭ al-majīd fī shaʾn al-bayʿah wa al-dhikr wa talqīnih wa salāsil ahl al-tawḥīd*	Published in India, 1901 based on MS Sami Benli 908; Cod. Or. 7052, Leiden; Cod. Or. 7029, Leiden; MS Sehid Ali Pasha 1197; MS Sehid Ali Pasha 1221; MS Esad Efendi 1491, Istanbul.	Sufism
11	*Al-Manẓūma fī al-ʿaqāʾid*	MS Carullah 1251; MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722, Istanbul.	Theology
12	*Al-Ifāḍa bi-mā bayna al-ikhtiyār wa-l-irāda*	MS Resid Efendi 428, Istanbul	Theology
13	*Risāla fī īḍāḥ qawl al-Ghazālī*	MS Resid Efendi 428, Istanbul	Theology
14	*Laysa fī al-imkān abdāʿ*	-	Theology
15	*Al-Intiṣār li-imām al-ḥaramayn fī radd man shannaʿa ʿalayh* (Other title: *al-Intiṣār al-mubīn bi-ḥaqq al-yaqīn*)	MS Third Series 514, Princeton	Theology
16	*Durrat al-thamīna fī-mā li-zāʾir al-nabī ilā al-madīna*	MS the Prophet Mosque Library nn, Medina; many libraries; printed.	Ethics, devotional practices
17	*Kitāb al-targhīb fī mazīd faḍlillāh al-ʿaẓīm al-qarīb al-mujīb*	MS Garrett 3791Y, Princeton	Hadith
18	*Jawāb al-masʾala li-man fataḥallāhu ʿayn qalbihi wa kaḥāla*		Sufi philosophy
19	*Kitāb al-tabshīr al-sāʾil bi-stikmāl waraʿ al-kāmil*		Sufism
20	*Al-Jawāb al-shāfī ʿalā al-suʾāl al-muwāfī*		Theology – on Zaydi doctrines
21	*Ṭarīq al-rashād fī jawāz ziyādat yawm al-jumʿa wa laylatuhā bil-afrād*		Rituals
22	*Muniyya ahl al-waraʿ fī ʿadad min taṣiḥḥu bihim al-jumaʿ*		Rituals
23	*Qawl al-maʿrūf ʿind al-mutashābih li-ahl al-wuqūf*		Theology
24	*Ḥujjat al-muhtadīn bi-bushrā al-mukarramīn*		Hadith
25	*Tanbīh al-shākirīn yudhkaru ʿimād al-dīn waqurbān al-muttaqīn*		Rituals

26	*Ḍawʾ al-hāla fī dhikr Huwa al-jalāla*	MS The Prophet Mosque Library nn., Medina	Sufi manuals
27	*Al-Thanāʾ al-manẓūm fī-mā asfara min al-wajh al-karīm bi-l-ḥayy al-qayyūm*	MS Arabic 282, Cambridge	Poetry
28	*Nafḥat al-yaqīn wa zulfat al-tamkīn li-l-mūqinīn*	MS New Series 1114, Princeton	Sufism
29	*Al-Ijāba ʿalā al-abwāb al-mustaṭāba*	MS New Series 1114, Princeton	Sufism
30	*Tatimmat al-arbaʿīn min ḥadīth sayyid al-mursalīn*	MS New Series 1114, Princeton	Hadith
31	*Ijābat al-akh al-fāḍil al-kāmil bi-ḥall al-abwāb al-arbaʿa min kitab al-insān al-kāmil*	MS Cod. Or. 7006, Leiden	Sufism

Table 5. Ahmad al-Qushashi's hitherto known books

Upon the death of Shinnawi, Qushashi assumed not only the spiritual legacy of his predecessor but also the considerable wealth inherited through marriage, as Shinnawi had no surviving male heirs and Qushashi was the sole beneficiary of Shinnawi's family wealth. A similar scenario transpired with regard to Qushashi's succession to Kurani. Shinnawi's family endowment was increased during the time of Qushashi in the 1630s by the generous donation from a wealth *sayyid*, namely Ibrahim al-Hindi of Bengal. According to a report of the eighteenth-century Medinan genealogist, Ibrahim, who had no children, also assisted to finance political rulers in the Hijaz, as well as freeing slaves and their descendants.[143] The initial designation of the endowed institution developed by Shinnawi remains uncertain. It is clear that Qushashi transformed his inheritance into a renowned Sufi seminary bearing his name, which was likely established through a consensus among his students following his death. Accordingly, it was called *al-Zāwiya al-Qushāshiyya* ("The Sufi Academy of Qushashi"), the formal name that continued its existence until later periods. The presence of this Sufi academy is evidenced by a multitude of Arabic, Jawi, and Ottoman texts, and probably other manuscripts, which demonstrate its extensive influence beyond the boundaries of diverse intellectual traditions and cultural identities. His student of Hadrami origin who learned with him in Cairo, namely al-Shilli Baʿalwi, referred to him "the pen of the easterners and the knowledge of the westerners" of the Islamic world (*qalam*

[143] Al-Ansari, *Tuḥfat al-muḥibbīn wa al-aṣḥāb fī maʿrifat mā li-l-madaniyyīn min al-ansāb*; İrfan İnce in his "Medina im 12./18. Jahrhundert" used al-Ansari to examine the prosopography of eighteenth-century prominent families in Medina.

al-mashriqīn wa-ʿilm al-maghribīn).[144] Indeed, this epithet signifies that Qushashi not only achieved renown in the eastern and western hemispheres but was also the preeminent commentator on Andalusian Sufism as espoused by Ibn ʿArabi during his lifetime. Various testimonies on this academy imply that this institution facilitated and financed social and religious activities on its behalf. Furthermore, it highlights the significance of scholarly pursuits, encompassing the production of manuscripts through the process of copying. The economy of Islamic scholarship contains a number of interrelated elements, including the mutual symbiosis between authors, financers/publishers, copyists, sellers, and audience. In the later period during the middle of the 1660s, many Jawi scribes or copyists[145] were employed under the auspices of Kurani, implying their need of allowance by copying manuscripts for the sake of learned culture buttressed by the academy. A list of readings containing both the rational and transmitted sciences taught by Qushashi in his academy demonstrates the broad curriculum offered to a variety of students.[146] He owned the endowed library, narrated by Ibn al-ʿUjaymi as *khizānat al-waqf*. This endowed library was administered by Kurani in a later period and contained different subjects that Hijazi scholars could not otherwise access due to the philosophical nature of some of the codices. It was a popular library in Medina, as evidenced by a reader acknowledgement in a marginal note.[147] The presence of copyists indicates that the library multiplied its collections for learning purposes and probably economic goals as well.

2.2. Learning in the Arabian Milieu

Qushashi enjoyed the last twenty years of his life as an esteemed Sufi master with many students hailing from diverse regions of the Islamic world. The political circumstance across many Islamic empires in the 1650s, to some extents, orchestrated the global circulations of ideas, texts,

[144] Al-Shilli Baʿalwi, *ʿIqd al-jawāhir wa-l-durar*, 302-303. Qushashi wrote the certificate of intellectual genealogy for al-Shilli at al-Azhar, Cairo. Al-Shilli was an important Hadrami scholar in the Indian Ocean. Al-Shilli, a Meccan scholar who began by studying in Bijapur, India, for four years, died eight years before Kurani's death. Cf. Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*.

[145] Some Jawi scholars were evidently copyists of Kurani's manuscripts or other manuscripts under the auspices of Kurani, including Yusuf al-Maqasiri, ʿAbd al-Shakur al-Bantani, and ʿAbd al-Mahmud al-Matarami—all of them were scholar-judges in Banten, northern Java, and the last one probably Mataram Sultanate in southern Java; see Chapter Five.

[146] Ibn al-ʿUjaymi, MS F 1744 Dar al-Kutub, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*; Umam, "Seventeenth-Century Teaching in Medina".

[147] MS New Series 1114, Princeton, fol. 24b.

and people, in addition to the established economic routes. The ascendance of the Köprülü family within the Ottoman political sphere, the rise of Aurangzeb in the Mughal Empire, the prosperous state of female authority in the Aceh Empire and the stability of other sultanates in Java, the progress of the Zaydi-Qasimi politics in the Greater Yemen, and the political fracture of the Alawite dynasty in Maghreb collectively shaped the mid-seventeenth century of the Islamic world. Some of the issues that emerged from the specific socio-cultural contexts of these regions were directed to Qushashi, the sole authority in Medina and the Hijaz, for resolution. Concurrently, Qushashi's authority manifested as a convergence of diverse students, thereby rendering Medina a centripetal force. Conversely, Medina can be regarded as a centrifugal force, whereby specific texts circulated away and individuals disseminated their ideas across a multitude of Islamic cultural loci. During this period, Kurani held the position of both the leading student of Qushashi and the deputy and assistant in writing letters and commentaries to which the teacher could not respond. In the shadow of Qushashi, Kurani appeared to be groomed for a future role as a successor in the religious institution that later became known as the Academy of Qushashi. His scholarly habit was reported to be one of continuous teaching, writing, and guiding, a pattern that continued throughout his life.[148]

Similarly, Kurani learned a considerable portion of Islamic intellectualism and Sufi practices from Qushashi complete with their rational and traditional chains of transmission.[149] Various scholars from different backgrounds came to Qushashi to seek spiritual and intellectual guidance. An account of Ibn al-ʿUjaymi elaborates the typical curriculum that Qushashi created for his students.[150] Over two decades, from 1640 to 1661, the leading scholar of Aceh, ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Fansuri, studied with Qushashi and followed his Sufi path and religious thinking. Fansuri, once he resettled in Aceh, attributed his thought and Sufi practice as the method of Qushashi (*ṭarīq al-qushāshī*) with some citations on the conception of existence and truths from Ibrahim al-Kurani in one of his writings.[151] In 1647, a Shafiʿi scholar of Damascus, namely Muhammad al-Maktabi

[148] Ibn ʿUjaymi, MS F 1744 Dar al-Kutub, *Khabāya al-ẓawāyā*, fols. 37a-37b.
[149] Cf. Chapter Two of Nasser Dumairieh's *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*.
[150] See a description of this in my article, "Seventeenth-century Teaching in Medina."
[151] ʿAbd al-Raʾuf, *Tanbīh al-māshī al-mansūb ilā ṭarīq al-Qushāshī*, MS Leiden, Cod. Or. 7031. For the close reading of the text, see Fathurrahman, *Tanbîh al-Mâsyî: Menyoal Wahdatul Wujud Kasus Abdurrauf Singkel di Aceh Abad 17*; cf. Riddell, *Malay Court, Religion, Culture and Language*, Ch. Three; In the late nineteenth century, Snouck Hurgronje discovered that, "In Sumatra some even give their *ṭarīqa* the special name of Qushashite; and it is only of late years that this *Satariah*, as it is usually called, has begun to be regarded as an old-fashioned and much-corrupted form of mysticism," *The Achehnese*, vol. 2, 18.

(d. 1685), learned with Qushashi. In addition to this, the presence in 1656 of ʿAlaʾ al-Din al-Haskafi (d. 1677), the grand mufti of the Hanafi legal school in Damascus, benefitted from his knowledge.[152] Scholars and friends of Qushashi who arrived and stayed in Medina enjoyed teaching other students, making this holy city one of the most favored places among every itinerant scholar. In Qushashi's circle, there was a significant feature of intellectual exchange. ʿAli al-Zabidi (d. 1661), a Yemeni hadith scholar who befriended Qushashi, for instance, taught Bukhari's *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* to Qushashi's leading students including Kurani, Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji, and Ibn al-ʿUjaymi.[153] When Muhammad Sharif Kurani re-appeared to reside temporarily in Medina, he taught Kurani Jurjani's philosophical work *al-Mawāqif* and Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani's hadith work *Fatḥ al-bārī*.[154] Such a picture vividly highlighted the dynamic characteristic of Medina, either during Qushashi's life or during Kurani's succession. Qushashi, however, is central in the making of Kurani's intellectual and spiritual progress. The robust intellectual tradition that Kurani had acquired during his formative years in Kurdistan led him to experience a certain degree of discomfort when he was instructed by Qushashi to engage in spiritual seclusion (*khalwa*) within one of the gates of the Prophet's Mosque. New students lacking prior education in rational sciences were more inclined to embrace the seclusion method, which they found to be an efficacious approach for absorbing divine knowledge. Kurani, for instance, expressed to ʿAyyashi his regret at having undergone a more prolonged seclusion training than another individual.[155] This enlightening yet challenging training proved instrumental in fostering Kurani's mystical leaning, which had been kindled during his Damascene secene of Sufi readings.

In addition to Ahmad al-Qushashi, there was a countless number of scholars in Mecca and Medina whose profiles and rich description became the central perspective of another dissertation.[156] This dissertation is limited in scope, focusing on a select group of prominent figures and their textual-intellectual engagements with Kurani. In the context of Hijaz, other scholars besides Kurani include the prominent Sufi in Mecca ʿIsa al-Maghribi (d. 1669),[157] Ishaq Jamʿan, Yahya al-Shawi, and others. However, their position cannot be considered to have replaced Qushashi's

[152] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 4, 63, 73.
[153] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 3, 192-3.
[154] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 4, 280-1; Kurani, *Al-Amam*, 16.
[155] Ayyashi, *Al-Riḥla al-ʿayyashiyya*, vol. 2, 389-390.
[156] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*.
[157] In addition to Maghrebi scholars, ʿIsa al-Maghribi's students include Ibn al-ʿUjaymi, Ahmad al-Nahli, Kurani, and many Yemeni scholars. He was buried exactly beside the tomb of the renowned Ibn ʿArraq. See Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, Vol. 3, 241-3.

educational imprint on Kurani during the latter's extensive period of training and teaching, which spanned the 1650s. From his admiration of Qushashi's *Nimbus of Light* in Damascus until his Sufi training in Medina, Kurani followed a challenging path of spiritual seclusion, after which he was permitted to resume his teaching activities.

Two curricula taught by Ahmad Qushashi have been identified by the presence of textual proofs written by some in his closest circle, e.g. Ibn ʿUjaymi and Ibrahim al-Kurani. It is obvious that Kurani studied with Qushashi and acquired a greater depth of knowledge than his fellow students, particularly when compared to Ibn ʿUjaymi's attestation. This estimation is not completely surprising because of the nature of the relationship between Qushashi and Kurani, whether viewed as the most prominent student or as a son-in-law. A summary of the books learned by Kurani, extracted from his *Amam* and *Ijāzatnāme*, can be summarized as follows. Kurani transmitted and demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of approximately sixty percent of the books pertaining to the transmitted sciences during his decade-long study in Medina with Qushashi. The remaining forty percent of the books were related to the rational sciences, Sufi themes, and miscellaneous subjects (see Appendix 1). These books collectively illustrate the characteristics of a post-classical Islamic scholarly tradition. As previously argued, Kurani's multiple genealogies were formed at the pinnacle of either a post-Timurid curriculum or a post-Mamluk intellectual tradition. Qushashi's training played a significant role in the proliferation of Kurani's multiple genealogies. Qushashi's particular focus on hadith narration and transmission, Akbarian Sufi writings, and the Ashʿari School of Theology can be viewed, employing Sufi terminology, as a "seal of authority" during the mature period of Kurani. These three streams – hadith, Sufism, and Ashʿarism – significantly influenced the intellectual projects conducted by Kurani, reinforcing his prior knowledge acquired in his hometown of Shahrizor, Damascus, and Cairo, where he had visited, as well as providing him with a high level of recognition as a scholar by the time he reached his late 30s and early 40s.

Qushashi obviously played a major role in this endorsement, making Kurani's position well-established in the circles of Hijazi scholars. Two of Kurani's major writings, *Inbāh al-anbāh* and *Qaṣd al-sabīl ilā tawḥīd al-haqq al-wakīl*, a commentary on Qushashi's credal poems, were finally completed in the late 1650s due to the endorsement and correction from Qushashi.

CHRONOLOGY	BOOKS OR RESPONSA	CREATED / REQUESTS FROM	GENRE
1653	*Isʿāf al-ḥanīf li-sulūk maslak al-taʿrīf*	Personal inquiry	Rational theology
1653	*Jawāb suʾālāt ʿan qawl Taq-abbal Allāh wa-l-muṣāfaḥa baʿda al-ṣalawāt*	Questions	Jurisprudence
1656-1658	*Qaṣd al-sabīl ilā tawḥīd al-ḥaqq al-wakīl – The Major Commentary*	1655; personal inquiry, Qushashi's command	Rational theology
1658	The abridgment of *Qaṣd al-sabīl ilā tawḥīd al-ḥaqq al-wakīl – The Minor Commentary*	Syrian friends, Qushashi's command	Rational theology
1659	*Al-Jawābāt al-gharrāwiyya li-l-masāʾil al-jāwiyya al-juhriyya*	The Jawis of Johor, Malay Peninsula, the vassal state of the Acehnese Sultanate; Qushashi's command	Jurisprudence, theology, Sufism
1659	*Maslak al-iʿtidāl ilā fahm āyāt khalq al-aʿmāl*	Personal inquiry	Rational theology
1660	*Inbāh al-anbāh fī taḥqīq iʿrāb lā ilāha illā Allāh*	1651 in Damascus; personal inquiry	Linguistics, theology, hadith
	Maslak al-itidāl ʿalā fahmi āyāt khalq al-afʿāl		Rational theology
1660	*Ifāḍat al-ʿallām bi-taḥqīq mas'alat al-kalām*	Personal inquiry	Rational theology
1661	*Al-Qawl al-mubīn fī taḥrīr mas'alat al-takwīn*	Personal inquiry	Rational theology

Table 6. Books authored by Ibrahim al-Kurani during Qushashi's guidance.

In the case of the manuscript production of *Inbāh al-anbāh*, after ten years of research with some substantial interruptions of journeys, training, teaching and other activities, the book was completed in 9 Safar 1071 or 15 October 1660 at the Sufi Academy of Qushashi[158] where Kurani appended and finalized all chapters.[159] The colophon narrates:

[158] Kurani, *Inbāh al-anbāh*, MS Laleli 2150, fol. 131a.

[159] Ahmet Gemi's PhD dissertation in Turkey on the introduction and the critical edition of *Inbāh al-anbāh* states that the work had been completed between 1061/1651 in Damascus and terminated in Medina in 1063/1653. He

Its initiation was in the beginning of 1061/1651 in Damascus, the Levant, and he wrote there until the end of the first topic and its middle and the end of the second topic in about two papers and words, some of them include its name, because in Medina it was added in 1071/1660. Then, he wrote something from the ninth topic in Medina in 1062/1652, then he wrote the rest in 1071/1660, and the beginning of the addition and completion on Sunday 27 Muharram of this year (October 1660), praise be to God for what He has bestowed and taught and who has completed in the city of His Honorable Prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him and his companions.[160]

The treatise was concluded with an array of hadiths and their transmission on the importance of *tahlīl* words, particularly explaining some hadiths on the importance of a prophetic message, "Whoever remembers and writes forty hadith (*arbaʿīn)* will be bestowed Divine salvation." This reading provided Kurani with the rationale to complete at least forty hadiths along with their entire transmission. The philological mimicry of the *arbaʿīn* tradition as a compilation of hadith was prevalent following such production of al-Nawawi's (d. 1277) book, namely *al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyya,* distilled wisely from the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*. *Inbāh al-anbāh,* was not published yet because Kurani initially only pursued ten hadiths with their incomplete principles of hadith—a project that occupied his attention for several years.[161] During this unfinished stage, he apparently published a preliminary book, namely *Rafᵏ al-ishtibāh ʿan qawāʾid iʿrāb lā ilāha illā Allāh*, before publishing his *Inbāh al-anbāh*.[162] Based on the advance guidance from Qushashi, with whom Kurani perused Suyuti's (d. 1505) commentary on Taj al-Din al-Subki's (d. 1328) *Jamʿ al-jawāmiʿ* and *takhrīj al-ḥadīth*, Kurani could have narrated forty-six hadiths with their entire transmissions, grouping with twenty-one different transmitters converged in the authority of Qushashi.[163] The writing of *Inbāh al-anbāh* was therefore subject to periodic editing, correction, and expansion. After quoting forty-six hadiths, Kurani attained additional guidance from

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wrote, *"İbrahim Kûrânî'nin, tahkîkini yaptıgımız eserinin ismi 'İnbâhu'l-enbâh ʿalâ tahḳîḳi iʿrâbi lâ ilâhe illallâh'dır. Kûrânî bu eserini -birkaç kez ara vermekle birlikte- 1063/1651 [sic!] yılında Medine'de bitirmiştir*." (p. 36). On the other hand, he correctly edited the longest colophon Kurani ever wrote.

[160] Kurani, *Inbāh al-anbāh*, MS Laleli 2150, fol. 131a.

[161] Kurani, *Inbāh al-anbāh* (ed. Ahmet Gemi), 263-264.

[162] Kurani, *Rafᵏ al-ishtibāh ʿan qawāʾid iʿrāb lā ilāha illā Allāh,* MS Laleli 2150, fol. 2a.

[163] Hadiths of *lā ilāhā illā Allāh* Kurani narrated from Qushashi and their group of transmitters: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11** [9,10], **12** [11, 12, 13], **13** [14, 15, 16, 17], **14** [18, 19, 20, 21, 22], 23 **[15]**, 24 **[16]**, **17** [25, 26, 27], **18** [28, 29, 30, 31], 32 **[19]**, **20** [33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40], **21** [41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46].

Qushashi who certified all his works of Suyuti and the Kurdish scholar added an appendix of twenty-five more hadiths cited verbatim from the *Jamʿ al-jawāmiʿ*. This appendix, however, represents merely a portion of the larger narrative. In order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of *lā ilāha illā Allāh,* it is necessary to consider rational theology of this *shahada* declaration added by the second appendix, which presents the chains of transmission associated with the practice of remembrance (*talqīn al-dhikr*) in relation to this concept. This demonstrates the necessity of attaining spiritual perfection. It was his Meccan fellow, Ibn al-ʿUjaymi, [164] who assisted Kurani to compile the second appendix at the end of the book. Kurani conveyed his aim to Qushashi on this appendix production until the latter advised the former to include attribution. "The blessing of the knowledge," Qushashi proclaims, "is [complementing scholarly] attribution even if it is sparce."[165]

The Medinan Sufi master was not only the chief key in the final processing of such textual productions, but he also held the licensing key for his circle to do anything. Besides Kurani, Barzanji could do his Constantinople journey and strengthen connections with Ottoman elites because of Qushashi's permission in 1659. In general, Qushashi's position was crucial in authorizing the social networks of Kurani and his circle in Ottoman Arabia and the transregional networks through which Kurani expanded beyond the confines of empires. Two representative examples include the Moroccan ʿAbd Allah al-ʿAyyashi and the Acehnese ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Fansuri who had connected to Qushashi before the succession of leadership to Kurani. The connection was established not only through Sufi fraternities, but also through theological and hadith discourse. For Fansuri, it was the Indian Sufi tradition of the Shattariyya, which was initiated by Qushashi and then Kurani, to spread throughout the entire maritime Southeast Asia. Qushashi's

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[164] He also mentioned another friend namely Ahmad al-Rifaʿi, the student of the Meccan scholar Mulla ʿAli al-Qari (d. 1605), whose thought on the unforgiven belief of the Prophet's parents was criticized by Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji. 283-284. On MSS Carullah 2069, *Inbāh al-anbāh*, fol. 101b, Carullah Efendi (d. 1151/1738) noted marginalia when he read the page on which Kurani mentioned Ibn ʿUjaymi. Carullah notes, "I say, I read Bukhari hadith canon with Shaykh Hasan b. ʿAli al-ʿUjaymi in Mecca in the forum close to the Rukn Yamani for 5 days; and during my migration and meeting at the gate of Bayt Allah in the Sulaymaniyya School, Tuesday and Friday, during the time of my residency (*mujāwiratī*) from the beginning of 1100 and finally in Constantinople after my visit on 15, 1151." [*katabahu Abū ʿAbd Allāh Walī al-Dīn Jār Allāh*]. The codex witnesses some marginalia of Carullah. On the contexts of this marginalia, see Chapter Three.

[165] Kurani, *Inbāh al-anbāh*, 272. Qushashi's assertion to add such scholarly credit, happened in 1660 probably weeks or months before his death, illuminated eventually the erudite aptitude of Kurani, occurred sixteen years before Isaac Newton (d. 1726) articulated his popular expression, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Of course, any comparable statements could be present before it in the Islamic scholarly tradition such as a proverb *min barakat al-ʿilm nisbatuhu ilā ahlihi* or even the Latin West. The imperative to include this ascription is embedded within the importance of sanad in the Islamic scholarly tradition, especially following hadith studies.

Sufi manuals *al-Simṭ al-majīd*[166] among others and Kurani's treatises, including *Inbāh al-anbāh* and *Qaṣd al-sabīl,* became common references cited, translated, or rearticulated in many seventeenth-century Malay and Javanese manuscripts. This transregional network facilitated the propagation of the Sufi academy of Qushashi, which sought to establish its legitimacy and disseminate its religious-intellectual traditions. This process, known as *translatio studiorum*, involved the rewriting, translation, reinterpretation, and adaptation of Medinan texts to align with the cultural context of their new milieu.[167] Snouck Hurgronje, in examining shortly the enduring reception of Qushashi's thought in the Malay world until the nineteenth century, ascribed the Sufi Master with the epithet of "remarkable personage."[168]

While the Shattari fraternity enjoyed popularity in the broader Indian Ocean milieus in the seventeenth century due to previous connections, such as that of Shinnawi from India to Egypt, it was not the only connection Kurani inherited from Qushashi. People in Arabia and the Malay world in later centuries were not, in fact, fascinated by this fraternity that had begun to be viewed as "an old-fashioned and much corrupted form of mysticism" more than the most popular Naqshbandi and the Qadiri fraternities.[169] As mentioned before, Kurani's multiple affiliation to Sufi fraternities followed the footsteps of Qushashi. In one of his popular hadith books, Kurani notes that he was initiated in Ramadan 1071 or April 1661, a few months before the death of his teacher, the practice of remembrance with the *tahlīl* sentence, *lā ilāha illā Allāh*, along with the chain of transmission back to the Prophet. In the same book, he was initiated by seven fraternities with their respective transmissions including the Qadiriyya, the Qushayriyya, the Suhrawardiyya, the Kubrawiyya, the Rifaʿiyya, the Uwaysiyya, as well as the Khadriyya.[170] This list is incomplete, however. Records indicate that Kurani was initiated into multiple Sufi fraternities under Qushashi's guidance on more than seven, not excluding the Indian Shattari and Transoxanian Naqshbandi traditions, which appeared to have played significantly in connecting people, ideas,

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[166] On the textual analysis of *al-Simṭ al-majīd*, see Rachida Chih, "Rattachement initiatique et pratique de la Voie, selon le *Simt al-majid* d'al-Qushashi (m. 1661)."

[167] For the concept see Marco Sgarbi (ed.), *Translatio Studiorum. Ancient, Medieval and Modern Bearers of Intellectual History*; cf. the succinct implementation of the concept in the Islamic intellectual tradition of Ifriqiyya, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *Open to Reason: Muslim Philosophers in Conversation with the Western Tradition*. See Chapter Five for more detailed analysis on Kurani and his Southeast Asian proponents.

[168] Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, vol. 2, 10.

[169] Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, vol. 2, 18. Sulayman Zuhdi al-Khalidi's ninetenth-century work *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil ʿalā uṣūl al-khālidiyya al-ḍiyāʾiyya al-naqshbandiyya* corroborates this fact.

[170] Kurani, *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīth al-nabī al-mukhtār*, MS Princeton, MS Garrett 4581Y, fols. 39a-41b.

and polemical discussion across regions.[171] Such multiple affiliations later permitted Kurani to issue different Sufi traditions to different students according to their specific needs and requests.

In addition to this circumstance, the most crucial aspect of the 1650s activities was the study of Ibn ʿArabi thought and hadith tradition from Qushashi, the preeminent commentator of Shaykh al-Akbar in Arabia, the attraction that Kurani grasped since his textual encounter of Qushashi's *Nimbus of the Light* in Damascus. All essential books by Ibn ʿArabi were studied thoroughly, so that he soon shifted to become the next leading Akbarian commentator owning many reliable transmissions of Sufi hadith tradition connecting to the chain of Shaykh al-Akbar.[172] These Akbarian texts were studied in Qushashi's forum along with post-classical Sufi traditions including the subtle writings of an Ottoman scholar Molla Fenari (d. 1431) and a Timurid thinker ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), two important Sufi philosophers in the late medieval and early modern contexts. Qushashi's interpretation of Sufi conceptions such as Akbarian 'unity of existence' and Jili's 'perfect man'—which helped to rearticulate the Sufi debate in the late sixteenth century, especially through the lens of Muhammad b. Fadl Allah Burhanpuri (d. 1620) in his well-circulated *al-Tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* (The gift addressed to the spirit of the Prophet)—imprinted in Kurani's mind. Qushashi's intellectual legacy is reflected in the abundant quotations from his complete transmission and thought that appear in Kurani's corpus of writings.

While Kurani learned from Kurdish theologians within a substantial phase of his youth, especially ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani and Muhammad Sharif al-Kurani, his subsequent interaction with with Qushashi in Medina proved crucial in furthering his knowledge of the rational sciences. Kurani usually mentioned all three teachers as the important ones in his transmission of theology (*uṣūl al-dīn*). Kurani learned all Qushashi's writings on the rational sciences, such as *ʿAqīdat Ibn Khafīf al-Shīrāzī* and his treatise on *kasb* (acquisition), [173] in addition to many works of foremost philosophers and theologians ranging from the age of Ibn Sina to the time of the most leading

[171] Cf. Ömer Yılmaz, *İbrâhîm Kûrânî: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Tasavvuf Anlayışı*, 31-76; Atallah S. Copty, "Naqshbandiyya and Its Offshoot"; Dina LeGall, *A Culture of Sufism.*

[172] For such hadith transmission, see Kurani's *Amam*; cf. M. b. Tayyib al-Fasi, *ʿUyūn al-mawārīd al-silsila min ʿuyūn al-masānid al-musalsala*, MS Princeton Garrett 234Y, f. 49b. A concise explanation on Kurani as a defender of Ibn ʿArabi, see A. Knysh, "Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1101/1690), an Apologist for *waḥdat al-wujūd*."

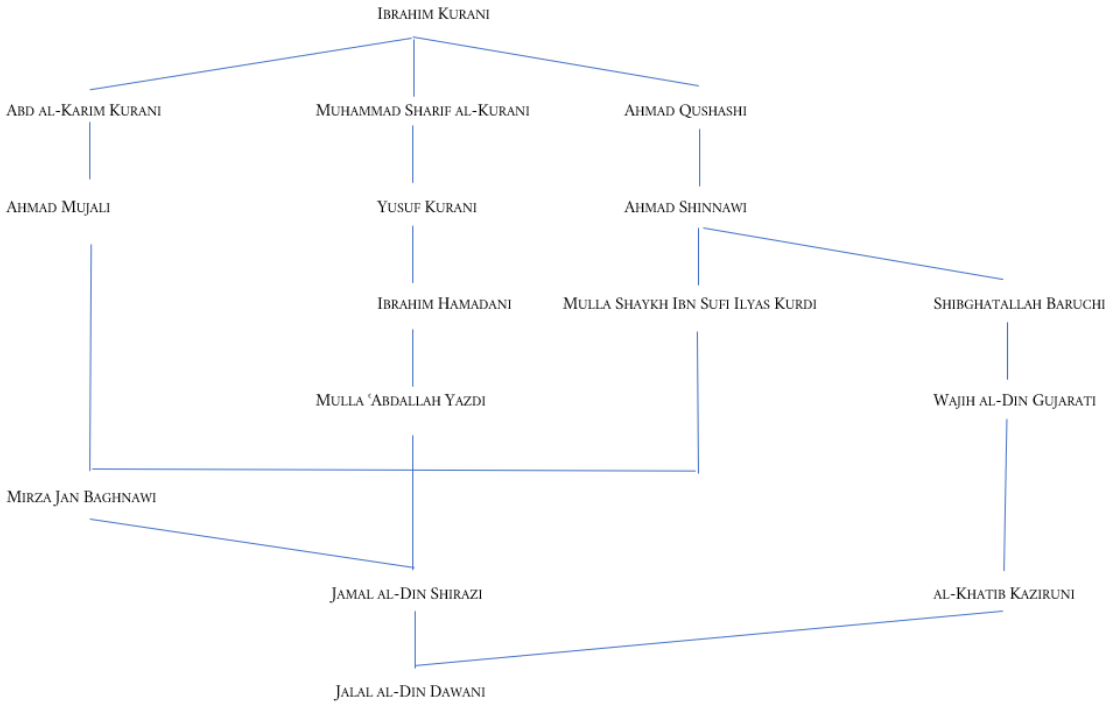
[173] Ibrahim al-Kurani, MS Garrett 2581Y, *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīṭh al-nabī al-mukhtār*, fols. 43a-45a; MS Fazil Ahmed Pasa 279, fols. 78b-79b; *Ḥāshiyya ʿalā sharḥ al-ʿaqā'id al-ʿaḍudiyya*, MS Nurosmaniye 2126, fols. 3b-4a. Both of Qushashi's treatises are hitherto unidentified. The information below is following these sources.

Sunni philosopher Jalal al-Din Dawani and his proponents, from the tenth to the early seventeenth centuries (See Appendix 1). In Medina, Kurani undertook a reexamination of the philosophical literature he had previously encountered in Shahrizor. For instance, he read the works of Persian polymath, Taftazani (d. 1390) during Ramadan 1641 with Muhammad Sharif in Shahrizor. Once he settled in Medina, Kurani reexamined Taftazani with Ahmad al-Qushashi's guidance, including *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid* and pursuing all the ijazahs of Taftazani's works.[174] The pursuit of multiple ijazahs serves to attest to the strength of Kurani's credentials. The origins of the rational sciences in Medina, from the line of Qushashi, can be traced back earlier through his teacher, Ahmad al-Shinnawi, who authored a book in the field titled *Manāhij al-ta'ṣīl*, among other oeuvres. Finally, Shinnawi acquired a set of trainings in this field from a Kurdish scholar, namely Ibn Sufi Ilyas al-Kurdi of Urmia, who had settled in Medina. This Medinan Kurdish scholar apparently became a point of interest for Kurani to magnify the confluence of a variety of chains of transmission back to the Shirazi philosopher, Dawani. The presence of Ibn Sufi Ilyas Kurdi, in light of the early modern period of the Islamic world, validates the prominent role of Kurdish theologians in a variety of directions, as has been finely argued by Khaled El-Rouayheb. Moreover, Ibn Sufi Ilyas al-Kurdi, commonly known as Mulla Shaykh, penned a commentary upon Dawani's *al-Zawrā'* and *al-Ḥawrā'*, as well as glosses on Baydawi's *Anwār al-tanzīl* and a commentary on Ibn Hajib's *Kāfiyya*. The most important link is that Mulla Shaykh's teacher was Mirza Jan Baghnawi, who connected directly to the intellectual legacy of Dawani that Ahab Bdaiwi called "philosophia Ottomanica", especially referring to his elucidation on "the existence of the necessary being".[175] In addition to this Kurdish scholar, Shinnawi also learned from Baruchi, who Kurani referred to as "the amalgamator between the rational and the traditional, the theoretical and the experiential" (*al-jāmiʿ bayna al-maʿqūl wa-l-manqūl wa-l-naẓar wa-l-dhawq*). Kurani's reading habit directed him to inspect all accessible books written by an assemblage of scholars in the endowed library of Qushashi (*khizanat al-waqf*). Therefore, there are Kurani's notes on Baruchi, e.g., "He has glosses on Baydawi and I observed that he has commentaries (*taḥrīrāt*) with his own handwritings upon glosses on *al-Tajrīd*, a commentary on *al-ʿAqā'id al-Aḍudiyya* and *Ithbāt al-wājib al-jadīdī* by Dawani." Finally, Baruchi's chain of transmission of this rational science can be traced back to India where a commentator of Dawani, al-Khatib al-

[174] They are including *Ḥāshiyat al-Kashshāf, Talwīh, Muṭawwal, Sharḥ al-shamsiyya, al-Irshād, al-Tahdḥib,* and *Sharḥ taṣrīh al-zanjānī*.

[175] Ahab Bdaiwi, "Philosophia Ottomanica: Jalal al-Din Davani on Establishing the Existence of the Necessary Being."

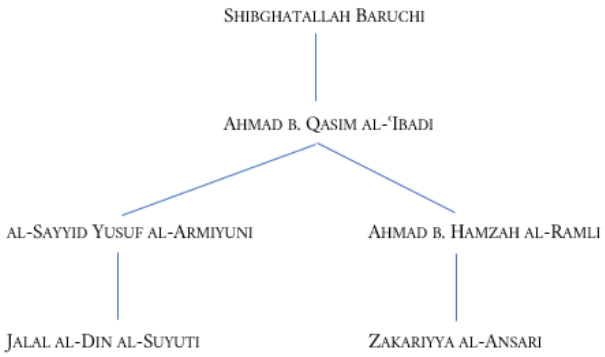
Kaziruni, died in Gujarat. Earlier in the sixteenth century, Gujarat, under the Bahmani Sultanate (1347-1527) in the Deccan, appears to have played a crucial role in developing scholarly milieu and patronizing the rational sciences. Under Sultan Mahmud I of Gujarat (r. 1458-1511), Jalal al-Din al-Dawani enjoyed his patronage through which Dawani's students and works flourished in India.[176] Another line of Baruchi's transmission is a certain Ibn Qasim al-ʿIbadi through whom Kurani also traced his transmission of the rational sciences until the late Mamluk period, especially Zakariyya al-Ansari (d. 1519) and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 1505). ʿAbd al-Karim al-Kurani is also recorded to have had a certain scholarly lineage from this late Mamluk period. All above names are recorded in the following genealogy:[177]



[176] Asad Q. Ahmed & Reza Pourjavady, "Theology in the Indian Subcontinent," 606-7.

[177] Note that Kurani's complete intellectual genealogy from the three teachers mentioned in the diagram comprise a variety of scholars, including the rational sciences that Kurani studied especially under Muhammad Sharif and Qushashi through the mediation of commonly perceived as legal-hadith scholars such as al-Sakhawi (d. 1497) and Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 1566), and other scholars in Arabian contexts. See for instance the transmission of examining Iji's *ʿAqāʾid al-ʿaḍudiyya* in Kurani's gloss on Dawani's commentary of the book, MS Nurosmaniye 2126, fols. 2b-4a.

Another proclivity of the genealogy from Baruchi's line follows:



To put it briefly, the major transmissions of the rational sciences pursued by Kurani originated from the Persian proponents of the Timurid philosophy, who traveled and taught in India and Kurdistan before reaching its ultimate confluence in Medina through Qushashi's intervention in the authority of the scholar under scrutiny here. Additionally, Qushashi's importance in the transmitted sciences from the late Mamluk period also extended to the rational sciences. Therefore, Qushashi transmitted the rational sciences from the line of scholars that flourished under the cultural environment of both post-Timurid and post-Mamluk times over the course of the sixteenth century. As illustrated from the two diagrams above, Qushashi's intellectual credentials were gained from the two lines of both post-Timurid scholarly culture and the post-Mamluk learned tradition. Unlike Kurani's earlier teachers in Shahrizor, these formed the foundation of his intellectual accomplishment, which was rarely rivaled in his time. Qushashi, in addition to his reputation as a scholar of the rational sciences and Sufism, was also a prominent hadith scholar who inherited the complete transmissions to Kurani. Looking widely at the broader view of Ottoman intellectual culture in the seventeenth century, the confluence between post-Timurid and post-Mamluk scholarly cultures that Kurani pursued from Qushashi significantly reshaped his own persona and the vibrant picture of Medina, as well. While the state of post-Timurid developments obtained by Kurani has been convincingly argued by Khaled El-Rouayheb, Florian Schwarz, and Harith Ramli, it should be noted that other important chains of transmission or tradition exist, which can be elucidated by considering post-Mamluk tradition in the context of Kurani's credentials. This complex convergence of intellectual traditions resulted in a more equal synthesis of rationality and tradition, as evidenced by the Medinan intellectual culture.

As previously noted in the eighteenth-century ownership statement over the title page of Kurani's *Minor Commentary*, MS Leiden, Cod. Or. 7202,[178] Qushashi's role occupied an imperative position in the intellectual perfection of Kurani's authority (*wa-takmil ʿalā yad shaykhihi al-Ṣafī al-Qushāshī*). Such a statement, written by a student of Kurani's son, confirms the extensive acknowledgement and endorsements (*taqārīẓ*) of later scholars to Kurani's authority. It can be fairly noted that Kurani's Medinan episode during his first ten years, from the age of thirty to forty years old, further reshaped his intellectual capacity by acquiring the profound engagement of textual-practical studies under the Sufi Master-cum-theologian, as well as hadith scholar, Ahmad al-Qushashi, through whom Kurani's social mobility elevated into the broader Hijazi contexts.

2.3. Kurani's Major and Minor Commentaries

Qushashi's corpus, which amount to about 50 treatises, contain a variety of subjects, especially Sufism, hadith, and philosophical theology (see Table 5 showing 31 identifiable manuscripts of Qushashi available to us). His esoteric teachings are still arcane in our time. While a rigorous reading of his existing manuscripts helps us to identify them, the general character of his writings can be identified as a strong proponent of Ibn ʿArabi's philosophical tradition, as well as the scholar of hadith with a special emphasis on Sufi hermeneutics in the prophetic tradition. His intellectual imprint is pervasive within Kurani's textual tradition.

To propagate rational theology and Sufism more popularly, Qushashi vigorously composed poems. His poetic skills apparently were not popular when compared to the fame of writings on Sufi and hadith tradition amongst his contemporary fellows and followers. He composed, in fact, a long anthology of his poems, currently stored at Cambridge University Library, titled *al-Thanāʾ al-manẓūm fī mā asfara min al-wajh al-karīm bi al-ḥayy al-qayyūm*, that had previously belonged to an owner dated 1139/1726.[179] Scholars who studied his works sometimes cited his poems. One of the cited poems is included in another anthology, namely *Safīr al-maḥyā li-man ṭafā bih al-waḥyā*, containing the praise of intellect as human enlightenment—the message that

[178] On this codex, see the next discussion.
[179] See the title page of MS *Thanāʾ*, MS Arabic 282 of Cambridge University Library.

classical philosophers of Islam (*ḥukamāʾ* or *falāsifa)* almost entirely agreed upon. Copies of these two anthologies, however, are rare to discover.

Another work of poetry that was much more famous was penned by Qushashi and entitled *Al-Manẓūma fī al-tawḥīd*. It is basically an aesthetic resume of the Ashʿari doctrines composed with poetics, a common prosodical practice among the post-classical Ashʿari and Maturidi scholars to popularize creeds making them easier to memorize. Therefore, Qushashi's work specifically aimed to establish a mnemonic means among its readers or audience to better valorize the very doctrine of Sunni orthodoxy. Qushashi's *Manẓūma* thus textually performs the rhythm of theological treatise formulated within the need of his seminary. It accentuates his persistent commitment towards theology and divinity and, unlike the tradition of Persian poetry such as the writings of Hafez (d. 1390), Qushashi seems to not employ wine-drinking metaphors in a Sufi way. His creedal poems, compared to his abovementioned lyrical anthologies, are more extensively admired as can be seen from its textual and geographical transmissions. Moreover, it can be explained that the shorter Qushashi wrote, the better it would be transmitted because its relative ease to copy, to physically transport, to transmit, and the possibility of effortless memorization.

Based on Qushashi's creedal poems, Kurani, in the second half of the 1560s, then penned major and minor prose commentaries,[180] the aformentioned *Qaṣd al-sabīl ilā tawḥīd al-ḥaqq al-wakīl*, "Embarking on the path toward the oneness of the Truth, the Trustee." Among other scattered copies, only one manuscript copy has a different tittle—i.e. the MS Van den Berg of Batavia A 135 with its title *Kitāb al-ghāyat al-quṣwā fī kalimat al-sawāʾ wa al-taqwā*. Given the copious manuscripts of the major commentary, each of which contains Qushashi's poems at the end of the treatise, it can be additionally assumed that Qushashi's poems are well-known through the mediation of Kurani's commentary. Extant manuscripts of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* typically suggest that the work is either similar or identical. Thus, it has been commonly perceived that only one commentary was penned by Kurani upon his teacher's creedal poems. The distinction of major and minor commentaries hence cannot be identified as most of the available manuscripts of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* were copied from the stemmata of the major commentary, including one of its earliest copies by one of Kurani's students from Banten, western Java, namely ʿAbd al-Shakur al-Bantani (d. unknown), who was one of the nobles within the court of the Sultanate of Banten.

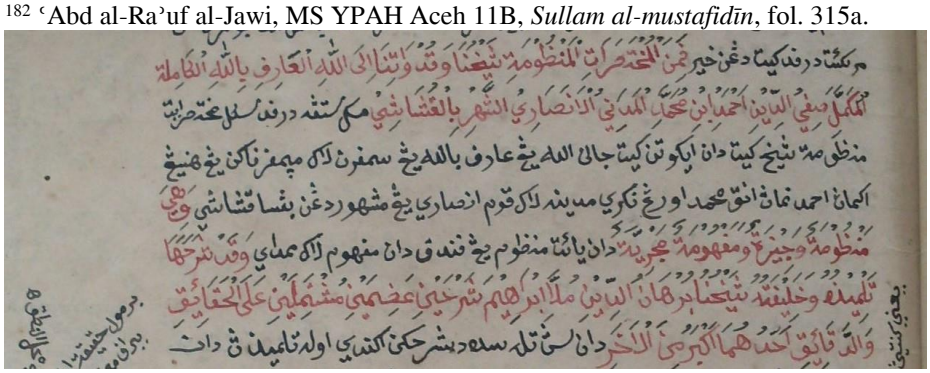
[180] Kurani's contemporary, also Qushashi's student, al-Shilli Baʿalwi already recognized that Kurani penned both major and minor commentaries. See *ʿIqd al-jawāhir wa-l-durar*, 385.

The copy was catalogued in Latin by the nineteenth-century Dutch orientalist, L.W.C. van den Berg. His intellectual rival, the more celebrated Dutch orientalist Snouck Hurgronje, obtained the opportunity to own a copy of *Qaṣd al-sabīl,* which has been remarked as Leiden Cod. Or. 7202. This codex, copied by Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Ajhuri in 1177/1763, distinctively reveals its own title, *Kitāb al-sharḥ al-ṣaghīr li-l-Kurdī*, "The Codex of the Minor Commentary by al-Kurdi." As shown in the colophon, the completion of the book took place in 1069/1658.

In addition to the Leiden collection, the second clue that obviously points out the category between a *major* and a *minor* one can be discovered by investigating the information offered by the student of both Qushashi and Kurani, i.e. the Jawi ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Fansuri (d. 1693). This Acehnese scholar and chief-qadi of the Aceh Empire excerpted Qushashi's poems and Kurani's minor commentary in his *Sullam al-mustafidīn* ("the ladder of the zealous"), a short treatise intermingling Arabic texts written in red ink and its direct Malay translation inscribed in black ink.[181] In the broader context of the early modern period, such transmission can be seen as, using the classical historiography, *translatio studiorum*, the transmission of knowledge from one place to another, from one context to another, or even from one period to another. In the opening of the text, Fansuri pinpoints that Kurani wrote two great commentaries containing "all the truths and the particularities; one of which is bigger than another."[182] It explicitly infers that Kurani wrote two commentaries, a *major* and a *minor* one respectively, of Qushashi's theological poems. A few witnesses on the copies of the minor commentary means that the major one had dominated the textual production and transmission, even the further reception that occurred until later periods, yet not all of them surely agreed with the theological thinking of Qushashi.[183]

[181] *Sullam al-mustafidīn* itself used Arabic texts from Kurani's *Minor Commentary*. See Elizabeth Anne Todd, *Sullam al-Mustafidīn: A Ladder for the Zealous. A Transcription with Notes* (MA Thesis, 1975), iv.

[182] ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi, MS YPAH Aceh 11B, *Sullam al-mustafidīn*, fol. 315a.



[183] Cf. unexplored theological treatises penned by Qushashi, MS Third Series 514, MS Garrett 3791Y, and New Series 1114 at Princeton.

Due to its theological exploration, *Qaṣd al-sabīl* is perceived as Kurani's magnum opus,[184] among other plentiful writings, that revealed Kurani as the rising scholar promoted by the Hijazi scholarly circle in his first decade of intellectual career in Medina. As also happened with *Inbāh al-anbāh*, it is written under the guidance of Qushashi in his old age. Since his Baghdad period, he already had a long writing project in mind to complete the glosses on the very doctrine of Islam, later titled *Inbāh al-anbāh ʿalā taḥqīq iʿrāb lā ilāha illallāh*, he considered penning *Qaṣd al-sabīl* as the personal proof for being a seeker of the Truth under the intellectual guardian Qushashi. The genesis of the major commentary emerged because of a request by friends of Kurani in the mid 1650s. Qushashi, then, commanded Kurani to write the commentary that would take place between 1656 and 1658.[185] According to Snouck Hurgronje in his unpublished note "Bechrijving van een Handschrift van Molla Ibrahim," upon Qushashi's command and at the request of Syrian friends, he composed an abridgement of his own commentary which was called *The Minor Commentary*.[186] Solicited from the text, the Syrian friends, namely al-Nasukh al-Rida and Jamal al-Din Muhammad al-Kayyal, frequently requested Kurani to write the minor commentary, and then Qushashi commanded him to complete it in 1659.[187] Qushashi's command could also mean that the commentaries functioned as the formalization of Kurani's being the "crown-prince" of the scholarly institution developed through worldwide hadith and Sufi networks by the former, or to put it allegorically in our time, as a doctorate thesis presented to the former.

[184] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 332, "…his magnum opus—his lengthy commentary on Qushāshī's creedal poem—remains unpublished and still awaits serious study."

[185] See the colophon of *Qaṣd al-sabīl*, MS New Series 1139, fols. 259b-260a.

[186] The notes have been inserted within the codex of MS Leiden Cod. Or. 7202; see also Elizabeth Anne Todd, *Sullam al-Mustafidīn: A Ladder for the Zealous. A Transcription with Notes*, xi.

[187] MS Leiden Cod. Or. 7202, fols. 4b-5a.

Figure 2.2. MS Leiden Cod. Or. 7202, *The Minor Commentary of Ibrahim al-Kurani*

The abridged version of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* means it is thinner and more accessible to lower levels of readers or students. This form of abridgment nevertheless reflects the practice of textual progeny[188] he employed within his own writings. In later periods, he frequently practiced his textual progeny mostly to rearticulate, expand, and reemphasize his thinking for a variety of audiences. For instance, the question of monistic apothegm by the Sufis of the early modern Jawis—that he answered shortly within the collection of responsa in *Al-Jawābāt al-gharrāwiyya li-l-masā'il al-jāwiyya al-juhriyya* ("Medinan responses to the Jawi questions in Johore"; see Chapter Five) completed in 1659—was expanded fourteen years later in his *al-Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm al-saṭh al-walī* as a robust corroboration of his arguments. It also functioned as the further attempt to re-

[188] This term means "the practice of writings which the content connected to previous writings; it can be an abridgment or an expansion/further commentary of his own texts." This terminology can be found in literary studies. See for instance Andrew Fleck, "The Father's Living Monument: Textual Progeny and the Birth of the Author in Sydney's *Arcadias*."

join repetitious requests of the same problem from different Jawi groups which did not have direct access to Kurani's previous responsa which was not laboriously multiplied. In the context of *Qaṣd al-sabīl*, it is obvious that the minor commentary functioned as an abridged version that offers a less sophisticated genre intended to be read by general students to grasp the author's critical-radical thinking[189] of the Ashʿari theology in light of the early modern period. Ironically, as revealed to us at present, the copies of the minor commentary are rare, likely signifying its limited readership vis-à-vis its accessible intention compared with the major one. The dearth of information on how many copies of the minor commentary had been produced and distributed suspends a firm conclusion on its wider transmission. Although it is noticeable that ʿAbd al-Raʿuf al-Fansuri owned, at least, one copy to produce another textual offspring for his own excerpt offered very definitely to the audiences in the Malay world. MS Leiden Or 7202, in addition, apparently speaks that the production of this copy took place in 1764. The collection had two seals of ownership before possession in the hand of Snouck Hurgronje, probably acquired during his travel in Mecca in the late nineteenth century.

The major commentary of *Qaṣd al-sabīl*, on the contrary, spread quite intensively from the Ottoman lands to the Malay Archipelago, at least as evident in Sumatra and Java. One of its earliest copies was made in 1672 by ʿAbd al-Shakur of Banten, mentioned above, to study the book under the instruction of the author himself. In the codex of Batavia A 135, its scattered marginalia by the copyist suggests that he noted further explications uttered by the tongue of Kurani. It is the only copy of the major commentary witnessing a direct relationship between written words and the aural dimension during the reading practices.[190] The author and the copyist and/or students engaged closely during the reading session and such an event recorded paratexts for which the students relied on as a complementary explanation from the core text. Ultimately, the author as the teacher, wrote his autograph in the codex to allow the student to transmit it to the next generation of scholarly community. Another evidence of such practice can be found in MS Princeton, Garrett 3872Y, in which Yusuf al-Maqasiri (d. 1699), a Sufi-statesman from Banten and a student of Kurani, copied ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami's (d. 1492) *al-Durra al-fākhira*, a Sufi philosophical treatise, and read directly with Kurani whose aural explanations were chronicled in the paratexts of the codex (see Chapter Five). Both the reading practices of two cases indicate that

[189] A fine elaboration on Kurani's project of radical interpretation of the Asʿari theology is El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, Part III.

[190] See Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands.*

transfer of knowledge engaged closely between the teacher and his students. In both cases, they are Sufi and theological texts which require advanced students to have a high degree of comprehension due to their sophisticated nature.

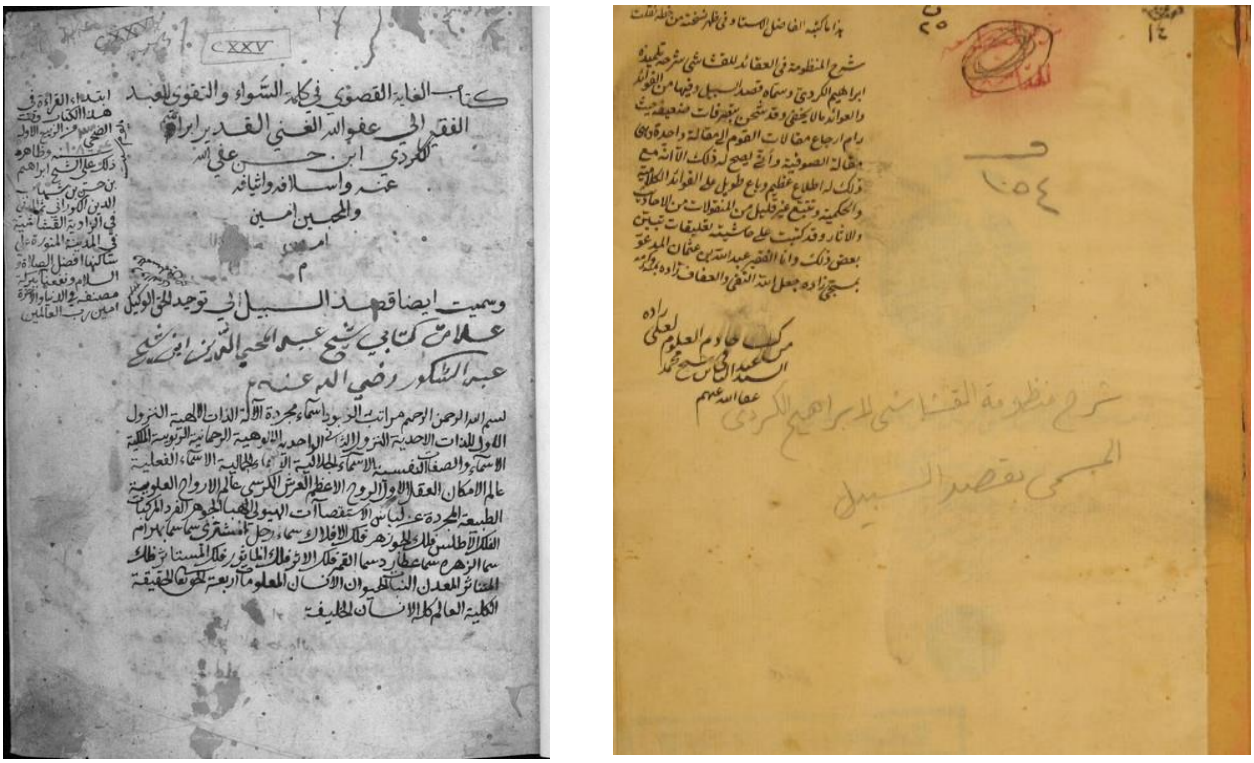


Figure 2.3. Two different codices of *Qaṣd al-sabīl*

MS Batavia A 135 & MS Istanbul Nurosmaniye 2523

Regarding the reception of this major commentary in Southeast Asia, MS Batavia A 135 is a copy of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* by Kurani's Bantenese disciple, ʿAbd al-Shakur, during Kurani's heyday in the 1670s. As can be seen from the title folio of this manuscript, it is obvious that Kurani gave the book two titles: *Kitāb al-ghāya al-quṣwā fī kalimat al-sawāʾ wa-l-taqwā* and *Qaṣd al-sabīl ilā tawḥīd al-ḥaqq al-wakīl*. In it, Abd al-Shakur noted that he began to read the text in the Zawiya of Qushashiyya, in 3 Rabiʿ al-awwal 1084 (18 June 1673), with two *ijāzas* that Kurani wrote at the end of two theological texts included in this manuscript. The declaration of ownership was made by Abd al-Shakur's son, Muhy al-Din, who was one of the religious figures in the Banten Sultanate. It is the only oldest copy of Kurani's manuscript preserved in the National Library of Indonesia, previously transported from the Royal Library of Banten during the Dutch colonial era under the auspices of the Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, built in 1778.

Meanwhile, the major commentary was highly regarded among Ottoman scholars in Istanbul. one of its Ottoman receptions, MS Nurosmaniye 2523, is an eighteenth-century copy of Kurani's major commentary, scribed in beautiful *naskhī* style, and collated directly from the original copy of Kurani in Medina, as can be seen from the marginalia besides the colophon. In the title folio of this manuscript, a certain Ottoman reader ʿAbd Allah b. Uthman offers a laudatory assessment, noting its notable Sufi-theological contents and transmitted sciences, particularly hadith, and the opinions of earlier scholars. He also claimed to make partial commentaries on select issues within this theological work. In the last folio of of this manuscript, dated 1149 / ca. 1736, the last owner or reader purchased the codex from ʿAbd Allah and attempted to look at another codex of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* belonging to the Ottoman professor and philosopher Yanyevi Esad Efendi (d. 1730) who penned annotations (*wa wajadtu fī aṭrāf tilk al-nuskha baʿḍ taḥrīrāt al-marḥūm al-fāḍil Esʿad Efendī al-Yānyevī bi-khaṭṭihi*). The owner then copied Esad efendi's annotations onto the codex in his possession. It was then becoming a repository of eighteenth-century Ottoman court, with an explicit stamp and endowment declaration (fol. 1a) of Sultan Osman Khan b. Sultan Mustafa Khan, very likely Osman III (r. 1754-1757). While the geographical receptions of this major commentary have different social and cultural stories, both codices were part of the royal libraries of the Banten Sultanate and the Ottoman Empire respectively. They also share the similarity of referring to Kurani as *Ibrāhīm al-Kurdī*, thus emphasizing this Medinan scholar as 'the Kurdish'.

Qaṣd al-sabīl even reached beyond the Sunni followers.[191] Yemeni scholars were among earliest cohort commenting on both Qushashi's theological poems and Kurani's commentary.[192] The close geographical proximity between Hijaz and southern Arabia facilitated the rapid dissemination of Kurani's texts. A number of Yemeni scholars resided in Medina, among them Abu al-Anwar Muhammad b. Yunus al-Yamani (d. Medina, 1071 / ca. 1660), who possessed one of the earliest copies of this significant commentary, as evidenced by MS Princeton, New Series 1139. It seems reasonable to posit that Sunni scholars from Yemen transmitted this text to Zaydi scholars. Some Zaydi scholars were blatant commentators to the writings of Qushashi and Kurani. The Zaydi critic of Sufi beliefs and practices, Muhammad b. Ismaʿil al-Sanʿani (d. 1768), for example, rebutted a part of Kurani's arguments in *Qaṣd al-sabīl* in which the latter claims that there is

[191] Note that some Sunni scholars including Muhibbi of the seventeenth century and the Indian Ashraf Ali Thanwi (d. 1943) titled their books "*Qaṣd al-sabīl*" as well.

[192] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 3, 116.

a level of knowing God that is beyond the powers of mind and cannot be autonomously understood by normal understanding and systematic reason; only through the light of prophethood and sainthood the knowledge of God can be perceived. Sanʿani penned his critics in his *al-Inṣāf fī ḥaqīqat al-awliyāʾ wa mā lahum min al-alṭāf wa-l-karāmāt*.[193] Sanʿani's rejection of Kurani's argument specifically accused certain Sufi groups with their 'ecclesiastical' privilege "to retain position of power and authority over the rest of the Muslim community."[194] There is guarantee for every Muslim to have equal access to God's truth; he further argues with an agreement comparable to the *sola scriptura* doctrine in the Protestanism. This Zaydi critique shows that Kurani's reception went well through a variety of Islamic schools in the eighteenth century. On the contrary, during Kurani's life, he, Qushashi, and later their close associate Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji (d. 1691) commented in various treatises on Shiʿi doctrines and politics in Iran and Greater Yemen (see Chapter Four).

The popularity of *Qaṣd al-sabīl,* read beyond the confines of Ottoman Arabia, cannot be separated from the fact that it contains a novel approach to Ashʿari theology. As demonstrated in his other works, he attempted to denounce the Ashʿari theologians on certain issues by tracing back to the "Ur-text" of the founder of the theological school, Abu Hasan al-Ashʿari (d. 936), especially *Al-Ibāna fī uṣūl al-diyāna* and *Maqālāt al-islāmiyyīn*. Also, the same tendency Kurani had with the Shafiʿi School in which he denounces many Shafiʿi scholars by rereading the classical canons.[195] In *Qaṣd al-sabīl*, Kurani strongly argues that the Ashʿari theology proposes *shayʾiyyat al-maʿdūm* (thingness of the non-existent), radically opposed the famous sayings among the Ashʿari proponents. At another point, he made a position between the Ashʿaris and the Muʿtazilis.[196] This theological tendency indeed does not originate from Qushashi's core texts. Kurani's prior inquiries in Kurdistan and Damascus, along with his robust renderings of the classics of *kalām* and *falsafa,* informed his own critical inquiries. While Qushashi indeed contributed a con-

[193] See page 68 of the book.

[194] Ahmad Dallal, *Islam without Europe*, 108; Dallal, however, did not explicitly mention "Ibrāhīm al-Kurdī," the author of *Qaṣd al-sabīl*, as "Kūrānī." In this dissertation, it is not my intention to closely examine the reception of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* in later periods.

[195] On this tendency, see Khaled El-Rouayheb, "From Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 1566) to Khayr al-Dīn al-Ālūsī (d. 1899): Changing views of Ibn Taymiyya among non-Ḥanbalī Sunni Scholars"; Caterina Bori, "Ibn Taymiyya (14th to 17th Century): Transregional Spaces of Reading and Reception."

[196] See the summary of *Qaṣd al-sabīl* in the critical edition of the text by Usama Ahmad ʿAbd al-Rahman Saʿd.

siderable impact on Sufi, theological, and hadith approaches, Kurani's theological summae cannot be always derived from the intimate interaction between the two during the determining period over the 1650s.

2.4. Kurani as a Successor

In the final years of Qushashi, Kurani had already been initiated into various Sufi fraternities, even with special training of spiritual seclusion guided by the teacher. Kurani was already permitted to issue religious responsa and teaching, he even married Qushashi's daughter. Like Shinnawi, Qushashi additionally had no male biological heirs. During this time, Kurani was requested to respond to an array of letters addressed to Qushashi from every horizon of the Islamic world (*katab al-jawāb ʿan al-rasāʾil… min al-āfāq*). Qushashi then looked at the responses Kurani made, either to add, reduce, or leave the contents as they were.[197] Based on this narration, we already recognize that some works written before 1661 that will be contextualized in the next chapters were produced during the last years of Qushashi. The death of Qushashi in 19 Dhu-l-hijja 1071 (August 1661)[198] was marked with elegies from poets, Sufis, and Hijazi people, as well as his followers. Kurani then succeeded the leadership of Qushashi. Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Rasul al-Barzanji called the succession from Qushashi to Kurani to metaphorically resemble the natural succession from Abu Bakr to ʿUmar b. al-Khattab in 634,[199] undoubtedly not in the sense of political leadership of Sunnism, but more in spiritual and intellectual continuation in Medina where the two early guided caliphs ruled. The leadership in the institution that Qushashi developed indeed reflected on certain flexible masters not always coming from Medina or the Hijaz. As a Medinan resident since he was born, Qushashi is, of course, an exception, but he was in fact a descendant of a Palestinian immigrant in the late sixteenth century, preceding him was Shinnawi who originated from Egypt and succeeding him was Kurani who came from Kurdistan. In this century, Medina transformed into a truly cosmopolitan urban center among its foreign residents (*al-mujāwirūn*) who were possibly elevated into the leadership level in its endowed institutions.

[197] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿAyyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 390.
[198] Ibrahim al-Kurani, MS Garrett 2581Y, *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīṯh al-nabī al-mukhtār*, fols. 43a-45a.
[199] Barzanji, *al-ʿIqāb al-hāwī ʿalā al-thaʿlab al-ʿāwī*, MS Garrett 978H, fol. 6b, *wastakhlafahu makānahu fakāna fī dhālik ka-Abī Bakr ḥīn istakhlafa ʿAmr raḍiyallāh ʿanh*.

2.6. Concluding Remarks

This chapter highlights the intellectual genealogy of Ibrahim al-Kurani through investigating cultural circumstances in Medina. Kurani's mystical turn that happened in Baghdad inspired him to travel to Damascus and Medina where he continued this Sufi tendency, but also advanced his engagement with the rational sciences. In the middle of his travel from Damascus to Medina, he routed to Cairo where he searched for a codex on classical Arabic and simultaneously began to be attracted to the deepness of the hadith studies—the moment which perpetually continued while living in Medina for the rest of his career. Under the guidance of Ahmad al-Qushashi, the great Medinan teacher, Kurani's genealogy of the rational sciences doubled, his involvement in the Sufi world increasingly deepened, and his pursuing hadith studies reshaped his intellectual personae. He therefore broke the specialty of Kurdish scholars in philosophy and theology in the early modern period by intensely engaging with different fields reciprocally, chairing Qushashi's legacy and preparing himself to enhance the privilege to have expanded a wide intellectual network he had from the 1650s to 1690. Under Qushashi's guidance, two major writings of Kurani, one on the manifold perspectives of *lā ilāha illā Allāh* and the other on the commentarial writings on Qushashi's creedal poems, were completed with vivid cultural settings of philological and intellectual labors demonstrated by Kurani's engagements on Islamic rational theology, Sufism, hadith, and linguistic thought. Considering that these two writings penned by Kurani defined and determined the author's scholarly authority, the temporal distinction of the 1650s was particularly substantial to the early formative career of Kurani in the city of the Prophet. This scholarly authority was made predating the natural succession of the institutional Sufi academy to Kurani, because of the death of Qushashi. The next three decades, from 1660 to 1690, were an important episode of "global test" in which Kurani responded to a wide variety of questions, as well as created his own controversies—the series of historical events that entangle Kurani and his Medinan associates to manifolds of ideas, people, and events, as well as textual materiality. This episode is the subject of the next three chapters.

Part Two: Connections, Contestations, and Transmissions

Introduction to Part Two

The history of Ibrahim al-Kurani and his Medinan contexts between 1660 and 1690 can only be done by understanding the history of his books and their receptions. Biographical dictionaries and other writings in Arabic offer only limited insight into his activities, with the majority of information pertaining to his teaching habits and narratives on texts he read, exchanged, and circulated with his friends and students. Therefore, an accurate representation of his intellectual profile can be achieved by examining notes and contents in the manuscripts of his works mainly in theology, hadith and Sufism. His Medinan close circle should also be analyzed to better understand Kurani's scholarly attitude. Such analysis is required to capture what Febvre and Martin called as the "géographie du livre" (the geography of the book)[200] pertaining to Kurani's writings and their cultural and intellectual contexts in transregional perspectives. Textual and material circulation are crucial to understand the broader contexts of Kurani's ideas in defending Sunnism that became the common religious canopy of the Ottoman cultural sphere. As reported by ʿAyyashi, a Morocaan historian who died in 1679 due to plague, Kurani obtained a collection of questions globally including the Levant, Iraq, Yemen and India. All of these requests related to either exoteric or esoteric types of inquiries. ʿAyyashi was only aware of seventy works penned by Kurani, a significant proportion of which were formulated according to the form of question and answer. These works were spread in Ottoman Syria and Yemen, even the Hijazi people did not know their contents and dissemination unless—as hoped by ʿAyyashi—his students and successors could attempt to collect and request to rewrite copies from around the world until all different oeuvres were assembled.[201] But this wishful thinking has never happened until today considering that the most dominant treasury of Kurani's works is mainly assembled in Istanbul, not in Arabia. By collecting the complete inventory of Kurani's writings and their historical values, such ʿAyyashi's wish could be completed today. Although, this can only be accomplished collective efforts, with the input of numerous scholars, in order to assemble the various philological, historical, and intellectual values that underpin the extensive corpus of Kurani's manuscripts.

[200] Febvre & Martin, *L'Apparition du livre.*

[201] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 390. On his short biography, see: Ben Cheneb, M. and Pellat, Ch., "al-ʿAyyāshī" in *Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*. On the colossal background of his grandfather's heroic actions against Iberian Christian rulers, see ʿAbd al-Latif al-Shadhili, *Al-Ḥaraka al-ʿayyāshiyya: Ḥalqa min tārīkh al-Maghrib fī-l-qarn al-sābiʿ ʿashar*.

Approaching Kurani's texts through geographical-historical approaches enables a synthesis of the spatial significance of manuscripts or body of texts and historical agency through which his texts were materially carried, transmitted, commented, and elaborated or adopted in one or other ways. The intellectual formation of this Kurdish scholar, consequently, is better situated through the analysis of relations between a "center" and a "margin". In Islamic written culture, such division is obvious in the composition of textual production appeared in manuscripts. There are core texts or *mutūn* which are located in the "center"; and there are peripheral or commentarial notes—*taʿliqāt*, *taḥrīrāt*, *shurūḥ*, *ḥāshiyāt* etc.—which are located in the "margins". Notwithstanding, the "margins" can also speak of their own and then make connections to the "center". Using this metaphor from manuscripts, the position of Kurani and his Medinan contexts can be perceived as the "center" (of analysis or locus), while his proponents and opponents alike can be considered as the "margins" coming from different places in the western and eastern Islamic world. Both the "center" and the "margins" are connected, intertwined, and coalesced through mediums of materiality (manuscripts), ideas (either written in manuscripts or orally communicated and recorded in manuscripts) and people (students, friends or readers). The objective of this second part is to delineate the "margins," which encompass all regions beyond Medina and Kurani. These include the Ottoman subjects in Constantinople who supported, sponsored, and significantly influenced the Sunni authority of Kurani on a transregional scale; Kurani's proponents and opponents in Islamic Mediterranean, African, and Indian milieus; Kurani's textual and cultural exchanges in Southeast Asia.

Chapter Three

The Boosting of Sunni Authority:

Ibrahim al-Kurani's Corpus of Writings, Hadith Circulation, and the Ottoman Connection

Hadith transmission became an elaborate, multifaceted act of pious devotion, which guarded the community against falling into error. The Prophet's timeless words encouraged hadith transmission and promise the Prophet's prayers for those who engaged it. There was no better reason to engage in hadith transmission than to piously follow the Prophet's recommendation and hope to be included in his supplications for the transmitters of hadith. This ideology posited that the chain of transmission was a unique blessing that God has bestowed upon the Muslim community.

—**Garrett Davidson**[202]

In his reflections on the crises of the Ottoman Empire, Katip Çelebi (d. 1657) advocated for a return to the archaic law or *qanūn-i qadīm*, through a series of reform in economic, military, and bureaucratic aspects.[203] By following a high-ranking Ottoman bureaucrat in the seventeenth century, the historian Koçi Bey recommended to reestablish the circle of justice to rebalance the duties between the rulers and the ruled. This endorsement was made in response to the political rhetoric of decline within the Ottoman polity, which sought to revitalize the *ancien régime*, robust and determined rule by a man of the sword (*ṣāḥib-i sayf*). Katip Çelebi was contemplating the period of decline that followed the death of Süleyman the Magnificent. He did not merely highlight the decline in political terms; he also emphasized the deterioration in the pursuit of scientific and philosophical exploration. "The scientific and philosophical decline," Çelebi rhetorically argues in *The Balance of Truth*, happened since the end of Süleyman's rule from 1570 onwards.[204] The archaic law of restoring politics and knowledge is, therefore, a necessity to regain

[202] "The Ideology of Hadith Transmission" in Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition: A Social and Intellectual History of Hadith Transmission across a Thousand Years*, 19-20.

[203] Katip Çelebi, *Dustūr al-ʿamal li-iṣlāḥ al-khalal*, 5; I found this information from Banu Turnaoglu, *The Formation of Turkish Republicanism*, 147.

[204] Katip Çelebi, *Mīzān al-haqq*, 23.

the magnificent history of the previous century, which Casale called as "the Ottoman age of exploration,"[205] not only in terms of geographical expansion against the European and Islamic imperial rivals but also for the shake of scholarly inquiry. The increasing impact of the puritanical approach espoused by the Kadızadelis (1621-1685) on the religious practices of the Ottomans led Çelebi to counsel his readers on the necessity of the philosopher-king, invoking the classical philosophy of Plato and al-Farabi (d. 950/1), presumably signifying the emperors Mehmet the Conqueror and Süleyman the Law-Giver. It is argued that the ruler should revivify the archetypal scholars who have devoted themselves in both philosophy and sacred law such as "the imam Gazali, the imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, the learned ʿAdud al-Din al-Iji and his followers, the Qadi Baydawi, the learned Shirazi, Qutb al-Din al-Razi and Saʿd al-Din Taftazani, and Sharif Jurjani and their learned follower Jalal al-Din Dawani, and their disciples." Çelebi remarks these scholars as polymaths who do not confine themselves to one branch of knowledge solely. Additionally, he emphasized this point in his renowned *Cihannüma* (Universal Geography), cautioning Ottoman readers about the perils of stagnation in scientific advancement, particularly in the fields of astronomy and geography.[206] In light of the destruction of the Ottoman Observatory in Istanbul in 1580 and the continued influence of the Kadızadelis throughout the seventeenth century, Çelebi underscored the necessity for the advancement of rational sciences.[207]

While some modern historians argue on the decline of the seventeenth century,[208] it is obvious from the above explanation that Çelebi expressed this decline narrative in his own time through the centrality of lens in Constantinople without considering the broader context of the Ottoman lands beyond the imperial court. Some modern scholars, including Wisnovsky, El-Rouayheb, and Dallal, have proposed a thorough examination of the post-classical Islamic era when de facto the rational sciences were revived not only in Persia.[209] The Ottoman scholars in fact continued

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[205] Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*.

[206] Banu Turnaoglu, *The Formation of Turkish Republicanism*, 27-8.

[207] Katip Çelebi, *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*; see also K. El-Rouayheb, "The Myth of 'The Triumph of Fanaticism' in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire."

[208] Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*; S. J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Vol. I: Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808.* For more perspectives on *inḥiṭāṭ* in the Ottoman Arab lands see reference given by K. El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb*, 1, fn2.

[209] R. Wisnovsky, "The Nature and Scope of Arabic Philosophical Commentary in Post-Classical (ca. 1100-1900 AD) Islamic Intellectual History: Some Preliminary Observation," and his much-anticipated book *Post-classical Arabic Philosophy, 1100-1900: Avicennian Metaphysics between Arabic Logic and Islamic Theology;* K. El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*; see also S. Ahmed's *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* especially chapter 1 on his useful conceptualization of "Balkans-to-Bengal complex" to capture a post-classical cultural dynamic of Islam in addition to Thomas Bauer's works, as an alternative to look at

to engage with *ḥikma* or philosophical sciences. The avant-garde scholars on this subject, nevertheless, were Kurdish, as also stated by Katip Çelebi. However, he focused exclusively on the contributions of Kurdish scholars in earlier centuries of the Ottoman Empire, as illustrated in Chapter One. The work of Khaled El-Rouayheb has been crucial to reconsider the contribution of Kurdish and other scholars in the Ottoman Arab lands to the development of rational sciences. In this light, the "decline" narrative and "pessimistic observation" stated by Çelebi can be perceived as "irrelevant"[210] and purely rhetorical.[211] Ibrahim al-Kurani and his contemporaries, on the other hand, supported the intellectual thrive in the empire from the political edges. It is possible to corroborate the idea that knowledge production in the early modern period was spread everywhere by relating Kurani and his Medinan milieus to the soft power of the Ottoman Sunnism. In this context, the spatiality of the imperial froentiers can be considered the epicenter of knowledge. In this cultural and intellectual terrain, Kurani and his inner Medinan circle in the second half of the seventeenth century represent a notable example of the interplay between rational sciences and the divine law, a phenomenon that Çelebi, seen elitely from the imperial center, was apparently unaware of. While hadith discourse appears to have been a primary point of connection between Kurani and Ottoman nobles, particularly those belonging to the Köprülü family, this does not imply that individuals in Constantinople or Anatolia who perused Kurani's theological compositions, as evidenced in numerous manuscript copies available from Turkish libraries, have been overlooked in this discussion. In the course of further examination, the Ottoman reception of Kurani's hadith and theological texts was inextricably linked to the notion of Sunnism, forming a complex intertwined discourse.

The second half of the seventeenth century in the Ottoman world constituted a period of significant intellectual advancement. Under the Köprülü political intervention, which the eighteenth-century French philosopher Voltaire notes as "just, generous, clement, liberal,"[212] many

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the alternative way to read this period. In a different tone, Ahmad Dallal's *Islam Without Europe: Traditions of Reform in Eighteenth-Century Islamic Thought* elaborate the fluorescence of *ijtihād*, although he does not look at philosophical inquiry and engange with manuscripts; for a critical review of *taqlīd* and *taḥqīq* in a comparison's tone see M. M. Koushki, "Tahqiq vs. Taqlid in the Renaissances of Western Early Modernity". Other scholars tend to echo this research trend, including Frank Griffel's *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy in Islam*.

[210] I. Metin Kunt, "The Köprülü Years," 134-135.

[211] I thank Sonja Brentjes and Evrim Binbas for their opinions on this political rhetoric of decline.

[212] "One ne peut, ce me semble, refuser la magnanimité à un guerrir juste, généraux, clément, liberal. Je vois trois grands visiers, *Kiuperli* ou *Kuprogli*, qui ont eu ces qualités"; Voltaire, *Commentaire sur l'esprit des loix de Montesquieu*, 36-37; I found this reference from A. Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the Enlightenment*, 175.

Ottoman scholars[213] enjoyed royal patronage that ameliorated the vibrant intellectual culture and networks within the empire. The Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha who reigned from 1661 to 1676 played a significant tole in the broader context of the Ottoman renaissance.[214] Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, in contrast to his father, the founder of the Köprülü regime, was known as *fazıl* (Ar. *fāḍil*) due to his virtuous character during his lifetime: an ex-professor (*müderris*), a calligrapher, a bibliophile, and a leading patron of arts and sciences. The contemporary Evliya Çelebi depicted Fazıl Ahmed Pasha as "a just, ghazi, virtuous, and visionary statesman endowed with an intelligence at the level of Aristotle."[215] One of his important protégés, the historian Hezarfenn Hüseyin Efendi (d. ca. 1691) wrote about Europe and exchanged ideas with European counterparts.[216] The cultural and intellectual patronage of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha extended to other Muslim and non-Muslim Ottoman scholars as his protégés, such as Köse İbrahim Efendi (d. after 1664), Panagiotakis Nikousios (d. 1673), Abu Bakr b. Bahram al-Dimashqi (d. 1691), and Alexander Mavrocordatos (d. 1709). These protégés created greater understanding of Ottoman knowledge by translating and transferring scientific merits from their European counterparts. In addition to this, the Grand Vizier sponsored the Italian physician Giovanni Mascellini and patronized his Latin medical oeuvre that in 1673 was published in Vienna.[217] Nevertheless, the extent to which Fazıl Ahmed Pasha and other Köprülü viziers extended their cultural and intellectual patronage in the Arab provinces remains unclear. Basheer Nafi was the first to suggest a potential, though uncertain, connection between Medinan intellectual culture and the brief Ottoman renaissance that was invigorated by the Köprülü family, the influential kinfolk which produced grand viziers during this era.[218] Meanwhile, Oman Fathurahman[219] investigates an intellectual connection between the Ottoman and the Malay worlds through the lens of the specific manuscript tradition

[213] I use this term broadly to include scholars outside Constantinople or Anatolia as *Ottoman*. In fact, modern biographies completed in the late Ottoman time include Ibrahim al-Kurani as *Osmanlı*.

[214] About the career of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, see chapter three of Cumhur Bekar's *The Rise of the Köprülü Family*.

[215] M. Fatih Calisir, *A Virtous Grand Vizier: Politics and Patronage in the Ottoman Empire during the Grand Vizierate of Fazıl Mustafa Pasha (1661-1676)*, 13, 169. I thank Umut Hasan for this reference.

[216] Heidrun Wurm, *Der osmanische Historiker Ḥuseyn b. Ǧa'fer, gennant Hezārfenn, und die Istanbuler Gesselschaft in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, 1971. I thank Derin Terzioğlu for her recommendation on this reference.

[217] M. Fatih Calisir, *A Virtous Grand Vizier*, 2.

[218] Basheer Nafi, "Taṣawwuf and Reform in Pre-Modern Islamic Culture: In Search of Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī," 354-5.

[219] Oman Fathurrahman, "New Textual Evidence for Intellectual and Religious Connections between the Ottomans and Aceh," 298-302. The author uses the variety of *Itḥāf al-dhakī* manuscripts stored in Istanbul libraries. See Chapter Four about this connection.

and intellectual contribution of Kurani whom Martin van Bruinessen, following the anthropological view of Clifford Geertz, interpreted as a "cultural broker," especially mediating between the Indian Muslims writing in Persian on the one hand and the Turkish- and Arabic-speaking world on the other.[220] Although, this Geertzian mediation particularly leads to the Persiante intellectual culture that extensively produced a vast literature on theology and philosophy especially in the post-Mongol conquest.[221] A fatalist overview of the term 'cultural brokers' may see Kurdish scholars as the intellectual interlopers who had lack of creativity and originality. On the contrary, it factually means that as a leading Kurdish scholar Kurani played as a cultural agency who pursued "the harvest of medieval theology"[222] of the past, transmitted it, and rearticulated it within his intellectual project which then connected disparate geographical and anthropological elements, a process that occurred even without his self-awareness. As will be discussed below, there is a discernible connection between the Köprülü ruling family, Kurani, and the broader Medinan intellectual milieu during the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Kurani's rearticulation of rational sciences, by rethinking certain doctrinal aspects, is one of the key factors in the intellectual reinvigoration that reached the wider audience witnessed by the extensive reception of his theological works in Ottoman libraries in Constantinople and elsewhere. Kurani's portrayal can be situated within the category delineated by Çelebi as exemplifying the ideal of a scholar who perpetuates the tradition of previous polymaths, including the celebrated late medieval philosopher Jalal al-Din Dawani and their disciples. A written account from the descendants of Kurani in Medina, as documented in MS Garrett 4670Y at Firestone Library, Princeton, substantiates this portrayal. This unique manuscript is a sermon delivered by Hasan b. ʿAbd al-Karim, a Kurdish sayyid and the grandson of Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji, who was a close circle of Kurani in Medina. The sermon was delivered at the wedding festival of Ibrahim b. Abu Tahir, the grandson of Ibrahim al-Kurani. Hasan delivered a sermon to an audience comprising primarily elites and scholars who were able to comprehend the content he sought to convey. He lauded the family of Kurani and then proceeded to acknowledge the latter's intellectual

[220] Martin van Bruinessen, *Mullas, Sufis and Heretics*, 23.

[221] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*; for the terminology of *Persophonie* as the "Persianate world" see Bert Fragner, *Die Persophonie. Regionalitäat, Identität und Sprachkontakt in der Geschichte Asiens*; Shahab Ahmed interpreted it as "Balkans-to-Bengal complex" in his *What is Islam? the Importance of Being Islamic.*

[222] This term is borrowed from HA Oberman's *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism*.

merits in the domains of transmitted and rational sciences, and this was followed by a brief philosophical exploration of existence, which represented Hasan's attempt to invigorate the reputation of Kurani.[223] This is the way Hasan attempted to invigorate Kurani's personae:

> The reformer… [like] Hermes Trismegistus (*Hirmis al-Harāmisa*) who compared two teachers, Abu Nasr al-Farabi and Aristotle. The leading among the Ashʿarites who firmly arbitrated between two shaykhs, Abu Hasan al-Ashʿari and Abu Mansur al-Maturidi… the reconciler between contradictory opposites. He pondered critically, comparatively what has been discussed by the Sufis, the theologians, and the philosophers.

While exploring the meaning of Platonic allegories (*al-mithāl al-aflāṭuniyya*) and other popular terminologies of existence among Sufis and philosophers, certainly thrived in the post-Timurid scholarly culture, Hasan bolstered Kurani's authority as a leading Sunni thinker with a variety of prosaic glorification, beautifully written and orally transmitted through the social gathering of the wedding of Kurani's grandson who offered 60 dinars to his bride. This adoration was intended to enhance the social status of the bridegroom among the audience; however, it is also a sincere testament to Kurani's intellectual legacy, as recounted in the early eighteenth-century Medinan social milieu.

The rendering of Kurani's personae as the "reformer" in the early eighteenth century reflects on his historical agency and intellectual authority which attempted to reconcile two contradictory modes of thought and to create a reconciling method which arbitrates what had been previously accepted as a taken-for-granted truth over an extended period. The association of Kurani with Hermes Trismegistus was a a deliberate attempt to create magnificent persona for the former. The term *Hirmis al-Harāmisa* correlates with the Greek tradition of Hermes as the messenger of the gods, the progenitor of writing, and the patron deity of good fortune, fraud, magic, and poetry. Meanwhile, classical Muslim scholars consider Hermes as the Prophet Idris (Enoch) and the prophet of science.[224] Given that Hermes is regarded as a paragon of hermeneutics, it can also be surmised that Kurani is perceived as a seminal figure in employing a profound interpretation of religious texts—theological, philosophical and traditional—to re-explicate them within his historical agenda. Kurani's pedagogical style was distinguished by his readiness to endorse the multiplicity of meanings and perspectives gleaned from the texts that he perused with his students.

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[223] *Khuṭbat al-nikāḥ Ibrāhīm b. Abī Ṭāhir al-Kūrānī*, MS Garrett 4670Y, fols. 2b-7a.
[224] See Kevin van Bladel, *The Arabic Hermes: From Pagan Sage to Prophet of Science*.

He would frequently pause to clarify further until the intricacies of the problem were fully elucidated. It was an experience acquired by ʿAbd Allah al-ʿAyyashi and Muhammad al-Barzanji when both studied philosophical books with Kurani. In the class, as it was purposed only for the advanced students or learned scholars, Kurani explicated a philosophical problem by gradating its different explanations according to various thinkers. Kurani used to say, "Get close to the discovery of the Truth!" (*Qāribū al-ʿuthūr ʿalā al-ḥaqq*). It is a scholarly ethos of what El-Rouayheb in his historical interpretation interprets as "verification" that Kurani taught his students. In Kurani's view, linking ourselves to the discovery of the truth will facilitate our enlightenment by the niche of the prophethood (*mishkāt al-nubūʿa*). It is important to underline here that the meaning of *al-ḥaqq* is usually interchangeable between 'truth' of knowledge and the Real Truth, one of God's names. As chronicled by ʿAyyashi, Kurani inclined to ascertain for the clarity of arguments by juxtaposing contradictory opinions, considerably suspicious of many things, including when he elucidated the Illuminationist philosophy of Suhrawardi. It is, ʿAyyashi notes, the method of the ancients like Plato did: the truth is hardly differentiated from the falsehood.[225] Dumairieh correctly asserted that Kurani philosophical contributions represents "a genuine synthesis of different Islamic intellectual traditions" spanning from the eleventh century to the fifteenth century, namely "*kalam* and the Akbarian appropriations of Avicennian metaphysics."[226] (14, 304). Dumairieh further explained:

> In the seventeenth century, al-Kūrānī found Ibn ʿArabī's writings to be already highly philosophized, as a result of the efforts of al-Qūnawī and of numerous other Akbarian commentators. Building on the efforts of previous scholars, al-Kūrānī used all of his intellectual preparation to buildIslamic Sunni theology on Ibn ʿArabī's thought. By that time, *kalām* had already been largely philosophized as well, making al-Kūrānī's task easier than it might have been without philosophy's pervasive influence. Al-Kūrānī discussed almost every topic current in theology and Sufism in such an interconnected way that it is difficult to separate these discussions into different categories. He established a coherent structure in which each part is at once based on another idea and foundational to still others… For al-Qushāshī, al-Kūrānī, al-Barzanjī, and al-Nābulusī, *waḥdat al-wujūd* is the best explanation of the first *Shahāda*, *la ilāh illā Allāh*. Ibn ʿArabī became the criterion by which to judge orthodox Sunni theology.

[225] ʿAyyashi, *Al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 397.
[226] N. Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz before Wahhabism*, 14, 304.

> Although al-Kūrānī is the scholar who provided the most detailed and structured explanation of *waḥdat al-wujūd* as a complete Islamic doctrine that represents the correct explanation of Islamic faith, the efforts of most of the Akbarian scholars in his time were similarly directed to clarifying the idea of *waḥdat al-wujūd* as representing the true faith.[227]

The hegemonic discourse of Akbarian philosophy as 'the official doctrine of the (Ottoman) state', as explained by Dumairieh, became an important setting for Kurani to raise his prominence as a leading commentator within this tradition. It is, however, imperative that combined with transmitted sciences, hadith in particular, Kurani played a significant role to determine the standard criterion of Sunnism for which Ottoman elites were particularly interested in. Hence, the hegemonic discourse of Akbarian philosophy in Sunni theology can only be fully understood by integrating with the excellence in hadith discourse and highest chains of transmission, an exemplary fusion between post-Timurid and post-Mamluk intellectual traditions. By highlighting this point, Kurani's persona and elevated Sunni authority, particularly in terms of proposing a synthesis through Islamic theological-philosophical and traditional frameworks, was widely embraced within the broader Ottoman contexts, through the intermediary channels of his inner circle and extensive networks, which will be clarified next. To better situate hadith discourse promulgated by Kurani, this chapter will deal with Kurani's hadith scholarship and its wider context within both post-canonical hadith culture and Ottoman receptions. Kurani's high authority in transmitted sciences, particularly hadith scholarship, this chapter will argue, elevated him to the status of a celebrated Sunni scholar and enabled him to establish connections with the Ottoman elites during the Köprülü's age.

3.1. Understanding Kurani's Hadith Authority

The earlier development of hadith scholarship in the city of the Prophet, Medina, began to flourish in the late Mamluk period during the life of Sakhawi (d. 1497), a prominent hadith scholar and historian who migrated from Cairo to Medina. Hadith studies in the city went uninterrupted even though the capital move from Cairo to Istanbul following the Ottoman conquest in 1517. Sakhawi and other scholars fostered Medina's status by producing works in hadith literature and

[227] N. Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz before Wahhabism*, 176, 255-6.

this historian composed a prosopographical study of the city. In his *al-Tuḥfa al-laṭīfa bi-akhbār al-balad al-sharīfa* ("The amiable gift on the history of the noble city"), Sakhawi connects the biographies of famous figures from early Islamic times until his period to sanctify the Islamic nobility of the city, and then it connected the authoritative pasts to his own time. Following Sakhawi, hadith scholarship in Medina was not dormant although the intensification of such studies across times differs. Still, the precise circumstances throughout the sixteenth century require separate studies that are absent in Western academia. There is dearth of information on the question to what extent the development in this century laid the basis for the growing quantity of Sufi masters who also delved in hadith studies. The assumption that hadith studies in this period were stagnant, mainly due to the major role of Sufi scholars in the Hijaz, has been a subject of critical review. At least from the time of the Indian Baruchi and the Egyptian Ahmad al-Shinnawi, the predecessors of Qushashi in Medina in the late sixteenth century until the nineteenth century, Sufis played a decisive role in cultivating hadith studies. However, this does not mean that they penned voluminous commentaries on hadith.[228] Several modern scholars tend to see this Sufi-leaning-to-hadith scholar as anew and built a different foundation for the reform project namely 'neo-Sufism'.[229] By understanding the endurance of hadith studies, without any significant interludes, the high authority of hadith in seventeenth-century Medina did not begin from Kurani's time. Ahmad al-Qushashi paved the way of the mélange between hadith studies and Sufi tradition in the city. Anthony Johns notes that the skills to marry between Sufi hermeneutics and hadith are sparse, and Qushashi filled the gap.[230] But, this is partially true as the history of Sufi hermeneutics of hadith in the post-classical or post-canonical era has been hitherto understudied. In other words, the Sufi hermeneutics of hadith could be flourished long before the seventeenth century. A new generation of scholars in the Western academia has started to scrutinize the nature of hadith writings including commentaries among Sufi scholars in the post-canonical era, which help us to uncover the broad circumstances in the field. In contrast to the rational sciences, there is no question of "intellectual decline" – proposed by experts in *kalam* and *falsafa* –

[228] Discourses on the post-classical development of hadith literature cannot be equated with that of post-classical Islamic theology and philosophy. Thus, we cannot judge that Kurani produced insignificant commentaries of hadith against our recent evaluation based on the commentarial tradition in the post-classical period. For Kurani's life, his hadith discourses formed the ultimate authority as a respected Sunni scholar among many people even though he made certain theological controversies that caused some famous scholars to refute or even to attack harshly.

[229] Fazlur Rahman, John Voll, Azra, etc. A classical critique is Bernd Radtke and O'Fahey's "Neo-Sufism Reconsidered." A recent critique of this approach can be seen in Ahmad Dallal, *Islam Without Europe: Traditions of Reform in Eighteenth-Century Islamic Thought.*

[230] Johns, "Ibrahim al-Kurani."

in understanding the post-classical or post-canonical hadith culture. However, it would be beneficial to examine how hadith exegesis contributed to the post-classical development of the Islamic intellectual tradition in general. The works of two scholars, Joel Blecher and Garrett Davidson, represent a significant contribution to this new discourse on understanding hadith in the post-canonical period.[231] Davidson, in particular, employs a theoretical approach to situating post-canonical hadith culture. This is achieved by drawing upon the study of orality in Palestinian Judaism as outlined by Martin Jaffee. The approach is structured around three layers of significant portions: the body of hadith texts, the oral-textual transmission of hadith, and the ideology that undergirds the tradition. In the context of hadith in the post-canonical period, Davidson presents a compelling argument that the ideology of hadith orality was not an entirely coherent entity, but rather a composite structure comprising a multitude of elements and layers. "This ideology," Davidson further explains, "transformed hadith transmission and the chain of transmission into a sacred and transcendent institution. Hadith transmission became an elaborate, multifaceted act of pious devotion, which guarded the community against falling into error."[232] An essential framework offered by Davidson is of particular significance in delineating the relation between Sufism and hadith, as briefly stated by Johns when the latter designated the Sufi-hadith characteristic of Kurani. Davidson writes:

> A mystic understanding of the chain of transmission added a further layer to this ideology. Centuries after the Prophet's death, the chain of transmission gave the hadith collector the opportunity to come into contact with his mystical charisma. It functioned as a kind of sacred relic that allowed one to span the centuries that separated him or her from the Prophetic era and connect with its spiritual power. Further layers of understanding could and would continue to be added, giving the ideology further depth and complexity, but all of these layers offered a rationale for the continuation of hadith transmission and the preservation of the chain of transmission. Together they formed an ideology that sustained the life of the chain of transmission and the community of transmitters.[233]

[231] On the introduction to a diachronic approach of post-classical hadith commentary and transmission see Joel Blecher, *Said the Prophet: Hadith Commentary across a Millenium*; Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition: An Intellectual and Social History of Post-Canonical Hadith Transmission*.

[232] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 19.

[233] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 20.

In consideration of this post-canonical era, the hadith tradition was aligned with the evolution of the Sufi tradition, with notable contributions from scholars based in Medina who played a pivotal role in the transmission of hadith. In his hadith certificate, the Damascene hadith scholar, Muhammad al-Kamili mentions Qushashi as one of the critical transmitters of hadith, especially all hadith canons as well as jurisprudence.[234] The abovementioned Muhammad al-Fasi attempted to migrate to Medina, because of his high interest in hadith development in the region. On the section of *Compendium of Tirmidhī*, the Moroccan author mentions one narration back to Qushashi by inserting that the scholarly reliability of the Medinan scholar connects to the Great Master Ibn ʿArabi.[235] The provenance of Sufi hermeneutics to Ibn ʿArabi means that there was a continuous link in the period between the Great Master in the thirteenth century and Qushashi, the leader of Akbarian philosophy in his time. Qushashi's contemporary in Mecca, Ibn ʿAllan, was an esteem authority of hadith, but the latter is more famous as hadith scholar per se. Ibn ʿAllan became a favorite teacher for those who were interested in transmitting the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhari and Muslim. A legend said that he remained to teach both hadith compendiums during the time of flood in Mecca in 1630 by relocating his class inside the Kaʿba. Qushashi and Ibn ʿAllan exchanged cordial communication and both shared the same Jawi students (see Chapter Four). In the early modern context, Medina already rivaled Cairo and Damascus as the new center for hadith studies buttressed with the rich tradition of Sufism. The location of the Prophet's tomb in Medina reinforced the city's position as a center of Islamic scholarship. Many scholars chose to remain in Medina, undertaking a series of physical visits with the intention of connecting with the Prophet and seeking to attain a high level of hadith transmission. Mecca, in contrast, from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries never developed into a top-ranking center of learning.[236] In light of this development, Qushashi was of critical importance as one of the most sought-after hadith transmitters and scholars.

In some Qushashi's writings, including some fragment folios of his extraordinary hadith work completed in Muharram 1067 (October 1656), *Tatimmat al-arbaʿīn min ḥadīth sayyid al-mursalīn* ("An exploratory completion to the forty reports of the Prophet"), a reader's note at MS New Series 1114 of the Firestone Library testifies that he benefitted from the opinion of Sakhawi

[234] *Thabat Muḥammad b. Nūr al-Dīn al-Kāmilī al-Dimashqī*, MSS Garrett 234Y, fol. 2a.
[235] M. b. al-Tayyib al-Fasi, *Irsāl al-asānīd wa-īṣāl al-muṣannafāt wa-l-masānīd*, MS Garrett 234Y, fol. 163a.
[236] Marco Scholler, "Medina," 371; Hasan Ahmad Hasan Barakah, *al-Madīnat al-munawwara fī ʿaṣr dawlat salāṭīn al-mamālik al-jirākisa*, 12; on Mecca's position in post-classical Islam, see Patrick Franke, "Educational and Non-Educational Madrasas in Early Modern Mecca."

with Qushashi's handwritings. The reader borrowed the book from the famous library of Qushashi,[237] which according to the Meccan Hanafi scholar Ibn al-ʿUjaymi inherited to Ibrahim al-Kurani as the endowed library containing the books of secrets and philosophical knowledge which were prohibited for public access.[238] It means that only transmitted sciences, as reported in the reader note, were all easily accessible to every level of students and people. The vast collection of Qushashi's library and manuscript production at his Sufi academy, including hadith literature, thoroughly inherited to the ownership and directorship of Kurani.

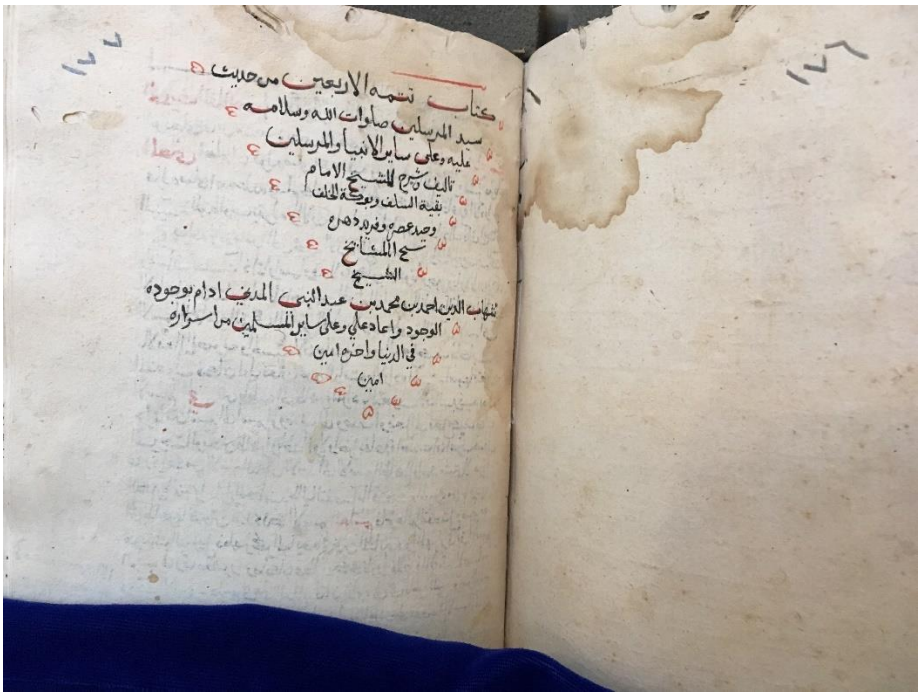

Figure 3.1. Fragment folios of Qushashi's *Kitāb tatimmat al-arbaʿīn min ḥadīth sayyid al-mursalīn*, MS New Series, Princeton, fols. 89a-105a.

While the reader note mentioned above as an example of intellectual engagement narrates about his reliance to the hadith opinions of Sakhawi and Qushashi, the specific fragment folios of the Qushashi's work, *Tatimmat al-arbaʾīn*, as evidenced from the Princeton collection, reveals a Sufi approach to the forty hadith genre. Copied only from the select thirty hadith to the forty, these fragments uncover that Qushashi elucidates discussions on certain issues, such as the exoteric and esoteric meanings of God names, *al-ʿalīm* (The Knower) and *al-ḥayy* (The Eternally

[237] *Min kutub khazānatihi al-maʿrūfa*

[238] MS New Series 1114, fols. 23b-24b; Hasan al-ʿUjaymi, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*, MS F 1744, Dar al-Kutub of Cairo.

Living One). In this work, he attempts to interpret certain select hadiths with his profound Sufi knowledge. Despite the obvious importance, it is noteworthy that the work does not contain complete chains of transmission to every hadith he quoted. This approach is markedly dissimilar to that of Kurani, who meticulously documented the comprehensive chains of transmission, including that from Qushashi, not only in his hadith works but also in other fields. A cursory examination of the composition of *Tatimmat al-arbaʾīn* reveals that Qushashi perpetuated the forty-hadith genre that was prevalent in the post-canonical hadith culture. As Davidson correctly asserts, this genre was motivated by the pious desire to be spiritually linked with the Prophet and aimed to provide a concise and accessible collection of hadith.[239] This forty hadith genre undoubtedly reflected in Kurani's writings, including the extensive discourse on *Shahāda* in his aforementioned *Inbāh al-anbāh* (in Chapter Two).

As expressed in Suyuti's *Durr al-manthūr*, written as a note in MS Garrett 4581Y, Princeton University Library, after Sufi masters the hadith scholars are categorized as the most common pious.[240] Due to the convergence of Sufism and hadith within his intellectual tradition, Kurani attained a prominent position among the intellectual elite of the Hijaz. According to Muhammad Qasim Zaman, the hadith transmission was "a function which, more than any other, defined the *ʿālim*'s vocation."[241] As seen from the previous chapter, Kurani's interest in collecting hadith and chains of transmission started with his first treatise project, entitled *Inbāh al-anbāh ʿalā taḥqīq iʿrab lā ilāh illā Allāh*, in which he assembled hadiths pertaining to the *shahada* under Qushashi's guidance. Following this work, his intellectual 'biography', *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam*, which contains his chains of transmission for almost major hadith collections from his major teachers, is a main work of *sanads* in which various scholars sought for certificates. During the course of the 1650s, Kurani's interactions with Qushashi led him to recognize all chains of transmission from this Medinan teacher, which were predominantly reflected in the textual production of his *Amam.* As a result of this work, as can be seen from Figure 3.2, *Al-Amam* is recorded as one of rare intellectual record (*hādhā al-thabat nādir al-mithāl*) – commonly recognized until later centuries – with a written *ijaza* by his own handwriting to his Damascene student in 1681.

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[239] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 204.

[240] *Wa in kāna yaʿumm al-muttaqīn al-kāmilīn fī al-taqwā lakinnahu fī ahl al-ḥadīth baʿd al-ṣūfiyya akthar minhu fī ghayrihin wallāhu aʿlam.* (fol. 35a).

[241] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 1.

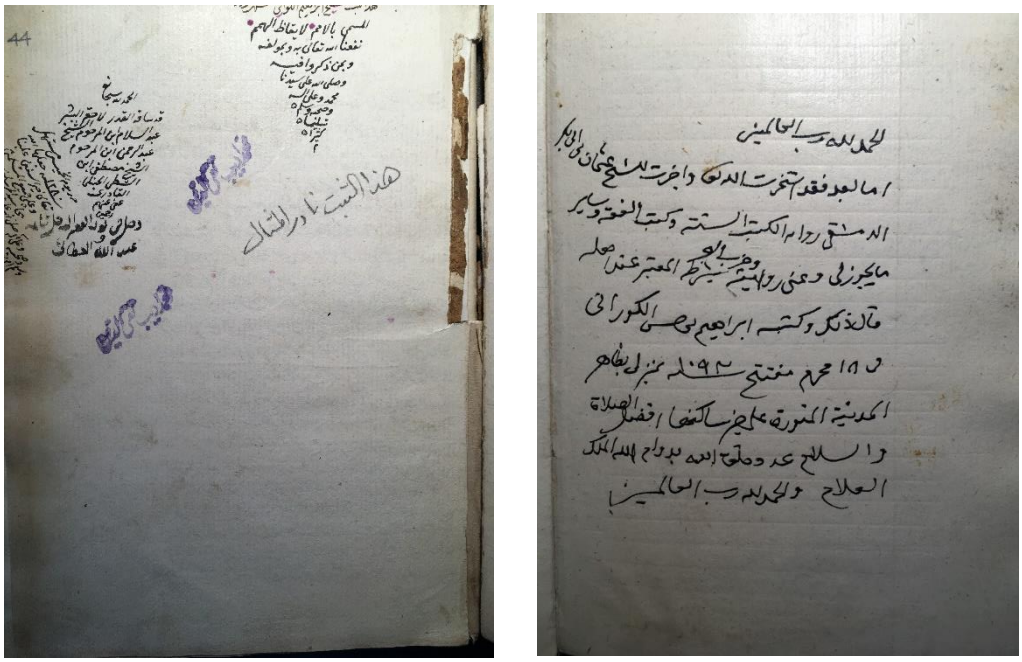

Figure 3.2. MS Princeton, Garret 336Y, fols. 44a, 36b. Kurani's autograph of his *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam*, an ijaza to his student in Damascus, Uthman b. Abu Bakr, given in 18 Muharram 1092 (February 1681). The codex belonged to Muhammad Adib Taqi al-Din of Damascus. In the cover page of this copy, there is a note written by certain Hanbali scholar, ʿAbd al-Salam b. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Rahman, in 1280 H / 1863 AD.

Kurani's other major works on hadith can be classified into two distinct categories.[242] The first category comprises treatises that document his contributions to the compilation of significant hadith collections and chains of transmission, including those of the highest rank. These include: (a) *Janāḥ al-najāḥ bi-l-ʿawālī al-ṣīḥāḥ* contains his elevated chains of transmission, as is evident from its title; (b) *Maslak al-abrār ilā aḥādīth al-nabī al-Mukhtār*, which contains 101 hadiths and their isnads; and (c) *Niẓām al-zabarjad fī al-arbaʿīn al-musalsala bi-Aḥmad*, which contains forty hadiths transmitted by scholars named Ahmad. The tradition of writing the forty-hadith genre, as represented from (c), and *ʿawālī* genre, as revealed in (a), is a solid proof that

[242] A brief review of these works can be found in Chapter Five of N. Dumairieh's dissertation, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 399-414, for which he omitted in his published book *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in Before Wahhabism* (2022), and was published separately in *Arabica* (2021), implying that Kurani's hadith scholarship does not fit with the theoretical paradigm of post-classical Islamic philosophy and theology. To simplify the classification, I have divided Kurani's major hadith work into two categories.

Kurani continued, in the language of Davidson, 'the most enduringly popular genres of post-canonical hadith literature,'[243] which, as I will show later, not only related to Kurani's personal – intellectual, spiritual – inquiry but also had an effect on his transregional network especially among strong Ottoman viziers in his time. The second category comprises treatises to explicate certain hadiths. These include *Iʿmāl al-fikr wa-l-riwāyāt fī sharḥ ḥadīth inna-mā al-aʿmāl bi-l-niyyāt* and *al-Tawjīh al-mukhtār fī nafy al-qalb ʿan ḥadīth ikhtiṣām al-janna wa-l-nār* which contain discussion on theological issues as appeared in his other non-hadith works. For instance, in Dumairieh's summary, Kurani employs the concept of intention (*niyyah*) to argue for *kalam nafsī* (inner speech) and uses the hadith of transformation in forms to support his theological conception that God manifests in any form He wishes without any limitations or conditions. While the second category identifies Kurani's expertise in theology, the social impact of this genre did not always reach the level of significance attributed to it by scholars who prioritize the first category. In the context of post-canonical tradition of hadith scholarship, narratives on Kurani's search for elevated chains of transmission, collecting hadiths, and acts of transmitting them to other people (friends, scholars, nobles, statesmen, and students) corroborate the importance of hadith scholarship endured from several hundred-years earlier. This ultimately reinforced his own authority as a prominent Sunni scholar and theologian in seventeenth-century Ottoman Arabia and beyond.

Transition period between Qushashi's and Kurani's succession as the most prominent scholar in Medina in the 1650s along with later accounts demonstrated the dynamic period where social forms of hadith scholarship made Medina vibrant. In what follow, narratives on the development of Kurani's hadith scholarship, including his acts of studying and transmitting hadith will be elucidated. There are numerous examples of written *ijāzas* of transmission from Kurani to other scholars occupying prominent positions, a few of which will be cited below for illustrative purposes (see also Figure 3.2 above). Others record the active forum of hadith under the direction of Kurani. The first is the *isnād* that had been given by Kurani in four folios to Mulla Mustafa b. Mulla Baghdadi.[244] Mustafa pursued hadith *samāʿat* from Kurani, especially the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhari for which he obtained some isnads altogether, one that is linked to the transmission of ʿAsqalani's *Fatḥ al-bārī fī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, and the other transmission that is different from the transmission linked to ʿAsqalani. The latter transmission is rendered as a highly reliable one

[243] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 203

[244] See *Ijāzat Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan al-Kūrānī li-Mullā Muṣṭafā b. Mullā al-Baghdādī*, MS Wizarat al-Awqaf wa-l-Shu'un al-Islamiyya, Kuwait.

in the seventeenth century as it comprises only seven transmitters, compared with ʿAsqalani in the fifteenth century with six transmitters. Also, Mulla Mustafa narrated *thulāthiyyāt*, a hadith chain that only consists of three narrators between Bukhari and the prophet, from Kurani. Having *thulāthiyyāt* in this sense means that a scholar narrated the most reliable report of the prophetic tradition, and it is valued highly. Davidson's research demonstrates that the presence of these short chains of transmission (*thulāthiyyāt)* in Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ* serves to distinguish the collection from the other works of the canon. Due to the revered status of Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, scholars engaged in a competition to hear the work's 7,000 hadith through the shortest possible chains of transmissions back to Bukhari. This resulted in the creation of some very short chains of transmission back to Bukhari, which contributed to the work's enduring popularity.[245]

The other evidence comes from a codex containing rational and transmitted sciences altogether. Copied by his Jawi student who later became the fighter of the Dutch Indies Company's politics in Banten, Yusuf al-Maqasiri (d. 1699), Kurani noted in the marginalia some quotations on hadith from Ibn ʿArabi, Husayn al-Husayni al-Yazdi al-Maybudi, Sakhawi, Nawawi (d. 1277), Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), etc. In the same codex, Kurani wrote that he read the index or *fihrist* given by the student of Suyuti on the notes (*taʿlīqāt)* of hadith.[246] On the middle interstices of the codex bridging between *maʿqūlāt* and *manqūlāt* Kurani made a note or summary for three pages on the sayings of Sakhawi, Nawawi, Ibn ʿAbd al-Salam (1262), Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 855), Ibn Hazm and Ibn Salah (d. 1245) on the prophetic tradition. Based on the discourse of Sakhawi, Kurani noted on the opinion of Abu Hanifah about the priority of the weak hadith that is superior to rational acquisition (*raʾy*) and analogy (*qiyās*). Other views on the condition of the weak *riwāyahs* were also supplemented in the marginalia. While Kurani familiarized sophisticatedly with the rational sciences, he did not oppose these sciences, even to weak hadith, which was historically often used by Ghazali in his works mainly his *Revivification of the Religious Sciences*. The codex used by Kurani as a scholarly tool to teach his Jawi students including hadith knowledge that must not be contradicted with the study of mystical and philosophical exploration.

It is also essential to consider the perspectives of other scholars who have traveled to and resided in Medina to portray it as a significant center for hadith scholarship during Kurani's life. The Moroccan ʿAbd Allah al-ʿAyyashi, for instance, pursued hadith transmission from Medina,

[245] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 222-223.
[246] MS Garrett 3872Y, fols. 39b-41b, 42b and 43a.

including *hadith musalsal*,[247] *thulāthiyyāt* of Bukhari,[248] and the sanad going back to Shamhurish the genie,[249] the alleged *jinn* companion of the Prophet who transmitted hadith in the sixteenth century. The genie transmission of hadith is reported to have informed the early modern Islamic community, mainly due to its shortest way to reach the prophet, commonly perceived by the majority of scholars to implement the maxim, "the sanad is the way to reach God and His messenger." Hadith critics pinpoint the absence of the genie records in earlier riwayahs. Thus their appearance after nine hundred years of the Prophetic time is perceived as doubtful. Although, many like the Moroccan scholar and historian al-Yafarni (d. 1742) argues that Shamhurish's existence has been established collectively with *tawātur*. The absence of previous biographical dictionaries can be ignored.[250] ʿAyyashi three times traveled to the Holy Cities for performing hajj after which he benefitted from prominent scholars to pursue certificates including hadith. In the premodern Islam, hajj also means a tool of hadith transmission, especially for those who would leave the cities soon. As a tool, it does also say that leading scholars coming to Medina transmitted hadith to the local scholars. Kurani, for instance, was narrated *musalsal* hadith from a Yemeni jurist, Nur al-Din ʿAli al-Ansari in July 1662. Kurani invited Ansari to his house after performing hajj. There is also another Yemeni hadith scholar ʿAli al-Zabidi (d. 1661), Qushashi's friend, who taught *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhari to Kurani and other Medinan scholars.[251] Other narrators were two Moroccan scholars, including Muhammad b. Abu Bakr al-ʿAyyashi in 1662 and the Marrakesh poet, Muhammad b. Saʿid al-Miraghti who narrated in 1665. Another Moroccan poet, namely Muhammad al-Murabit al-Maghribi, also happened in Kurani's house narrated hadith in May 1669 after the end of hajj. While Kurani had Moroccan connections in the Hijaz, by having this hadith narration his scholarly networks to the Moroccan scholars increased and definitely strengthened his social capital specifically among the western Mediterranean Islamic milieu, although he had bitter experience with some famous North African scholars who opposed him in rational theology and accused him infidel and deserved a death sentence (see Chapter Four).

A Moroccan scholar from kater period, Muhammad b. Tayyib al-Fasi (d. 1753), narrated hadith *musalsal* from Abu Tahir, son of Ibrahim al-Kurani. He inserts that Kurani narrated this type

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[247] *Al-Rāḥimūn yarḥamuhum al-Raḥmān tabāraka wa taʿālā irḥamū man fī-l-arḍ yarḥamukum man fī-l-samāʾ*.

[248] ʿAyyashi, *Al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 393.

[249] ʿAyyashi, *Itḥāf al-akhillāʾ bi-ijāzat al-mashāyikh al-ajillāʾ*, 103.

[250] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 73-75; Muhammad b. Jaʿfar al-Kattani, *Risālat al-musalsalāt*, 61.

[251] Muhibbi, *Khulasat al-athar*, vol. 3, 192-3.

of hadith from Zayn al-Tabari and his daughters who were also respected hadith scholars.[252] Kurani's *Maslak al-abrār* also mentions another female hadith scholar which he called "the pious scholar" namely Umm ʿIsa Maryam bt. Al-Shihab Ahmad al-Hanafi.[253] Such female authority in the chains of transmission is certainly not absent in the post-classical history of Islam. There are important notes recording a significant number of female scholars, including those who excelled in hadith literature, in Damascus in the late Mamluk and early Ottoman period, for instance appeared in many notes of MS Landberg 75 and 891 at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.[254] Muhammad al-Barzanjis's mother, Fatima bt. Shukr Allah al-Kuraniyya (d. 1670), also gained a reputable status as a female hadith authority in the Hijaz.[255] This picture offers other views of Kurani's scholarly milieu; some chronicled female scholars did active in teaching and narrating hadith. Medina increasingly constituted as one of the foremost hadith centers in the early modern Sunni world.

Kurani himself did not cease his efforts to obtain hadiths from the most reliable transmitters, after the death of Qushashi, during the 1660s and beyond. In the seventeenth century, Kurani owned the highest isnads that other scholars did not have. His isnads closely matched the isnads of late Mamluk scholars such as Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 1505) who lived in the fifteenth century. One of the factors that contributed to this highest degree is that Kurani narrated hadith from a hadith scholar who lived more than one-hundred years old, technically in the sciences of hadith called as *muʿammar*, 'a long-lived scholar', and narrated from a chain of transmission that contains three *muʿammars* after Firabri, the student of Bukhari.[256] Kurani's shortest sanad is supported by the transmission from a Herat scholar, namely Baba Yusuf al-Harwi, allegedly lived for three hundred-year-old. Besides this, Kurani also narrated hadith from another Medinan *muʿammar* of Indian origin namely the Sufi Mulla ʿAbd Allah al-Lahuri (d. 1672/3). According to Kurani himself, Lahuri transmitted hadith from Cairene scholar of Damascene origin, namely Ibrahim al-Tanukhi (d. 1397/8), and the age gap between the two ranges less than three centuries. He goes on to say, "And the highest isnads between Bukhari and Suyuti is eight and my isnad is

[252] Muhammad b. Tayyib al-Fasi, MS Garrett 234Y, *ʿUyūn al-mawārid al-silsilah min ʿuyūn al-masānid al-musalsala*, fol. 16a.

[253] Kurani, *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīth al-nabī al-mukhtār*, MS Princeton, Garrett 4581Y, fol. 10b.

[254] For a broader view of the Mamluk society, see Yossef Rapoport, "Woman and Gender in Mamluk Society: An Overview"; Asma Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam*.

[255] Kattani, *Fahras al-faharis*.

[256] Kurani, *al-Amam*, 4.

equal to this."[257] The shortest isnad here means the highest isnad that many learned people wanted to pursue. The pursuit of short chains of transmission and hadith collections from individuals with unusually long-life spans and elevated chains of transmission (*muʿammarūn*), as discussed by Davidson, was prevalent in many Muslim regions, especially in Morocco until the twentieth century. This was also the period during which the renowned hadith scholar Muhammad ʿAbd al-Hayy al-Kattani (d. 1962) cultivated his own version.[258]

Surprisingly, at the end of 1079 or June 1669, he narrated hadith from the Egyptian *muʿammar* ʿAbd al-Wahid b. Ibrahim and their young female students who were respectable *muḥaddithas* namely the two ʿAlid descendants namely Mubarakah and Zayn al-Sharaf,[259] the daughters of Muhy al-Din ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Tabari. When the Egyptian *muʿammar* taught both female hadith scholars, the hadith *samāʿ* took place in 1011/1602. It means that when Kurani narrated hadith from both scholars in 1662 in Mecca, it had been sixty years since the *muʿammar* taught to both female scholars. Earlier in the 1650s, Kurani's sole narrators include (a) Qushashi who also narrated hadith to his grandson, Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Kurani while the father attended the session; (b) the Hanbali leader in Damascus, ʿAbd al-Baqi who wrote the certificate to him from Damascus in 1654.[260] While the practice (a) is a direct study between student and his master, the written form as the second practice (b) took place because physical encounters between student and his master or between two fellow scholars were impossible and the letter exchanges legitimated the study of hadith in the fashion of far distance communication, eliminating the barriers of physical-spatial boundaries. Letters mean as a mode of communication to exchange hadith and intellectual authority. This fact demonstrates that Kurani had not only exchange Sufi and theological knowledge, as appeared to his Maghribi and Jawi scholars, but also hadith transmission.

There are other scholars listed as teachers of Kurani who made him unrivalled of both hadith transmission and texts, including the poet-Sufi and hadith scholar namely ʿAfif al-Din ʿAbd Allah, whose scholarly standard furthermore enhanced Kurani's approach to synthesize hadith with

[257] Kurani, *al-Amam*, 4-5. Tanukhi was renowned by his epithet "the Syrian proof" (*al-burhān al-shāmī*).
[258] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 278.
[259] See Muhammad b. al-Tayyib al-Fasi, *ʿUyūn al-mawārīd al-silsila min ʿuyūn al-masānīd al-musalsala*, MSS Garrett 234Y, fol. 16a. Another female hadith scholar who is mentioned is *al-shaykha al-ṣāliḥa* Umm ʿIsa Maryam bt. Al-Shihab Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Hanafi, see *Masālik al-abrār*, MS Garrett 4581Y, fol. 10b.
[260] Information on above narrators can be seen at MS *Masālik al-abrār*, fols. 27a-8b.

Sufi inclination. The Sufi-inclined transmission usually can be identified with the narration explicitly inserting the words such as *bi-riwāyat musalsal-an bi-l-ṣūfiyya* as shown by the narration of Muhammad b. Abu Tayib al-Fasi (d. 1756) from a Sufi whose nickname is *Abū al-Asrār* ("the father of the [sciences of] secrets"), very likely Kurani, from Qushashi and going back to the prophetic tradition of Ibn ʿArabi.[261] Kurani's *Masālik al-abrār* also mentions this word explicitly: *al-ḥadīth al-musalsal bi-l-ṣūfiyya*.[262] Broadly speaking, understanding this Sufi milieu of hadith scholarship is of critical importance to highlight the fact that Sufi and hadith worlds are inseparable and the notion of the hadith revival and neo-Sufism much neglects the complex dimension of post-classical Islamic scholarship. In seventeenth-century Medina, such trend fundamentally continued the discursive tradition of hadith among Sufis, as can be seen from the chain of transmission presented within the Akbari tradition. Qushashi was once famous as a Sufi and hadith scholar who attracted scholars and students from many places. In 1656 for instance, the grand Ottoman mufti in Damascus ʿAlaʾ al-Din al-Haskafi (d. 1677) learned with Qushashi during Kurani's first decade in Medina. In addition to this, a Damascene Shafiʿi scholar Muhammad al-Maktabi (d. 1685) in 1647 learned with Qushashi.[263] Both Haskafi and Maktabi were Kurani's friends and contemporary. Following Qushashi's authority, Kurani also attracted a wide variety of scholars and students to learn with him, especially because of his hadith knowledge. A Damascene Shafiʿi preacher and legal scholar Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Darani, who was dead in his early 40s, was Kurani's student.[264] In addition to legal and hadith scholars, there are some recorded poets who learned with Kurani. The first is Ibn Bajʿ (d. 1674) who studied with Qushashi and Kurani.[265] The other is ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Khani (d. 1684) who decided to spend his life studying in Medina by abandoning his travel and trade fortune in favor of advancing knowledge with Kurani.[266] Some of these examples demonstrate Kurani's authority that is mainly articulated by his deep knowledge of religious sciences which specifically means hadith tradition in addition to his mastery of Sufi theory and practices.

The resemblance between Kurani's elevated chains of transmission in the seventeenth century and those of the fifteenth century (of Suyuti) is indicative of a superior claim, which contributed

[261] See *Irsād al-asānīd wa īṣāl al-muṣannifāt wa-l-masānīd*, MS Garrett 234Y, fols. 153b-216b.
[262] MS Garrett 4581Y, *Masālik al-abrār*, fol. 8.
[263] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 4, 63, 73.
[264] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 1, 356.
[265] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar,* vol. 3, 146-7.
[266] Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, vol. 2, 434.

to Kurani's esteemed position among the prominent Sunni scholars of his era. This superiority, which was driven by a combination of spiritual, social, and economic factors, as discussed by Davidson in his analysis of the post-canonical hadith, served as a means for scholars, in this case Kurani, to differentiate themselves from their peers. Davidson maintains that the social logic of hadith transmission was shaped by the competitive dynamics of the academic field. He argues that scholars engaged in a process of social capital accumulation through the quality and breadth of their chains of transmission, which functioned as a form of social capital and were central to the established social hierarchy of their discipline. Consequently, scholars with high chains of transmission were regarded as superior to those with lower chains.[267] While we have no sufficient evidence from Qushashi's writings, Kurani in his curriculum vitae *al-Amam* transmitted high isnads from this Medinan teacher.[268] This implies that Qushashi's superiority was widely acclaimed by his peers in Medina and beyond. Wider recognition from other scholars corroborated Kurani's position. For example, the Moroccan scholar Ahmad al-Khalifa (d. 1717) is said to have obtained an *ijāza* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* through Ibrahim al-Kurani, which represents the highest *sanad* in Morocco. The criterion for a superior position among others was the parallel possession of Sufi and hadith chains of transmission. Subsequently, Khalifa also copied Burhanpuri's *al-Tūḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī*, one of the dominant esoteric texts in Medinan Sufi culture, through a meeting with Kurani. Khalifa knew Kurani from ʿAyyashi who was a disciple of Khalifa's father.[269] In the case of Khalifa, it can be inferred that he sought to establish a connection with one of his father's distinguished students, while simultaneously pursuing the scholarly hierarchy of the hadith tradition by linking himself to the Kurdish scholar. Other evidence from later centuries continuously attest this proof. The nineteenth-century Syrian scholar ʿAbd al-Rahman Kuzbari (d. 1846), for instance, was extremely proud having two hadith genealogies: one from Damascus line tracing back to ʿAbd al-Baqi the Hanbali scholar who taught Kurani and another one from the shortest transmission chain of Ibrahim al-Kurani. "This is," Kuzbari underlines, "the highest chain of transmission" (*sanad ʿāl jiddan*).[270]

[267] Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition,* 21, see also Chapter Four of this book.

[268] Kurani, *al-Amam*, 12, 13.

[269] M.C. Schumann, *A Path of Reverent Love: the Nāṣiriyya Brotherhood across Muslim Africa*, 180-181, 340; Ahmad al-Darʿi, *al-Riḥla al-nāṣiriyya*, 520-528. Information on Kurani in this travel literature was apparently copied and summarized from ʿAyyashi's *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*.

[270] ʿAbd al-Rahman Kuzbari's *thabat*, MS Garrett 245Y, fols. 10a-10b.

From the time of Muhammad al-Shawkani[271] and Murtada al-Zabidi in the eighteenth century until the era of scholars in the twentieth century, Kurani's hadith transmission is valued as fantastic. The Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation—which has offices in Cairo, Cambridge, and Stuttgart—published the contemporary corpus of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and it includes on the first page the sanad back to Kurani.[272] Another fascinating feature is the way people in the Islamic Mediterranean connected to Kurani's chains of transmission. The Kattani family in Morocco, famous as hadith scholars, attest such connection.[273] A renowned Damascene poet, the same generation with ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi, namely Ibn Kannan, demonstrates the same tone.[274] The Islamic milieu in the Indian Ocean also reveals the same tendency. In addition to this, an African scholar namely Muhammad al-Bartalli al-Walati (d. 1805) in his *Fatḥ al-shakūr* ("Opening the obliged), edited by the Moroccan Muhammad Ibrahim al-Kattani, narrated different streams of sanad of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from a variety of hadith scholars. However, the highest among all of them originated from the sanad of Ibrahim al-Kurani.[275] Indian scholars also confirm the same proclivity. They usually refer to the sanad pursued by Wali Allah Dihlawi and the later attribution by nineteenth-century Indian scholar of hadith and biographer Muhammad Sidiq Khan Qanuji (d. 1889) in his *Abjad al-ʿulūm*.[276] A Meccan scholar of Sumatran origin in the twentieth century, Muhammad Yasin b. ʿIsa al-Fadani, popularly known as *musnid al-dunyā* (the popular narrator worldwide) in his time, also narrated hadith from Kurani.[277] Almost the renowned hadith scholars in the early modern time until the twentieth century had continued to valorize Kurani's elevated status in hadith transmission.

Did Kurani's influence extend to Ottoman scholars and rulers? The subsequent discussion will offer some insight into this matter.

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[271] See Muhammad al-Shawkani, *Badr al-ṭāliʿ* for instance.

[272] I thank Stefan Reichmuth for this information.

[273] See al-Kattani, *Fahras al-fahāris*.

[274] See Ibn Kannan, MS Arab. 286, *Kitāb al-risāla al-mufrada fī arbaʿina ḥadīthan.*

[275] Al-Talib Muhammad al-Walati, *Fatḥ al-shakūr fī maʿrifat aymān ʿulamāʾ al-Takrūr,* 116-117. He notes, "*Wa qad rawaytuhu bi-asānīd mutaʿaddida, aʿlāhā ijāzatī min al-shaykh al-imām ʿālim al-Madīna al-nabawiyya, ʿalā sākinihā afḍal al-ṣalāh wa azkā al-salām, al-shaykh al-muḥaqqiq al-mujāwir Abī Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan b. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Kurdī al-Kūrānī al-Shahrazūrī nafaʿanā Allāh taʿālā bi-barakatihi.*"

[276] See Wali Allah al-Dihlawi, *al-Irshād ilā muhimmāt al-isnād*; cf. Claudia Preckel, "Screening Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's Library: The Use of Ḥanbalī Literature in 19th-Century Bhopal."

[277] Muhammad Yasin b. ʿIsa al-Fadani al-Makki, *Min dafāʾin al-musnid al-Fādānī al-Makkī*; *Asānīd wa ijāzāt wa musalsalāt al-Fādānī.*

3.2. Kurani's Hadith Scholarship and Ottoman Connections

There has been a dearth of analysis in the secondary literature on the state of sponsorship or cultural patronage by the Köprülü viziers. This section is intended to provide some facts about how the viziers' relationships with scholars outside Constantinople, with Kurani representing a notable case study. The Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha is reported to have an important Kurdish mentor, namely Ahmad Husaynabadi, among others. The other viziers of the Köprülü family evidently also supported many scholars outside Constantinople. When Fazıl Mustafa Pasha, the younger brother of the Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, made pilgrimage to Mecca in 1670, he was interested in astronomy and met an important scholar in astronomy from the Maghreb, Muhammad al-Rudani (d. 1683). Rudani was asked to travel back with the vizier to Istanbul. The grand vizier was impressed with the excellence of Rudani and conferred him the status of supervisor of the religious endowments in Mecca and Medina.[278] In addition, two belletrists Muhibbi and ʿAbd al-Qadr al-Baghdadi (d. 1682) met one of the grand viziers of the Köprülü family in Edirne. Baghdadi particularly attributed one of his works to Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, namely a gloss to Ibn Hisham's *Sharḥ Banāt Suʿād*, in addition to his dexterity on Persian and Turkish literature.[279] Baghdadi devoted his literary skills only after studying in Cairo where he inherited in 1659 the superb private library of his master Shihab al-Din al-Khafaji with whom Kurani studied in 1650 and consulted his manuscript library, as explained in Chapter One. Over a thousand-volume of pure Arabic poetry alone is reported to express a considerable number of such category in Baghdadi's private collection.[280] Although Khafaji is not a frequent presence in the index of works in his *Khizāna*, Baghdadi appropriately uttered his thankfulness when he praised Khafaji as the prominent litterateur of his age: "Everything I have learned is just a drop in the river of Shihab, and I have acquired nothing of the literary sciences except from him."[281] Unlike Khafaji, Baghdadi, and Qushashi, Kurani did not write any literary works. Nonetheless, his son Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Kurani abridged the commentary on the *Evidentiary Verse of al-Rāḍī* authored by Baghdadi.[282] This interconnected link inserts the virtual connection between the Köprülü's

[278] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 59, 165-166.
[279] See *ʿAbdulqadiri Bagdanensis Lexicon Sahnamianum*, St. Petersburg.
[280] On Khafaji, see Muhammad Sabri, *Fuqahā wa fuqarā': Ittijāhāt fikriyya wa siyāsiyya fī Miṣr al-uthmāniyya*, 104. For the intellectual sketch of Khafaji see pp. 93-166. For the significance of premodern Arabic library see Konrad Hirschler, *Plurality and Diversity in an Arabic Library*.
[281] Michael G. Charter, "ʿAbd al-Qadir ibn Umar al-Baghdadi," 72.
[282] Michael G. Charter, "ʿAbd al-Qadir ibn Umar al-Baghdadi," 70.

support and the scholarly networks in the second half of the seventeenth century which Kurani took part within.

Scrutinizing evidence embedded in extant manuscripts, Kurani factually had direct connections with either the Köprülü family or some prominent shaykhs al-Islam appointed in the imperial office. MS Carullah 2069 of the Süleymaniyye library for instance demonstrates such a rare proof. It is marginalia note written by the famous Ottoman scholar in the eighteenth century, Carullah Efendi (d. 1738). According to Carullah, Kurani's encounter with Ottoman scholar Minkarizade Yahya Efendi (d. 1678) happened, probably earlier in the late 1640s in Damascus where Kurani studied. This earlier encounter very likely shifted in the later period into a closer connectivity between the 1660s and the 1670s during which both scholars were fame figures in the political court and religious spheres, respectively. There is however the dearth of further information on the nature of their relationship. Carullah's narrative on the emphasis of their connection could be meaningful in the vitae of Kurani untold in his 'intellectual autobiography' (*Ijāzatnāme*) as given to the younger Kurdish contemporary in Damascus, Ilyas al-Kurani. From Minkarizade, Kurani probably learned certain knowledge during his residency in Damacus or traveling to Jerusalem.

Carullah himself encountered Kurani in the last years of the latter's life. In 1100 or ca. 1688/9, Carullah arrived in the Holy Cities to study. In Mecca he studied the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhari for five intensive days with Hasan ibn al-'Ujaymi close to the gate of the Haram near to the Sulaymaniyya's School.[283] Carullah possibly asked Ibn 'Ujaymi to whom he might be seeking knowledge much further. He was directed to come to Medina and learned with Ibrahim al-Kurani. In MS Carullah 2069, especially in Kurani's book on *ḥadīth musalsal*, Carullah confirms that he studied in Kurani's house close to the Citadel of Medina in 1689. He even spent some nights staying sometime in that house after the death of Kurani. Kurani taught Carullah with the reading of 'his clever sons' namely Muhammad al-Hasan and Muhammad Tahir some chapters from the Commentary of Jurjani's *al-Mawāqif* and its glosses, *al-Muṭawwil*, *Ashkāl al-ta'sīs*, and other books from the intellectual class of the verifiers (*wa jihat al-wiḥda li-l-muḥaqqiqīn*). Carullah then realized the quantity of Kurani's writings which numbered ninety-five books and letters, on the one hand, and other five letters from the information given to him by his son Muhammad

[283] Carullah's marginalia written in 1150/1737 on Kurani's hadith book, MS Carullah 2069, fol. 100a. Carullah wrote this before his death one year later.

Tahir. This number has added another information from the Moroccan ʿAyyashi who received in the 1670s twenty more books for which Kurani's son and Carullah would not recognize. Together with this firsthand information written in marginalia, Carullah then listed some Kurani's circuits of knowledge and his Ottoman intellectual connections:

(a) In Cairo, Kurani studied with Khafaji, the Commentator of Qadi Baydawi, and the former proposed to the latter his very first thick project namely *Inbāh al-anbāh fī iʿrāb kalima lā ilāha illā Allāh*;
(b) In Jerusalem, Kurani learned with Shaykh al-Islam Abdurrahman Efendi Husamzade (d. 1670); and
(c) In Damascus, Kurani learned from Minkarizade, Carullah's own teacher.

Carullah wrote this note when he was 80 years old, fifty years after his study experience with Kurani.[284] Cairo, Jerusalem, and Damascus are important in the imaginary of Carullah to show that these places were an integral part of the Ottoman intellectual nexus. The three scholars accordingly refer to the same imaginary. These notes can be considered as the sign that Carullah's intellectual genealogy includes three prominent Ottoman scholars through the extraordinary intermediary of Kurani. Carullah's Library, established as one of the major collections in Istanbul libraries, attests some codices of Kurani corpus.[285]

[284] MS Carullah 2069, fol. 114b.
[285] On general overview of Carullah's library and its history, see *Osmanlı Kitap Kültürü: Cârullah Efendi Kütüphanesi ve Derkener Notları*; but, the scope of the research does not entail the Ottoman Arab lands/scholars within the web of Carullah's scholarship. I thank Derin Terzioğlu for this reference.

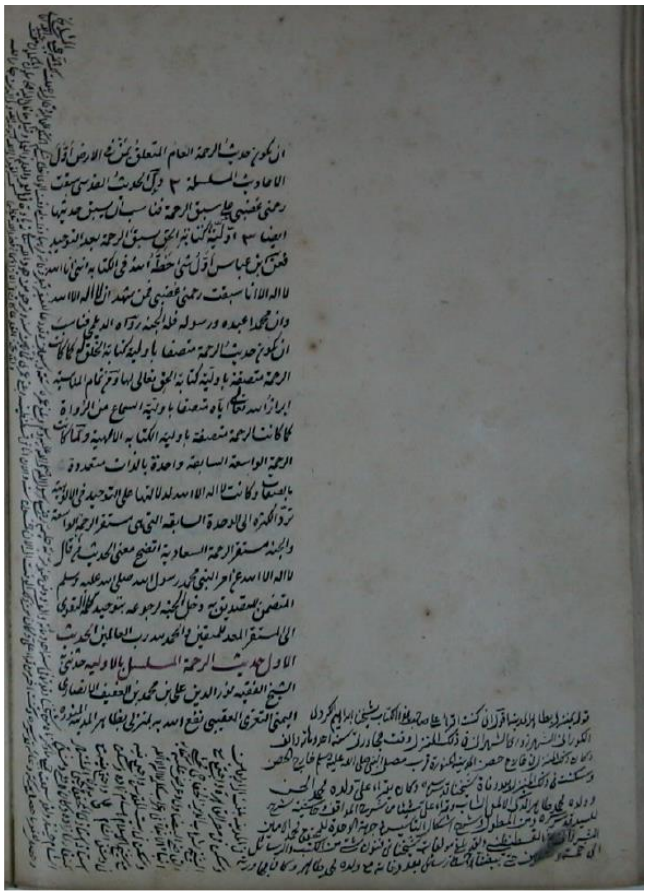

Figure 3.3. MS Carullah 2069, fol. 114b; Carullah's marginalia on Kurani

Carullah's narrative additionally portrays Kurani's less known network to the world of Ottoman scholars. This narrative strengthens the fact that from the 1660s onwards Kurani transformed his scholarly persona as the centripetal force of the study of hadith, theology, and Sufism in the entire Arabia. There are certainly more clues to decode about the nature of this connection. Kurani had not always agreed with Ottoman scholars,[286] as is natural for every scholar or intellectual until today, such as his famous treatises to reject a sermon of an Ottoman shaykh in Diyarbakır who preached in public to prohibit the practice of vocal remembrance based on the teaching on the Hanafi law tracing back to the fifteenth century arguments raised by the Naqshbandi Sufis in Transoxiana. Kurani's treatises *Nashr al-zahr fī dhikr bi-l-jahr* and *Itḥāf al-munīb al-awwāh bi-faḍl al-jahr bi-dhikr Allāh* aim to demonstrate that such vocal remembrance

[286] For an example of Kurani's *ijaza* to an Ottoman scholar in Edirne, namely Ibrahim Efendi b. Abi Bakr, see MS Manisa Il Hak Kütüphanesi 6150.

is lawful according to the arguments of the worthy ancestors (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*), hadith and Sufi tradition. Hence, he could offer a firmer rejoinder to the Ottoman preacher who publicly declared such practice as bad innovation in Islam. Besides, Kurani underpins the line of Sunni orthodoxy which brought him scholarly recognition and appreciation from his followers.[287] Kurani's visible affiliation to the Shattari and Naqshbandi fraternities and his Shafiʿi school of law supported his stance toward this specific issue. Kurani's meticulous scrutiny to explore the original arguments and propositions of classical scholars is also obvious in these two manuscripts.

A more challenging aspect of this study is to examine the ways in which Kurani and his circle established connections with the Ottoman viziers in Istanbul. As previously discussed, hadith serves as a crucial link between Kurani and the Köprülü regime. While not the sole evidence, hadith represents a significant piece of the puzzle in unravelling this complex network. To begin with, Köprülüzade Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (r. 1661-1676) is less known as a hadith connoisseur; hadith discourse at the manuscript collection of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha is ranked first (253 titles), followed by literature (217), history (198), exegesis (183), and other disciplines.[288] Kurani's autograph in a hadith codex of MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279 reveals that he called this Pasha as his "friend the grand vizier His Excellency" (*ṣāḥibihi al-wazīr al-aʿẓam wa-l-ṣadr al-akram al-afkham*).[289] Even though our sources do not tell us whereabout and whence they encountered, it is very likely that their meeting occured in Medina when this grand vizier visited the Hijaz. MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279 contains two valuable hadith works of Kurani, including *Janāḥ al-najāḥ bi-l-ʿawālī al-ṣiḥāḥ (*"Wing of the favorable on the complete hadith genre of *ʿawālī*; hereafter: *Wing of the Favorable*) and *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīth al-nabī al-mukhtār* ("The paths of the righteous towards reports of the chosen Prophet"; hereafter: *The Paths of the Righteous*). This codex contains notes of correction and clarification made by Kurani himself. This two works offer the most representative of Kurani's hadith works in which he provided the highest chains of transmission. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha seems to be interested in reading this post-classical hadith genre that elevation of the chain of transmission was increasingly the dominant principle for selection.[290] While the copies of the two hadith works are extant widely, this Köprülü codex tells a

[287] Atallah Copty, "Ibrāhīm Ibn Ḥasan al-Kūrānī's Attitude to the Vocal Remembrance (*dhikr jahrī*)," 179-190.

[288] I thank Derin Terzioğlu for her suggestion on this particular issue. For the valuable manuscript collection of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha and its political and cultural context, see M. Fatih Calisir, *A Virtuous Grand Vizier*, 160-168.

[289] See the title folio of MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasa 279.

[290] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on the Tradition*, 218. In this book, based on the secondary literature of modern hadith works, Davidson wrote that Ibrahim al-Kurani compiled popular work of *ʿawālī* genre, *al-Lawāmiʿ al-laʾālī fī al-arbaʿin al-ʿawālī* as well as reorganized the *thulāthiyyāt* in *musnad* format (p. 213, 227).

specific occasion in which Kurani attempted to introduce his hadith works to the circle of the most powerful Ottoman ruling family at that time. While we do not know whether this ruling family requested Kurani, hadith is an important subject among them as a means of religious learning. In addition to the members of the Köprülü family, Ahmed Efendi, the principal clerk within the Köprülü family (*maktubcī al-ṣadr al-aʿẓam* or *mektubci-yi sadrazam*), read another Kurani's book namely *Niẓām al-zabarjad fī al-arbaʿīn al-musalsala bi-Aḥmad*. The title page of MS Landberg 986 at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin attests this evidence, showing Kurani's autograph giving certificate to Ahmed Efendi dated 18 Muharram 1087 (April 1676).

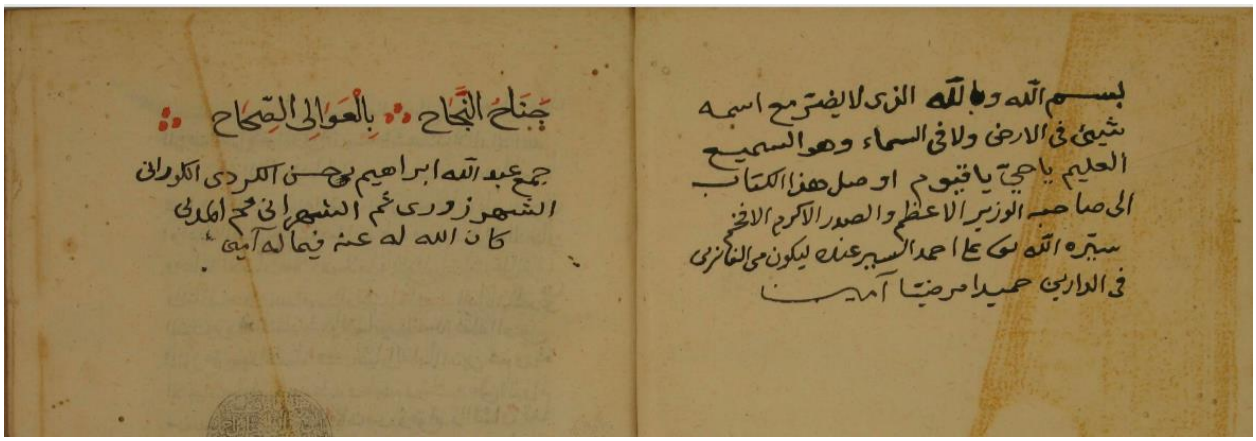

Figure 3.4. MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279, the Suleymaniyye Library (title page with Kurani's autograph, presented to 'his friend' His Excellency Fazıl Ahmed Pasha)

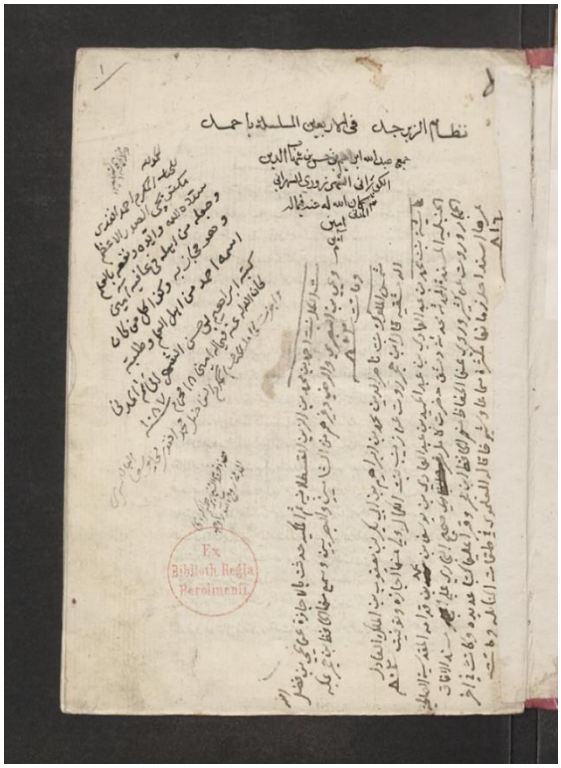

Figure 3.5. MS Landberg 986, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, fol. 1a. Kurani's autograph to Ahmed Efendi, the clerk of Köprülü viziers

Other Kurani's writings at Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's library collection are all direct gifts from Kurani. This collection includes, for instance, MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820 which represents solid evidence in which Kurani made corrections in marginalia including addendum of geographical names and other information through dictionary-checking. This codex was marked with the original stamp of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha dating to 10 Dhu-l-qaʿda 1075 (May 1665). But this is not the collection of hadith works penned by Kurani. There are three crucial theological works. First, Jalal al-Din Dawani's *Sharḥ al-zawrāʾ* and its glosses namely *al-Ḥawrāʾ*. The second, Kurani's *Itḥāf al-dhakī*.[291] Third, Kurani's *Maslak al-iʿtidāl ilā fahm āyāt khalq al-aʿmāl*. As written in every title pages of all of these three copies with Kurani's autograph, they were presented to Hüseyin Çelebi Mustafazade, a member of the Köprülü family probably the son of Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha (see Figure 3.4). Hüseyin Çelebi was probably more interested in the study of the rational sciences, different from Fazıl Ahmed Pasha who was more inclined to read hadith

[291] On the authorship and context of this work, see Chapter Five.

discourse. The choice of these three works signifies Kurani's selection that represented some of his important theological works and his intellectual genealogy to the Persian philosopher Dawani. The three works were probably delivered from Medina in separate folios, given each title page of these three contains Kurani's autograph. Then, once arrived in Istanbul, all of them were bound together in a codex that was specifically recorded as Kurani's archive. In addition to MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820, the codex of MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279 shows direct communication between Kurani and members of the Köprülü family. This communication is corroborated by other philological traces in MS Landberg 986 in which Kurani penned his *ijāza* to one of the officials within the administration of the viziership. Kurani's archive then became one of the important collections in the Köprülü Library which was formally established as the first independent library in the Ottoman Empire in 1678, two years after the death of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha in a relatively young age. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha had the network and the endowed funds to collect the very best books, produced from the classical times to his own period. The contemporary historian Defterdar Sarı Meḥmed Paşa described that the books Fazıl Ahmed Pasha endowed were all "precious" (*nefis*).[292] According to İsmail Erünsal, the Köprülü Library had endowed collection of 2000 volumes. Two statesmen from this ruling family, Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha and Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha, each donated college libraries of about 500 volumes, in 1681 and 1700 accordingly. A large number of books were reported to have also been endowed to a college in Medina by this ruling family.[293] This 'Medinan college' is probably related to the famous library of the Sufi Academy of Qushashi. Kurani's archive and Medina certainly became an integral part in the history of the development of the Köprülü Library in the second half of the seventeenth century.

[292] Meredith M. Quinn, *Books and their Readers in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul*, 76-79.

[293] İsmail Erünsal, *Ottoman Libraries: A Survey of the History, Development and Organization of Ottoman Foundation Libraries*, 43-46; Ramazan Sesen, *Fihris Makhṭūṭāt Maktabat Kūprīlī* (vol. 1), 2-11.

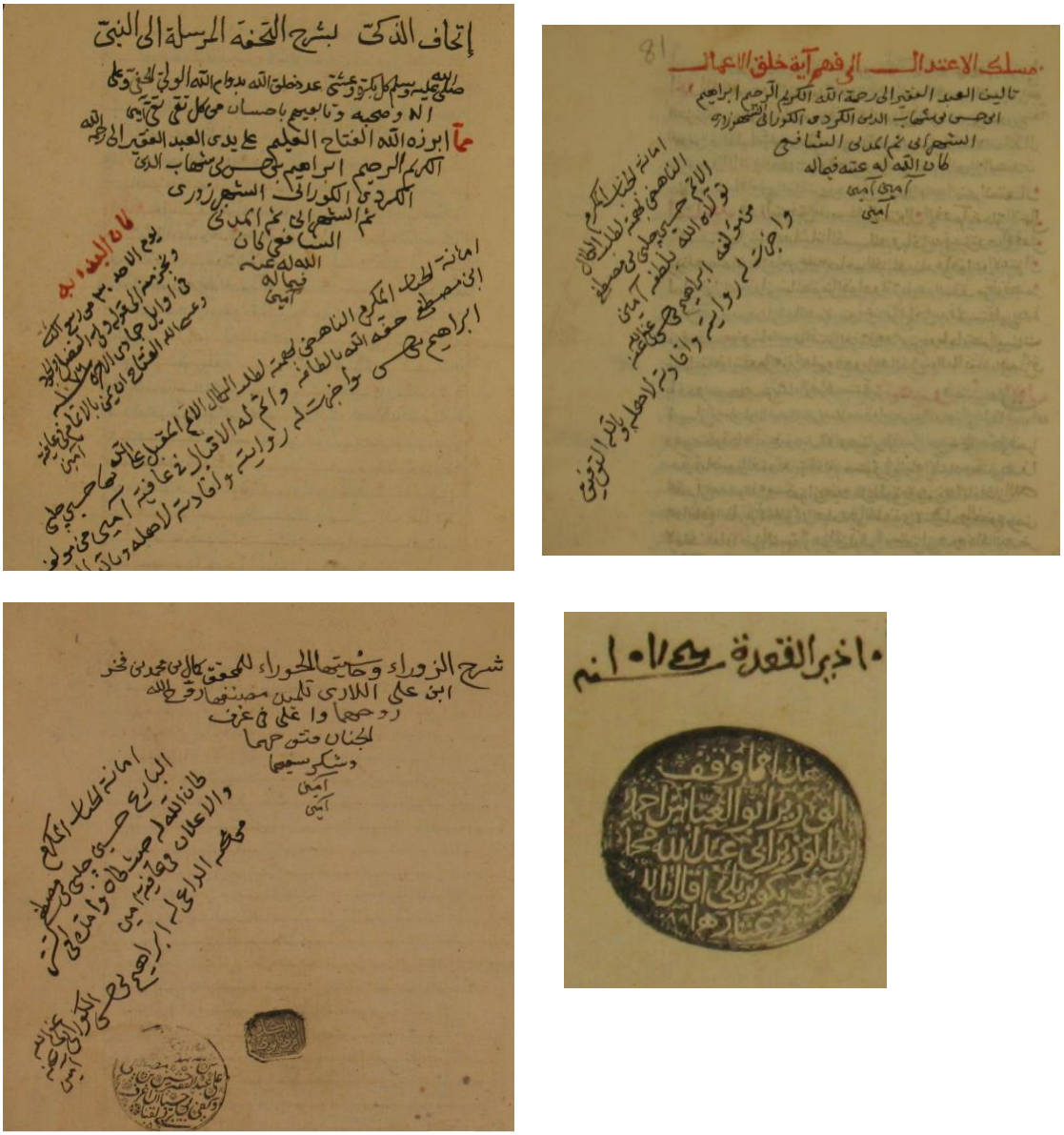

Figure 3.6. MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820 contains three theological works that was sent by Kurani to Huseyin Çelebi Mustafazade. This codex bears important witnesses showing Kurani's autographs to Huseyin Çelebi of the Medinan scholar's treatises and the Koprulu stamps (clock-wise): (1) *Maslak al-iʿtidāl ilā fahm āyāt khalq al-aʿmāl*; (2) a stamp of the endowed library of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, dated 10 Dhu-l-qaʿdah 1075 / 25 May 1665; (3) Jalal al-Din Dawani's *Sharḥ al-zawrāʾ* and its glosses namely *al-Ḥawrāʾ* by the author's student, Muslih al-Din Lari (d. 1572) with two stamps (ex libris of Huseyin Çelebi and a stamp of hadith fragment "*Innamā*

likulli-mriʾin mā nawā" ; (4) *Itḥāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfah ilā rūḥ al-nabī* with an information about its authorship.

MS Feyzullah Efendi 1174 provides further evidence that the connection between Kurani and Huseyin Çelebi was close. This manuscript contains two Kurani's works including *Al-Maslak al-mukhtār fī maʿrifat al-ṣādir al-awwal* on theology, for which Kurani wrote an *ijazah* (fol. 1a) in 17 Muharram 1083 H or 15 May 1672 AD, and *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādith al-nabī al-mukhtār*, for which the *ijazah* (fol. 12a) was written at the same date. In the title folio, which can be seen in Figure 3.6 at the top, Kurani's autograph of his *ijāza* is combined with two hadiths. The first hadith relates to the virtue of knowledge, while the second is related to the words of wisdom (*kalimat al-ḥikma*). Between the title and the cited hadiths, despite the contrasting handwriting, there is a citation from Ibn 'Arabi's *Futūḥāt al-makkiyah*. This title folio ultimately shows Kurani's interconnected scholarship between theology, Sufism, and hadith. The incorporation of his own invaluable contribution to the field of hadith, *Masālik al-abrār*, ultimately instituted a distinct text for the Köprülü family. The codex includes some of Kurani's notes and corrections (as seen on folio 10b), which provide clarification on certain theological matters. While this codex was in the possession of the Feyzullah Efendi library, it bore a stamp indicating the reading rule and the construction of Feyzullah's madrasa in 1112 in Constantinople (fol. 90a). Additionally, the end of this folio features a series of notes on Ottoman Turkish.

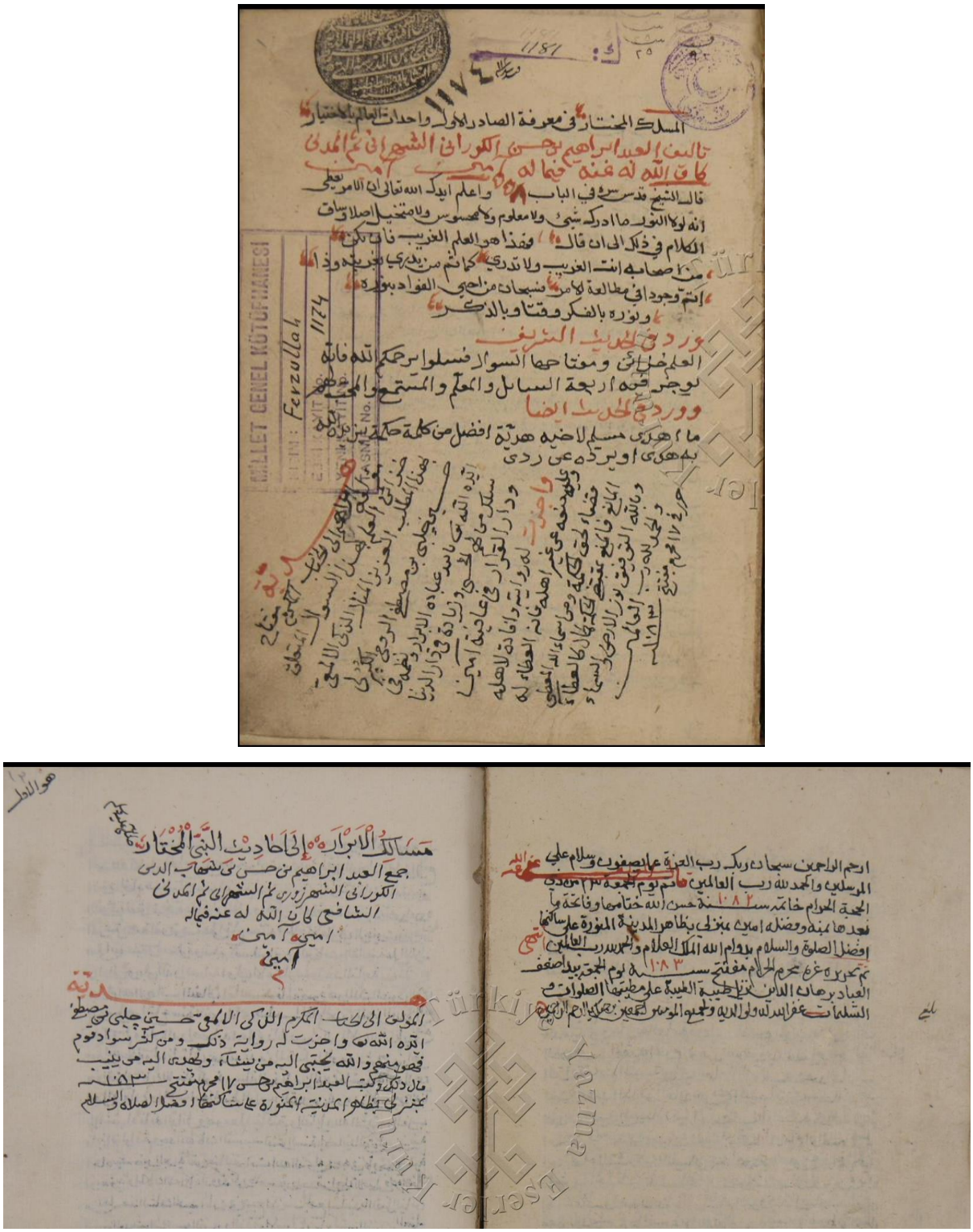

Figure 3.7. MS Feyzullah Efendi 1174, Suleymaniyye Library, fols. 1a (top), 12a (bottom).

Other identified manuscript copies sent, collated, and verified by Kurani himself to this Ottoman elite include the interdisciplinary treatise *Inbāh al-anbāh ʿalā taḥqīq iʿrāb lā ilāha illā Allāh* (MS H. Çelebi 637) and *Qaṣd al-sabīl* on theology (MS H. Çelebi 638). MS H. Çelebi 637 contains Kurani's *ijazah* that was written in 5 Muharram 1084 H or 22 April 1673). Meanwhile, Kurani wrote his *ijazah* in MS H. Çelebi 638 without a specific date, but one of the personal scribes who was significant in the pan-Arabian Naqshbandi nexus[294] of Kurani, Muhammad Saʿid b. Husayn al-Qurashi al-Kawkani completed this copy (fol. 129b) based on the original writing of the author in the end of Dhu al-hijjah 1080 H or May 1670 AD. Kawkani's other copies include MS Damat Ibrahim Pasha 1150 in which he copied Kurani's *Jilāʾ al-fuhūm fī ruʾyat al-maʿdūm* including other theological and philosophical works by luminaries such as Plato and Dawani. When viewed in conjunction with other manuscripts held by various Ottoman scholars, particularly those from the latter half of the 17th century, which are not extensively discussed in this chapter, the Köprülü collection of Kurani's treatises with a particular emphasis on hadith scholarship presents clear evidence of active communication and interaction between Medina and Istanbul. This setting served as a crucial backdrop for the boosting of Kurani's Sunni authority seen from the imperial city.

[294] I borrow the term "pan-Arabian networks" of the Naqshbandi in which Kurani played an important role from Florian Schwarz, "The Arab Receptions of Jāmī in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries." (cf. discussion on Maqasiri in Chapter Five)].

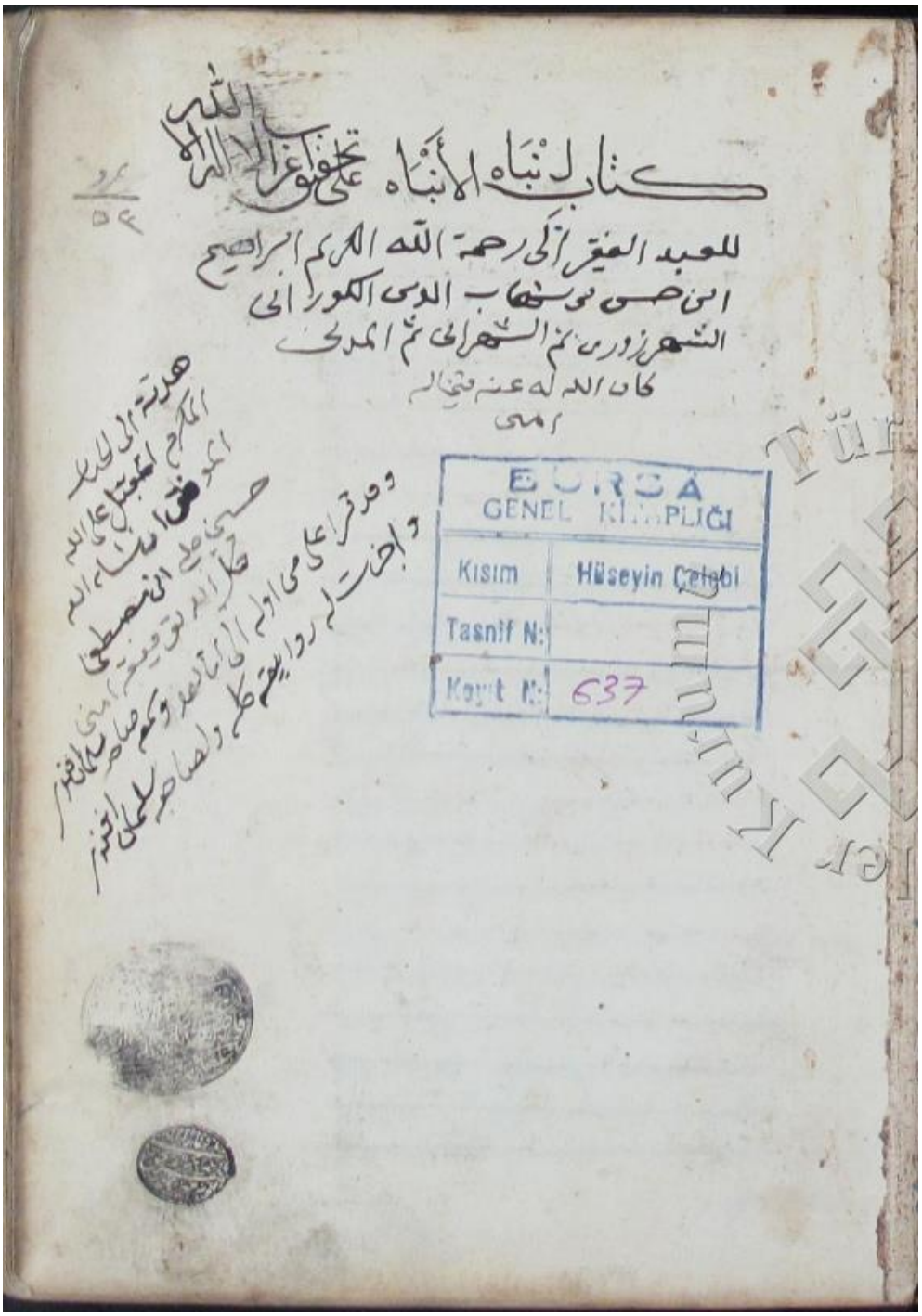

Figure 3.8. MS H. Çelebi 637, Suleymaniyye Library, Kurani's *Inbāh al-anbāh* with his autograph to Huseyin Çelebi Mustafazade

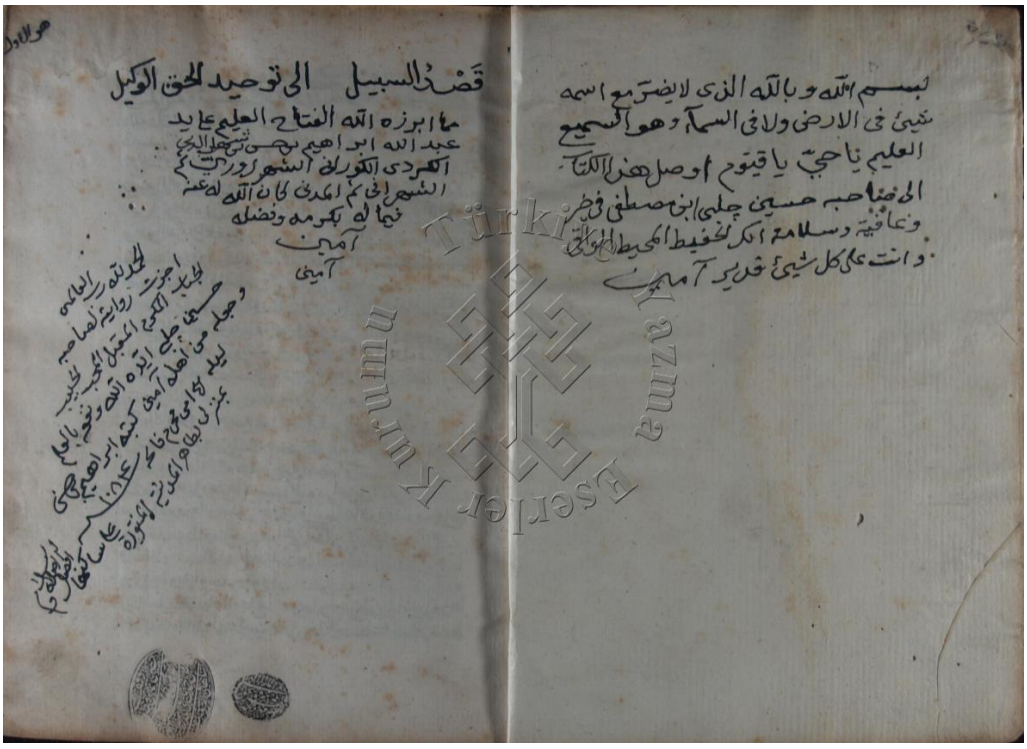

Figure 3.9. MS H. Çelebi 638, Suleymaniyye Library, Kurani's *Qaṣd al-sabīl* with his autograph to "*his friend*" Huseyin Çelebi Mustafazade

Some of these identified manuscripts that were given by Kurani to a few members of the Köprülü family, to summarize, attest the transregional network between Medina and Istanbul at its best in the second half of the seventeenth century. Although Kurani's corpus of writings circulated in the center of the Ottoman Empire, as evidenced from today's Turkish libraries, comprising a variety of treatises, it was Kurani's hadith scholarship which provided the basis for the possible intimate connection with the Köprülü ministers and members. When Köprülüzade Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (d. 1676) received from Kurani a friendly gift of manuscript containing hadith works and other texts, it is assumed that the Köprülü family was interested in learning hadith following a hypothesis among few Ottomanists that this regime was fascinated by hadith discourse. The presence of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's seal in his own collection (i.e., MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279) is regarded as an indication of the gift's recognition. This interest continued until the great-grandson of the Köprülü family in the eighteenth century when the minister ʿAbd al-Rahman beautifully copied Kurani's *Masālik al-abrār* in Damascus with *thulūthī* style in a beautiful codex, MS Garrett 4581Y of the Princeton Library (see Figure 3.9). MS Garrett 4581Y is the finest

copy of *The Paths of the Righteous*, copied based on the book penned precisely by Kurani's handwriting and sent to a Damascene scholar, Muhammad al-Kamili (d 1719). As an Ottoman elite, the copyist was proud to have chains of transmission from two renowned Shafiʿi hadith scholars: the Damascene Shams al-Din Muhammad b. ʿAli al-Kamili and the Meccan ʿAbd Allah b. Salim al-Basri.[295] These two scholars had direct connection to Kurani. ʿAbd al-Rahman also mentioned the third route of transmission from Moroccan scholar, Muhammad b. ʿAbd Allah al-Fasi. ʿAbd al-Rahman was the grandson of the Ottoman Grand Vizier Mustafa Pasha who became a martyr during the battle of defending Ottoman sovereignty in the Balkans against the Habsburg Empire in the end of 1691. During one of the war campaigns, Muhammad al-Barzanji participated to propagate the war. Alas, the grand vizier was shot by one of Habsburg soldiers and the failure of the Ottomans remarked as the military decline of the empire in eastern Europe (see discussion of the role of Barzanji as Kurani's student and proponent in Chapter Four). Some of Kurani's hadith and other manuscripts were copied in Sarajevo and this fact very likely shows the role of Barzanji in the manuscript circulation of Kurani's hadith works. It is no doubt that Kurani and his circle already connected to the Ottoman family of viziers as early as the second half of the 1650s, when Barzanji himself gently asked the permission of Qushashi to travel to Constantinople.

While the Köprülü family considerably lost their political influence after the military failure of the Ottomans in Vienna in the late 1680s, the progeny of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha in the early eighteenth century continued to show their intellectual interest in hadith studies through the credential of Kurani who was deemed as a prominent figure in the study of hadith. This Princeton codex is the best copies of all versions of *Masālik al-abrār* and as complete as MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279 at the Süleymaniyye library. However, the Princeton codex has sometime different scribal copies, if not corrupted ones, such as scribing *al-Ṭabrānī* as *al-Ṭabarī*.[296] The presence of the MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 279 in the Köprülü library, and Huseyin Celebi's ownership of Kurani's *Masālik al-abrār* (MS Feyzullah Efendi 1174) probably motivated the great-grandson of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, ʿAbd al-Rahman, to scribe MS Garrett 4581Y during his studies. *Masālik*

[295] Cf. John Voll, "'Abdallah ibn Salim al-Basri and 18th Century Hadith Scholarship."
[296] See for example MS Garrett 4581Y, fols. 81a, 120a.

al-abrār, which contains not only Kurani's hadith transmission and discourse but also the transmission of his rational sciences, defined the way for which the Köprülü progeny attempted to reclaim the Sunni genealogy from one of the most leading scholars in the seventeenth century.

It is very likely that Kurani became one of the most reliable references among the family to absorb the prophetic tradition. During the reign of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, the Kadızadelis continued to spread their teachings across the Anatolian religious sphere. The setting of these puritanical adherents also evinced an interest in hadith studies. It is, however, premature to argue that the grand vizier had a closer connection to the Kadızadeli movement, whose imprint invigorated certain religious puritanism. To gain a deeper understanding of this context, it would be beneficial to conduct a separate study of the Köprülü library, particularly to trace the interests and knowledge production associated with this ruling family. Nevertheless, an analysis of the Köprülü family collections pertaining to Kurani's writings leads to the assertion that the Ottoman Sunnism of the second half of the seventeenth century was shaped by a complex interplay between two centers: one imperial (Istanbul), the other intellectual (Medina).

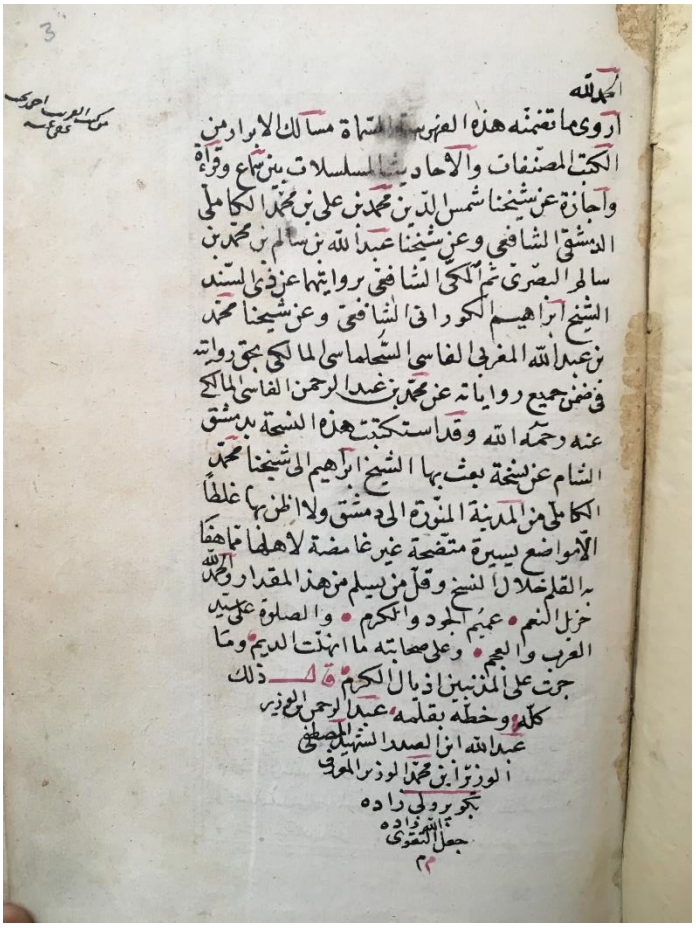

Figure 3.10. MS Garrett 4581Y, fol. 3a. The holograph of the minister ʿAbd al-Rahman, the progeny of the Köprülü family in the 1720s, copying Kurani's *Maslak al-abrār*, with his hadith certificate originated from Kurani.

3.3. Concluding Remarks

Hadith scholars have emphasised the importance of *isnād* to prove the reliability in transmitting Islamic knowledge.[297] Ahmad al-Shinnawi—the teacher of Ahmad al-Qushashi—remarks one of the benefits come from the high chain of transmission.[298] Ibrahim al-Kurani himself in many of his writings stresses on the saying of *al-isnād min al-dīn* 'the transmission is part of the religion' and the quotation from the second/eight century authority ʿAbd Allah b. al-Mubarak, "Verily, the

[297] See Recep Senturk, *Narrative Social Structure: Anatomy of the Hadith Transmission Network, 610-1505*.

[298] *Asānīd al-ūlā bi-kathrat al-rijāl bi-khilāf asānīd al-muḥaddithīn, fa-l-murād fīhā qillat al-rijāl li-suhūlat al-naqd wa-l-murād hunā kathrat al-rijāl li-taqwiya al-madad wa taʿẓīm al-sanad fainna li-l-mutaqaddim ʿalā al-muta'akhkhir ziyādah wa lahu ʿalayhi amdād wa ifādah ....* See Muhibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar*, 243-5.

knowledge of narrating traditions is part of the religion, so be careful from whom you take your religion" (*al-isnād min al-dīn walawlā al-isnād la-qāla man shā'a mā shā'a).* Such practice is usual in the hadith writings to uphold the supremacy of hadith transmission in the context of post-canonical culture. Hadith transmission and chains of transmission have functioned as ideological, spiritual and logical apparatus to guard the community from errors.[299] Consequently, the more credible, reliable and shorter transmission a scholar has, the more he (or she) is sought after. Important to notice is that hadith scholars have scholarly rigor in terms of their honesty to prove their teachers who have direct report from the time of the Prophet. Kurani's philological doubt in many of his writings to rediscover the true sayings of the classical scholars was strengthened boldly by this hadith standard. To support this view, Jonathan Brown for example argues:

> The ulama who undertook intensive Hadith study often maintained stricter standards in their craft… They sat hunched over volumes of transmissions, tracing and evaluating the minute details of words attributed to Muhammad. Such committed scholars insisted over the centuries that preserving the Prophet's legacy in its true form meant only attaching the noble phrase 'The Prophet of God said…' to statements with established chains of transmission.[300]

Kurani was one of the most respected hadith scholars of his era, a prominent figure both within the Hijaz region and beyond. His reputation attracted students from distant areas, including Medina, Damascus, Baghdad, Fez, and Aceh, who exchanged letters with him. These correspondences, as evidenced in manuscripts, illustrate the far-reaching influence and popularity of Kurani.

This chapter aims to show the making of Sunni authority obtained by Ibrahim al-Kurani by understanding his specific interests and corpus on hadith. He was widely regarded as the most prominent hadith scholar in the Hijaz mainly because his credential as the hadith scholar with the highest chain of transmission. This authority was not only established by his students from Maghribi and Ottoman Arab lands; it was also reinforced by the circulation of some of his hadith works within the circle of the Köprülü regime. This latter phenomenon constituted the founda-

[299] Garrett Davidson, *Carrying on Tradition*, see especially Chapter One.
[300] Jonathan Brown, *Misquoting Muhammad.*

tion for a transregional network between Medina and Istanbul. Kurani's excellence in both transmission and narration of hadith was not only revealed in his hadith corpus which is numbered less than fifteenth books on hadith. This number certainly excludes his substantial reference to the *riwāyahs* every hadith he cited in his non-hadith books. Kurani's hadith corpus itself cannot be strictly categorized as a pure hadith genre. His writings usually intermingle different sciences that he loved to write. One of his hadith works for instance intended to solve certain complicated problems (*al-masā'il al-mushtakila*) addressed repeatedly to him regarding the question whether one hadith on God transcendence (*tajallī fī-l-ṣuwar*) is categorized as *mutawātir* or not, and what is the implying theological meaning of this hadith.[301] Kurani, in this case, was asked because of his deep learning of two branches: hadith and theological discourses. Through the lens of hadith, Kurani's networks had extended and transgressed his theological attitude, in the sense that scholars who had different opinions on certain theological or legal issues had maintained their friendly communication with Kurani. One fine example of the relationship between him and some of his Maghrebi scholars even though their relations were conflated with "Kurani's affair" that made his thought and writings condemned (see the last part of Chapter Four). Another example is the long friendship between Kurani and his teacher, the Damascene Hanbali ʿAbd al-Baqi. Kurani wrote a letter to ʿAbd al-Baqi to provide a complete certificate along with the chains of transmission from the books of hadith.[302] Kurani's omnivorous search for rare, elevated chains of transmission, especially as seen from the narrative of ʿAbd al-Baqi, lead to another clue how Kurani was curious of the grand-grandfather of this Damascene scholar who owned Ibn Taymiyya's books for which Kurani sustained his defense to certain theological issues penned by Ibn Taymiyya, mainly to reject God's anthropomorphism. Kurani, according to ʿAyyashi, "did well to investigate... and did not imitate the Shafiʿi jurists, since he know what happen between disputants... He started reading the works of Ibn Taymiyya and his followers."[303]

Notes and marginalia written by various scholars and Kurani's own autographs are valuable source to reconstruct the social and intellectual connections stemmed from the "center" of Medinan discourse of the prophetic tradition. In lieu of questioning Kurani's efforts to produce hadith commentaries regarding the problem of "revival" and a novel approach for hadith criticism,[304]

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[301] Kurani, *Izālat al-ishkāl bi-l-jawāb al-wāḍiḥ ʿan al-tajallī fī-l-ṣuwar*, MS Nafiz Pasha 508 with Kurani's autograph addressed to certain Zayn al-ʿAbidīn.

[302] ʿAbd al-Baqi, *Riyāḍ al-janna fī āthār ahl al-sunna*.

[303] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 399; El-Rouayheb, "Changing View," 300.

[304] Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 423.

our discussion on Kurani's authority in hadith chains transmission offers another angle how social and intellectual network between Medina, Constantinople, Fez, Cairo and other cities were connected. This intellectual network is not hidden—or "informal"[305]—if we trace the reception and transmission of hadith discourse emanated from the central production in Medina particularly and the Hijaz generally. Producing no voluminous hadith commentaries does not mean that this is ineffective effort. Kurani's authority in hadith certainly bolstered his transregional positive reception and, along with his Sufi connections, formed him as an ideal Sunni scholar with rigorous approaches to hadith chains of transmission with its religious commentaries inherent in every Kurani's books that were filled, almost laboriously, with hadiths and their complete chains of transmission. This laborious attempt had resonated when Kurani penned other fields of knowledge, including the rational sciences, completely filled with chains of transmission that is identical with hadith studies.

[305] See introduction chapter of Evrim Binbas, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran*.

Chapter Four

Polemics and Controversies:

Ibrahim al-Kurani, Medinan Circle, and Religious Difference

Muslims have, in other words, been dealing with *difference*, *diversity and disagreement* four fourteen centuries. Muslims have long been well aware that they are *not* all the same; they have long been aware of their identity as components of universal Islam *includes* diverse experiences, agreement, disagreement, problems, dilemmas, and predicament; they mostly agree to disagree and to be different. One might say that the community of Islam is a *community of disagreement*—or rather, it is the community of a particular disagreement.

—Shahab Ahmed[306]

That he was attacked on such a wide range of issues is an index of his learning—he had a sufficient status in various fields to prove disagreement; he was independent, a man who mastered the various disciplines of Islam, and on the basis of his learning, made his own decisions. Eclectic and original he was the kind of man about whom people have divided views, who wins support and provoke oppositions, and thus exercises a creative, fecunding role among his contemporaries.

—Anthony Johns[307]

Kurani's hadith works with some other writings were together circulated in Saraybosna, the present-day Sarajevo of Bosnia, as evident in the catalogue of the Ghazi Husrev Bey Library. One of the possible links to relate this textual circulation is through the history of the Köprülü military campaign. The grandfather of ʿAbd al-Rahman, Fazıl Mustafa Pasha, was a martyr in defending the Ottoman sovereignty in the Balkans. At the bloody war close to Belgrade, Mustafa Pasha was hit by a gunshot of Habsburg imperial army under the commando of Ludwig Wilhelm von Baden. This tragedy determined the Ottoman military defeat and the victory of the Habsburg Empire in the early 1690s onwards. During the late 1680s of the Ottoman expansions in the Balkans, Fazıl Mustafa Pasha was accompanied interalia by a Kurdish ʿAlid scholar, Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji (d. 1691), who composed poetical elegy on the heroic tragedy of Belgrade, aggrandizing the Ottoman holy war to the European land.[308] The colophon of the elegy conveys a

[306] S. Ahmed, *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic*, 147.

[307] A. Johns, "Friend in Grace: Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī and ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Singkelī," 474.

[308] Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji, *Al-Qaṣīda al-lāmiyya al-bilghrādiyya*, MS Feyzullah Efendi 2154, fols. 80a-82b.

clear message that Barzanji composed this poetry during his path of jihad with the grand vizier Fazil Mustafa Pasha in 1101/1689. As already mentioned, Barzanji is an avant-garde pupil and staunch defender of Kurani's thought and Medinan intellectual stance. After Kurani's death in 1690, Barzanji was the most leading figure who succeeded Kurani's role in leading his extensive intellectual and Sufi institution and networks; however, Barzanji soon passed away in 1691 and the succession offered to Kurani's son, Muhammad Tahir. With the permission of Ahmad al-Qushashi earlier in the late 1650s, Barzanji travelled to Aleppo and Istanbul and was greeted warmly by Ottoman nobles, particularly the Köprülü family who suddenly regarded Kurani as a high recognition.[309] He was an active intellectual in the second half of the seventeenth century with a high mobility crossing the lands of the Ottoman Empire and beyond, even reached the Indian Ocean as far as Aceh, not only playing a role as the 'religious envoi' of Kurani and some Hijazi political missions commanded by the Meccan sharif. With the travelling of Barzanji to Sarajevo, some copies of his works and Kurani's oeuvres are extant. Sarajevo, thus, indicates as one of the possible circulation spots of this Medinan scholar through the unfortunate fate of the Ottoman campaign.

Seen from the political canopy of the Ottomans, both Ibrahim al-Kurani and other prominent Medinan scholars were the proponents of Ottoman Sunnism. Not only are Kurani's works on hadith which constituted his persona into a high credential, but his intellectual journey from Shahrizor to Medina aimed to rearticulate what is the pristine version of Sunnism by reading deeply into the classics of Islamic thought. Through these contexts Kurani and his circle was active in producing polemics and responding to controversies across imperial boundaries. The formation of Kurani's intellectual career, I argue, cannot be separated from his active engagement with polemical issues raised from different political and religious parties in a global fashion, supported by either Medinan intellectual infrastructure or his close circle and proponents spanned from the Maghreb to the Malay world. This chapter is divided into three parts. The first relates to Medinan responses to Zaydi politics and doctrines. The second relates to Medinan responses to messianic movements across-empires. The third is devoted to Kurani's polemics with several prominent scholars in the western Islamic Mediterranean.

[309] Mustafa al-Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*.

4.1. Medinan Responses to Zaydi Politics and Doctrines

In the seventeenth century, the Zaydis of Yemen continued to revolt and made a radical political shift in southern Arabia. The Ottoman governor of Yemen, Qansuh Pasha, and the Ottoman governor of al-Hasaʾ, Ali Pasha, were deposed by them in 1635. Consequently, the new Zaydi polity namely the Qasimi imamate was established from Zofar to ʿAsir under the leadership of Muʾayad billah Muhammad b. Al-Qasim (d. 1644). The Qasimi imamate, whose sovereignty continued to exist up to the eighteenth century, was across the frontiers of Ottoman Hijaz, even in close proximity to the vicinity of the Holy Cities. The Zaydis transformed their politics into a "charismatic authority".[310] During the reign of al-Mutawakkil ʿala Allah Ismaʿil b. al-Qasim between 1644 and 1676, the imamate attempted to expand its greatest territory, unifying Yemen as a distinct political identity and made Duran its capital.[311] In addition to being a ruler, Ismaʿil b. al-Qasim is well-known as an author of certain twenty-two books, including hadith, kalam and jurisprudence. One of his works, namely *al-Barāhīn al-ṣarīḥa fī-l-ʿaqīda al-ṣaḥīḥa* ("Distinct proofs on the correct creed"), is a commentary of his short text titled *al-ʿAqīda al-ṣaḥīḥa wa-l-dīn al-naṣīḥa* ("The correct creed and that religion is sincerity"; hereafter: *The Correct Creed*), which was probably completed before 1656, the completion year of one of the extant manuscripts.[312] *The Correct Creed* played an important role to ideologize the imamate according to the understanding of the Zaydi theology. This short text stimulated Ibrahim al-Kurani to critique it, as will be discussed soon.

The establishment of the Qasimi imamate created a political bifurcation between this Zaydi polity and the Ottoman Arabia. The expulsion of the Ottoman province in Yemen resulted in further revolts of southern Arabia against the Qasimi imamate. One of their revolts was successful to depose the Ottomans caused social and political turmoil, and to some extent stimulated theological debates in the borders between Ottoman Arabia and the Zaydi polity. Power struggle following the Zaydi rule was also remarked by the social conflicts and textual polemics between the

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[310] Bernard Haykel, *Revival and Reform in Islam: The Legacy of Muhammad al-Shawkani*, 31; cf. François Blukacz, "Le Yémen sous l'autorité des imams zaidites au XXIIe siècle une éphémère unité."

[311] On Mutawakkil, see al-Mutahhir al-Jurmuzi (d. 1665), *Tuḥfat al-asmāʿ wa-l-abṣār bi-mā fī al-sīra al-mutawakkiliyya min gharāʾib al-akhbār*.

[312] There are some manuscripts: one completed in 1071 115 folios (*waraqa*) in the Mosque Library 123 (ʿilm al-kalām); included in a codex no 80 in the same library; and another codex no 18 at the same library; while the fourth multiple-text manuscript was completed in 1067 (1665) in 74 folios also at the same library no 122. Jurmuzi, *Tuḥfat al-asmāʿ wa-l-abṣār bi-mā fī al-sīra al-mutawakkiliyya min gharāʾib al-akhbār*, 976.

Zaydis and the Shafi'is, especially in Hadramawt.[313] These intellectual polemics and social conflicts affected the dynamics of scholarly developments in the Hijaz. To this point, social and political settings are important to shed light the production of writings took place between Zaydi scholars or imams in Yemen and Sunni scholars in Ottoman Arabia. Surrounded by the dominant Sunnism in the borders, including within Hadramawt and other places in Yemen, the imamate produced and propagated more religio-political efforts to develop their own state.

Although the Qasimi imamate was mostly hostile to the Ottoman politics, the imam al-Mutawakkil billah made efforts to engage pragmatically with other Sunni empires. He made alliance, for instance, with the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb to legitimize his imamate political authority, as prominent members of the *ahl al-bayt* (the family of the Prophet). His correspondent with Aurangzeb is also mentioned to be stored at his library, as recorded by the Zaydi court historian Jarmuzi.[314] There was a realistic approach regarding this Zaydi-Sunni imperial relationship: to balance the imamate's power in both southern Arabia and the broader western Indian Ocean milieu where European powers were present for commerce. As the controller of coffee and other commercial goods this imamate sustained its pious government. Under the rule of al-Mutawakkil, whose reign time crossed the careers of both Ahmad al-Qushashi and Ibrahim al-Kurani, the Qasimi imamate expanded into a strong dynasty. Al-Mutawakkil's ambition did not stop at the frontiers where they held their military and political control. Rather he endeavored to apply his realpolitik of diplomatic and foreign policies. The Imam also claimed to make certain intervention into the affairs of Mecca and the Hijaz. The centrality of Holy cities and the entire Arabia to the Ottoman Empire probably triggered the imamate to interfere Ottoman sovereignty in the region. In addition, al-Mutawakkil also tried to convert the Ethiopian Christian emperor to Islam, although it did not happen straightforward. These efforts aimed to extend the political influence beyond the imamate's confines.

The intellectual opposition that took place in the Hijaz significantly contributed to the escalation of anti-Zaydi politics and theology. From our evidence, Ahmad al-Qushashi and Ibrahim al-Kurani encountered with Zaydi people and texts; thus, both produced commentaries on the "ideological" foundation of the Qasimi state, as will be explained below. In the Hijaz, the 'cosmopolitan' milieus of Mecca and Medina became important spaces of refuge for dissents coming from

[313] Al-Hiyed, *Relation between Yemen and South Arabia during the Zaydī Imāmate of Āl al-Qāsim: 1626-1732*, 21.

[314] Jurmuzi, *Tuḥfat al-asmāʿ wa-l-abṣār bi-mā fī al-sīra al-mutawakkiliyya min gharā'ib al-akhbār,* 978.

Yemen during the seventeenth century. The holy cities had been in fact a favorite place for intellectual refugee and dissents since the sixteenth century when the establishment of the Safavid Empire urged certain Sunni scholars to refuge. Following the reign of al-Mutawakkil in the second half of the seventeenth century, some scholars exiled to Mecca. Yemeni dissidents at this period include Salih b. Mahdi al-Maqbali (d. 1696), a Yemeni exile in Mecca. Like al-Hasan b. Ahmad al-Jalal (d. 1673) who mastered the rational and traditional disciplines, Maqbali was an important scholar. Maqbali was praised by eighteenth-century scholar al-Shawkani, although the latter disagreed with some parts of former thought. Maqbali's antagony in Zaydi Yemen pressed him to refuge to Mecca. Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji, in return, penned a response to al-Maqbuli's major work against imitation titled *al-ʿAlam al-shāmikh fī al-radd ʿalā al-ābāʾ wa-l-mashāyikh;* Al-Maqbalī then wrote a rejoinder to Barzanji, namely *Al-Arwāḥ al-nawāfiḥ.*[315] In addition to these political opposition and polemics among Islamic scholars across borders, some Jewish affairs crossing the Qasimi imamate and also the Ottoman Empire (see the next section of this chapter) caused Medinan intellectual circle concerned to the possible effect on politics and religious claims on messianic power. As one of the distinguished scholars inside Ibrahim al-Kurani's circle, Barzanji penned for instance a rebuttal to the messianic claims of the Ottoman Jewish namely Sabbatai Zvi who probably motivated other messianic claims of Jewish leaders in Yemen. In 1666, these Jewish leaders were persecuted by the Qasimi rule which previously protected dhimmitude under the legal rule and religious policy of al-Mutawakkil.

Considering antagonistic circumstances above, the common relations between the Zaydis and the Hijazi scholars could be affected further by bitter theological and political difference. That Hijazi scholars maintained cordial communication with scholars and Sufi in Yemen especially in Hadramawt is very much connected to the networks that Qushashi and Kurani sustained. Sufis and Shafiʿis were among the common meeting point between both Medinan scholars and their Yemeni counterparts. Qushashi and Kurani's friends as well as students were numerous among the Yemeni scholars. During escalating political climate of the Qasimi rule, this connection probably informed their intellectual attitude towards the rise of the Zaydi politics. This antagonism does not mean, however, that the relation between the Zaydis and the Hijazi scholars was always conflated with political issues. It is estimated around the middle of the 1640s, Qushashi received

[315] Dallal, *Islam without Europe*, 188-190.

letters from several Zaydi elites. One of the letters contained four questions from the Zaydi *sayyid*s brought by certain Jamal al-Din al-Samhi al-Yamani. In his treatise titled *al-Jawāb al-shāfī ʿalā al-suʾal al-muwāfī*, Qushashi recorded four questions from the Zaydis: (1) the position of Zaydiyya among different schools in Islam and *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa*; (2) are there some religious schools which lead to salvation; (3) on the honoring the Family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt)*; and (4) on the practice of performing prayer with four Sunni imams at the same time in the front of Kaʿba, whether it was part of practice during the Prophet's time. MS Garrett 3791Y notes that the copy was completed by a Yemeni Lutfullah on Muharram 1058 or January 1649. The reason why the Zaydi *sayyid*s needed to ask these questions is unclear. One of the possible answers is that they looked for sound arguments from the most prominent Sunni scholar in the Arabian Peninsula. MS Garrett 3791Y offers no clues about the curiosity of these Zaydis to exchange letters with Qushashi. Yet, it provides a possible suggestion that the Zaydis aimed to compare their religious knowledge with that of the Sunni environment close to their political sovereignty. Apart from political animosity that took place since the 1630s, such comparative legal understanding was part of scholarly dialogue that the Zaydis needed to comprehend because of their closeness to certain aspects of Sunnism.

Qushashi's answer as appeared in the manuscript often emphasizes the importance of Sunnism as the right follower of either the Quran or the Prophetic tradition. He explicitly mentioned his opinion that "every Sunni is the (right) follower and every innovator is deviant." As long 17 folios of his response as concerned, Qushashi scarcely mentioned the term "Muʿtazila"[316] and its explicit derivatives. Though, throughout this treatise, he offers critical views against the Muʿtazili position that is adopted by the Zaydis. He for instance refuted the state of the Quran as God creation (*makhlūq*), as was defended by the classical Muʿtazilis. He firmly says that this attitude is deviant, disobedient, and rebellious to the understanding of the Sunni orthodoxy.[317] Following this line of refutation, he criticized Jabbari, Qadiri, and Muʿtazili theological positions by offering the Sunni methods of theology. In addition to the problem of creation pertaining to the Scripture, Qushashi also rejected other Muʿtazili positions on divine willingness (*irāda*) and the ascertaining acts according to reason which in the classical theology is called as *taḥsīn wa taqbīḥ*. Different from the Zaydi theological points of view which adopted

[316] See for instance fol. 75b of MS Garrett 3791Y.
[317] MS Garrett 3791Y, fols. 72a-b, 78a.

the classical form of Muʿtazila, Qushashi reiterated the Ashʿarism against human voluntarism of acts and that good and evil are qualities generated through divine power and prevention.[318] Then, in the manuscript he elaborates more on the question of God's salvation according to the Prophet's hadith on the division of Jews into 71 sects, Christian 72 sects and Muslim 73 sects. As the Prophet says that the only one lead to God's salvation, Qushashi accordingly argues on the orthodox version of Islam, which means his own theological position to defend (Ottoman) Sunnism.

Qushashi's answers to the last two questions follow the same pattern: arguing for the supremacy of Sunnism. On the specific inquiry related to the Family of the Prophet, he returned to questioning the Zaydi inquirer on the abundance of religious literature from hadith to biography, from jurisprudence to pious asceticism (*zuhdiyyāt*), etc. "Why they left these sources unexamined and why did they not read these books deeply?" Qushashi pondered on the intellectual reluctance of the Zaydi inquirer. According to Qushashi's reasoning, these religious classics tend to firm a statement that "every member of the Family of the Prophet follow the Truth, trust, justice etc. according to the values brought by the Prophet."[319] Meanwhile, Qushashi's answer to the last question led him to argue that it is an innovation, but a permissible good one (*bidʿa ḥasana*). Thus, he argues that the innovation carried by the Sunni followers is different from that one carried by *ahl al-bidʿa* by quoting the saying of the Prophet. This is corroborated by his arguments following the Ashʿari theological proofs.[320] During his childhood, Qushashi traveled with his father to Yemen to seek knowledge. His father had bad experience while encountering the Zaydis in Yemen during his preaching activities. The father is told to have never returned to the region.[321] Qushashi's father experience probably contributed to his early understanding of the social life in the Zaydi milieus and partly triggered his intention to judge on the Zaydi doctrines, though he never directly mentioned Zaydi terminologies in his critical response. Although in many places, Qushashi prayed for God's blessing for every Muslims as well as the Zaydi inquirers, he firmly says that free will as defended by the Qadiri proponents are sectarian defiant resembling "milk between two blood streams".[322] He does not say that the defiant ones are unbeliever (*kāfir*). But

[318] On ethical aspects of the school, see for instance Sophia Vasalou, *Moral Agents and their Deserts: The Character of Muʿtazilite Ethics*.
[319] MS Garrett 3791Y, fol. 83b.
[320] MS Garrett 3791Y, fols. 34a-35a.
[321] Umam, "Seventeenth-Century Islamic Teaching in Medina," 13-14.
[322] MS Garrett 3791Y, fol. 73a.

in the end, he quoted a dialogue between Harun al-Rashid and Malik b. Annas about the right follower. Malik says to the caliph, "Difference between scholars is God's blessing… and that his companions were different in branches (*furūʿ*) and widespread in many regions and all of them attains (the truth)." While Qushashi's emphasis on these different opinions among religious scholars lead to the relatively true interpretation, but he also aims to underline that this difference accords only to the four Sunni schools.[323]

Like Qushashi, Kurani confronted the same pattern of critical response. MS Garrett 224Y is one of the extant copies of his rejoinder to critique the ideological foundation of the Qasimi imamate. In this unique manuscript, Kurani clearly tried to answer al-Mutawakkil's *Correct Creed* that was brough by the Zaydi followers as a small booklet functioned as an "ideological booklet".[324] Kurani's response is titled *Sharḥ al-ʿaqīda allatī allafahā mawlānā al-Imām al-ʿAllāma al-Mutawakkil ʿalallāh Ismāʾīl b. al-Qāsim riḍwān Allāh ʿalayhimā* ("Commentary on the correct creed authored by Ismaʿil b. al-Qasim"; hereafter: *Commentary on the Correct Creed*). Al-Mutawakkil's *Correct Creed* contains the summary of the Zaydi doctrine which can be carried and read freely by laypeople, the residents of the imamate mostly in northern Yemen. Its succinct form of booklet manuscript made it easy to bring everywhere, resembling the forty hadith tradition (*arbaʿīn*) authored by scholars in the post-classical period. Al-Mutawakkil himself penned a work on forty hadith based on his religious leaning. Al-Mutawakkil's booklet, it is told, was brought inside the small bag of one Yemeni hajj in Medina. From him, the booklet arrived in Kurani's hand. When reading this booklet, Kurani felt that the text is deviating from the Sunni worldview. The booklet in general is a guide for the Zaydi followers to the only salvific path to pursue God redemption (*ʿaqīda nājiya*). Based on this setting, Kurani composed his critical commentary that was previously buttressed by Qushashi's response.

The content of the manuscript is a commentary on every sentence written by the author of the ideological booklet. In it, Kurani emphasized the variety of religious ways according to the fundamental principles of Islam and their branches and then elaborated the meaning of the ship of perfect salvation (*safīnat al-najāh al-kāmila*) that addresses acts which are not disagreeing with

[323] MS Garrett 3791Y, fols. 76a-b.

[324] Konrad Hirschler defines "booklet" as a small size manuscript which consists of just between five and twenty folia (Hirschler, *A Monumet to Medieval Syrian Book*, 115-116). Meanwhile, Nir Shafir in his book project calls this small size manuscripts as "pamphlets".

the Holy Scripture and the Prophetic tradition.[325] Here he seems to offer a refutation to the exclusivist truth claim brought by the Zaydis, although Kurani's commentary aims to provide the relative inclusivist claim according to the Sunnism. Thus, as Qushashi argued in his response to the Zaydi questions above, Kurani also elaborated the Ashʿarism to refute the conception of "free will" according to the rationalist Muʿtazila as well as the powerless action according to the theology of Jabbariyya. Kurani's attitude toward this ideological booklet is clear: the Zaydi creed created by al-Mutawakkil is different from the pristine doctrine emphasized by ʿAli b. Abu Talib and other ʿAlid descendants across regions in the eastern and western Islamic spheres, Syria, Yemen, and other corners of Islamic polity. An emphasis on the archaic opinions of ʿAlid descendants was used by Kurani to deconstruct the very fundaments of the Zaydi creed. "This creed," Kurani stresses in his commentary, "is a violating creed (*ʿaqīdah makhrūqah).*[326] In delineating what is the correct method to have a closer look at the true creed, Kurani's arguments are constructed heavily on the opinions of leading Sunni scholars such as Nur al-Din al-Samhudi (d. 1533), Sayyid Jurjani (d. 1413), and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Like Qushashi's response to the Zaydi *sayyids*, Kurani's commentary also stresses on the corrupting idea of "free will" to rationalize good and bad deeds even though this rationalization is deemed with both intellectual and traditional proofs.[327] The more elaborative arguments about this refutation are present in other Kurani's manuscript namely *Takmila* that will be explained.

In other passages, Kurani bolsters his arguments by criticizing the notion of independence of acts (*istiqlāl)* and other Muʿtazili doctrines,[328] and in return, rethinks the Ashʿari doctrine. On his other works such as *Maslak al-sadād fī masʾalat khalq afʿāl al-ʿibād* ("The right method to the problem of the creation of human actions"; hereafter: *The Right Method*), completed to pen in 1674, Kurani discusses this issue extensively. Kurani's position, according to the summary made by El-Rouayheb, rejects two general perspectives: (1) the views of the early Muʿtazilis according to which humans create their acts independently of God and occasionally even act against God's Will and Decree, and (2) view of most later Ashʿaris (*al-mashhūr al-mutaʾakhkhirī al-Ashāʾira*) that human acts are direct creations of God and that human intentions and abilities have no effect (*taʾthīr)* on the created act. For the latter critique, he always believes that al-Ashʿari's Ur-text or

[325] MS Garrett 224Y, fol. 151a.
[326] MS Garrett 224Y, fols. 149a-b.
[327] MS Garrett 224Y, fol. 154b.
[328] See for instance MS Garrett 224Y, fols. 158a-159b.

original opinion is different from later reception. One of Kurani's favorite texts is Ashʿari's *al-Ibāna fī uṣūl al-diyāna*, deemed as his last and most authoritative work, to reveal that Ashʿari only denied the Muʿtazili position, not endorsed the position that human power has no effect whatsoever on the action.[329] To support this argument, Kurani usually refers to the saying of neo-Hanbali traditionalist such as Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya.[330] To conclude, Kurani's commentary on Ismaʿil b. Qasim's booklet shows not only the very critique of the Muʿtazili doctrines but also the general Shiʿi creeds regarding the Family of the Prophet and the companion of the Prophet.

Kurani's education and book learning during his intellectual journey from Shahrizor to Damacus provided of what Ahmed El Shamsy calls as "critical philological impulse".[331] During his first decade in Medina, his desire to attain spiritual enlightenment under Qushashi's guidance prevented him to use his critical, skeptical view. El-Shamsy is true when he noted that Kurani's keen critical philological interest reappeared once he established his own intellectual personae from the 1660s onwards. During this period, Kurani used his philological instinct to correct many wrong perceptions by recultivating original texts according to scholars that he needed to examine. One of this skeptical approach is Kurani's defense to Ibn Taymiyya from any accusation on the latter's view on anthropomorphism perceived through centuries by scholars such as Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 1566).[332] This critical philological impulse is certainly obvious to Kurani's response to the Zaydi doctrines. His zealous attempt to investigate the pristine texts or doctrines written or defended by many theologians and scholars in Islamic history led him to have a critical understanding of multitudes of religious knowledge. When he read a text by a Medinan scholar in the late fifteenth century, al-Samhudi, in his book *Jawāhir al-ʿiqdayn fī faḍl al-sharafayn* Kurani stopped to ponder. He says, "I understood from the book that there is an affirmation of will (*qadr*) and acquisition (*kasb*) with God permission and without independence (*ibṭāl al-istiqlāl)* by creating actions (*bi-khalq al-afʿāl)* as propagated by the Muʿtazilīs and the Shaykh (Samhudi) proposed to take a break (*wuqūf*) of the saying of Zayd b. ʿAlī." From this setting,

[329] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 298.
[330] See MS Garrett 224Y, fol. 167b for further discussion on later Ashʿarism.
[331] El Shamsy, *Rediscovering Islamic Classics*, 56-57.
[332] El-Rouayheb, "From Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī to Khayr al-Dīn al-Ālūsī," 272; El-Shamsy, *Rediscovering Islamic Classics*, 57; Copty, "Taḥqīq Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan al-Kūrānī li-masāʾil kalāmiyya ʿinda Aḥmad b. Taymiyya al-Ḥarrānī"; Kurani, MS al-Azhar library, *Kitāb al-ʿayn wa-l-athar fī ʿaqāʾid ahl al-athar.* Kurani co-authored this work with ʿAbd al-Baqi al-Baʿli, his Damascene teacher. See also original ʿAbd al-Baqi's *al-ʿAyn wa-l-athar fī ʿaqāʾid ahl al-athar*.

Kurani then authored *Takmilat al-qawl al-jalī fī taḥqīq qawl al-Imām Zayd b. ʿAlī* ("Complement to the lofty opinion in verifying the original opinion of Zayd b. ʿAli"; hereafter: *Complement*) to understand the archaic opinions of the Imam according to Kurani's own investigation and intellectual horizons.

MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722 at the Sulemaniye library is the only identified Kurani's anthology including *the Complement* though there is no information in the colophon when it was penned. The anthology itself was clearly copied on 12 Ramadan 1091 or 6 October 1680 in Medina, at the time when Kurani was still active to teach and write until his death in 1690. The dearth of information pertaining to the dating of the relevant work leaves no trace whether it was penned before the authorship of MS Garret 224Y which showed a direct physical encounter between Zaydi proponents and Kurani. In MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722, Kurani's *Complement* contains many keywords derived from the Quran such as *qaṣd al-sabīl* as the 'correct methodology' of Sunnism; the Quranic term that was used by him pertains to his prose theological *summae* (major and minor ones) to comment extensively on the Ashʿari theology written based on the creedal poems authored by his teacher, Qushashi, popularly known as *al-Manẓūma al-qushāshiyya* (see Chapter Two on this authorship). Kurani's search for the authenticity of Zayd b. ʿAli's opinions considerably emerged as his critical philological interest to investigate the very beliefs of Family of the House (*ahl al-bayt*), especially as propagated by Zayd b. ʿAli and his ʿAlid predecessors that are not accord with Muʿtazili beliefs. In the *Complement*, Kurani's aim clearly shows his position as an Ashʿari verifier who was very critical not only with other beliefs but also within the tradition of Ashʿari rational theology itself. He mentioned for instance that Zayd b. ʿAli and his forefathers were part of the ancient Sunni propagators that were opposing to the Muʿtazili proponents and that *jabr* and *istiqlāl* were denied according to the very opinion of Zayd b. ʿAli as narrated from his father.[333] The *Complement* moreover provides a general overview of other classical theological schools including Jahmiyya (founded by Jahm b. Safwan, d. 746) and Karramiyya (founded by ninth century theologian Ibn Karram) that, according to Kurani's reading, was not part of opinion defended by Zayd b. ʿAli. Then, by relying his arguments on Ashʿari's *Ibāna* and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's *Shifāʾ al-ʿalīl*, Kurani further defined the salvific camp is belong to whoever follows the Prophet and his companions, justifying the predestination with the Scripture

[333] MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722, fols. 299a-b, 301a.

and the Prophetic tradition and the community of Sunnism.[334] Apart from the fact that Kurani's defense is not disagreeing with the major Sunni theology, his resilient skeptical attitude towards theological texts or books that he read directed him to questioning everything he philologicallay and theologically deemed as "corrupt" that was perceived by many scholars as true in the course of historical reception and recension.

Together with Qushashi's treatise, Kurani's writings critiques the Zaydi doctrines as an 'official ideology' that was created, self-commented, and disseminated by the ruler and apparatus of the Qasimi imamate, took place from the 1650s onward. Both Qushashi and Kurani needed to strengthen the Ashʿari doctrine as an attempt to refute the theological-political difference. They not only reformulated Ashʿari positions but also engaged in heated debates with other schools, in this case the Zaydi Shiʿis in Yemen. While regarding the legal tradition, there is identical position between the Zaydis and the Shafiʿis, the theological problems as promoted in al-Mutawakkil's booklet and his political regime had been a critical subject for which Kurani radically critiqued. From this point of view, the competing ideas in the borders of southern Arabia encouraged Kurani to argue on Sunnism, supporting the Ottoman sovereignty intellectually. Kurani's perception on Muʿtazila finally cannot be separated from the existence of the Zaydis, through their rituals, texts, politics and their mobility across the Hijaz and southern Arabia, that accumulated the collective memory of the classical doctrines of the founder of the school. From this context, Kurani's commentary and investigation to the classical doctrine of Zayd b. ʿAli found his counterpart. Kurani's defense for the Sunnism that was politically protected by the Ottoman Empire was also buttressed by his close circle, Muhammad b. Rasul Barzanji who critiqued the Safavid politics and Shiʿi doctrines following the path of the intellectual refugee from Persia to Mecca in the sixteenth century, Makhdum Sharifi.[335] A discussion of Barzanji as a close circle and student of Kurani who came from the same Kurdish region is required to understand the collective attitude of Medinan intellectual milieus.

[334] MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722, fol. 312a.

[335] Cf. Özervarlı, "Between tension and rapprochement: Sunni-Shiʿite relations in the pre-modern Ottoman period," 22.

4.2. Countering Messianic Movements across Empires: Kurani and his Medinan coreligionist Barzanji

Millenarianism and messianic movements in the seventeenth century were one of the central issues for which Kurani and his Medinan circle confronted to defend on Ottoman Sunnism. These movements caused social and political angst in the capital of the Ottoman Empire and many places. An explicit response to the affair of Sabbatai Zvi, the self-proclaimed Jewish messiah in Istanbul in 1666, was written by Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji. Barzanji penned *al-Ishāʿa li-ashrāṭ al-sāʿa (The Proclamation on the Final Hour)* a treatise on the correct doctrine of Mahdism according to the understanding of the Sunni theology.[336] The writing of this treatise was completed on Wednesday on 11/11/1076 of Islamic hijriyya or 15/5/1666 AD, two months after Sabbatai Zvi's self-proclamation and five months before the case filed into the Ottoman court. This response was completed probably to halt public unrest, either among the Jews or their Islamic counterparts caused by the possible political chaos affected by the messianic ideas. The Köprülü regime in Istanbul had certain intellectual proximity to Medinan scholars, especially Kurani, through which the writing of *The Proclamation on the Final Hour* was taken place. Through this earlier connection that was started in the 1650s following the beginning of the Köprülü ruling period, Barzanji in later decades joined the Ottoman campaign against the Habsburg Empire. While the reception of Sabbatai Zvi's messianic movement in Arabic literature was present especially through a writing of Yemeni scholar al-Shawkani in the eighteenth century,[337] such response was already commenced by Barzanji shortly after the affair. It is important to note that Sabbatean messianic proclamation widespread throughout Islamic and European worlds; thus its reception affected the wide political concerns inside the Ottoman Empire.

[336] Barzanji, *al-Ishāʿa li-ashrāṭ al-sāʿa*. The manuscript of this writing is extant everywhere and its reception is ubiquitous including its print version. Some fine copies of this manuscripts include MS Garrett 3249Y and many in Ottoman libraries. It was translated to Ottoman Turkish, see MS Yazma Bağışlar 206. On this specific relation between Sabbatai Zwi and Barzanji's response, see Aziz al-Azmeh, *The Times of History: Universal Topics in Islamic Historiography*; David Cook, "Apocalypse". However, Cook wrongly attributes the death of Barzanji as 1113/1701. Nineteenth-century Indian scholar, Siddiq Hasan Khan, followed Barzanji by authoring *Iqtirāb al-sāʿa* (Approaching of the Final Hour); cf. Preckel, "Screening Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān's Library," 210.

[337] Islam Dayeh is completing a book project on this specific response.

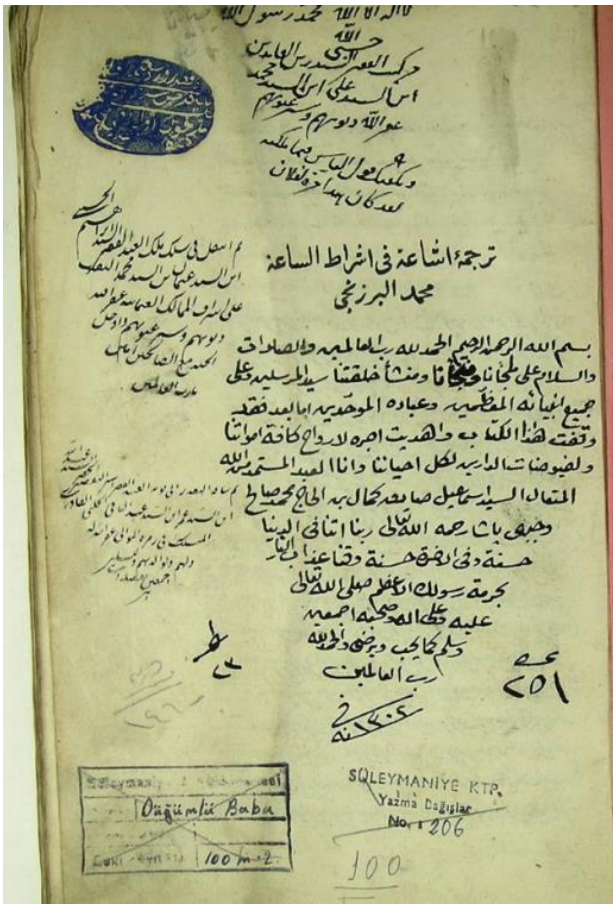

Figure 4.1. The Ottoman Turkish translation of Barzanji's *al-Ishāʿa li-ashrāṭ al-sāʿa*. MS Yazma Bağışlar 206 (the Süleymaniyye library).

The messianic ideas and movements de facto appeared behind the gun powder empires at the turn of the new millennial Islamic time.[338] An earlier apocalyptic treatise by the Egyptian polymath, Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 1505), *Kashf ʿan mujāwazāt hādhihi al-umma al-alf*, written one century prior to the millennial turn 1000/1591, was prepared to the expected end of the world at that time.[339] Suyuti's response were often copied side by side with Barzanji's writing as can be seen for instance in MS Kılıç Ali Pasha 186 at the Süleymaniyye library. This intertextual connection signifies the reception of this genre into the Ottoman libraries. Although Suyuti's speculation on the coming of the final hours is inaccurate, his treatise inspired later scholars including Barzanji to expand more on the Sunni perspective of the Mahdism. The messianic ideas and

[338] On the relation between millennial turn and Islamic sovereignty, see A. Azfar Moin, *The Millenial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*; cf. Cornell Flesicher, "A Mediterranean Apocalypse"; "The Lawgiver as Messiah."

[339] David Cook, *Contemporary Muslim Apocalyptic Literature*, 90.

movements immediately prompted the circle of Medinan scholars in conjunction with their support, at least intellectually, to the Islamic sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire. Some specific events occurred within the nearness of Medinan scholars' minds.[340] In Ramadan 1671, a self-declared messiah (a Persianate pilgrim, *ʿajamī*) appeared in the Haram, and he was dragged out and burned in the cemetery. The chronicler, however, is more scandalized by the reaction of the mass mob than by the self-proclaimed messiah. At that time, in the Persianate world, there were several messianic movements which might be connecting to the sensitivity with which the people in Mecca reacted. In other words, this messianic issue took place between Istanbul and Delhi, transgressing empires, and tested the foundation of Sunni belief at the turn of the eleventh Islamic century. Furthermore, in June 1666, Ibrahim al-Kurani responded to a letter from northern Mesopotamia where a Kurdish boy namely Muhammad b. ʿAbd Allah declared the Mahdi. Kurani denies this self-claim, and his response can be figured out as the protection of Ottoman sovereignty from the unsound act and thought of the Kurdish Islamicness. In addition to this, Barzanji additionally writes about the appearance of the Beast in France, a messianic incident he had heard of, probably based on the early modern circulation of Judeo-Christian apocalypticism.

The messianic events thus gravitated social-political movement that potentially threatened the political climate in the Arabian Peninsula where the circulation of people never stops and amongst the Ottoman elites in general. Another messianic challenge originated from the self-claim millennial movement of Sirhindi followers, named after Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624), whose Persian letters circulated widely among the Sufi Naqshbandi networks in the Ottoman lands. In the Hijazi milieu, the Sirhindi movement notably deconstructed the old-established Naqshbandiyya by creating another offshoot namely *mujaddidiya*, semantically means the belief of 'the renewal of the second Islamic millennium'. Nonetheless, Medinan scholars from the time of Qushashi in the early 1630s until the later years of Kurani in 1680s fully reacted to the creedal aspects of Sirhindi. Qushashi particularly critiqued Sirhindi's teaching, especially on the superiority of Kaʿba's existence over the Prophet Muhammad's existence. Qushashi's students, especially Kurani and Barzanji, later intensified Qushashi's arguments to radically refute Sirhindi's teachings widely supported between Anatolia and India due to the deep connection of the Naqshbandi fraternity. Kurani authored the commentary of Qushashi's *Kalimat al-wāḍiha ʿalā*

[340] I thank Florian Schwartz and Christian Lange for providing me information of specific events that are mentioned as follow; personal communication.

al-maqāla al-fāḍiha namely *Ibṭāl mā ẓahara min al-maqāla al-fāḍiha fī mā yataʿallaqu bihi*, rebutting Sirhindi's favouritism of Kaʿba's existence over the Prophet's existence.[341] It was completed on 4 Rabiʿ al-awwal / 1078/24 August 1967, one year following Jewish messianic affair in Constantinople. Fifteen years after the completion of this book, another request of responsa on the affair of Sirhindi arrived in Medina from India. Kurani did not respond anything during this period. Kurani urged his circle to answer this centurial request of responsa. In the Medinan circle of Kurani, Barzanji was the sole scholar who was a specialist critic of "incorrect" messianism. Barzanji in return wrote not only one, but ten treatises composed in both Arabic and Persian[342] to address the wide audience in the Persianate world. The treatises had been drafted eloquently with relatively rapid time to complete.[343] These were written in response to *istifta'* (request for responsa) coming from India that reached the Hijaz in Jumada II, 1093/June-July 1682.[344] The first, *Qadḥ al-zand wa qidḥ al-rand fi radd jahālāt ahl al-Sirhind*.[345] This Arabic work was finished on 15 Rajab 1093 / 20 July 1682. In other words, Barzanji wrote this polemical work shortly after the *istifta'* reached the Hijaz in the same year. It was translated into Persian titled *Gardan shikan* (literally means "Who severs the neck/deserved to be beheaded") most probably for readership in the Persianate culture in India. While its Arabic copies are accessible in Istanbul libraries, it was translated into Ottoman Turkish, revealing the interest of the Ottomans to read it. After the authorship of *Qadḥ al-zand* and it seems it was being accepted widely between 1093-1095 / 1682-1684, there was the prominent defender of Sirhindi who came to Hijaz directly from India, namely Muhammad Beğ al-Uzbaki. He composed *ʿAṭiyyat al-wahhāb al-fāṣila bayna al-khaṭā' wa al-ṣawāb* which was completed on 2 Rabiʿ al-awwal 1094 / 1 March 1683. Al-Uzbaki attempted to reveal that the Arabic translation of Sirhindi's *Maktūbāt*, prepared for the Hijazi scholars, was distorted. He also directly quoted *istiftā'* from Indian scholars addressed to Hijazi

[341] MS Sehid Ali Pasha 2722, fol. 347a.

[342] Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, although unlisted works are not all recorded. In addition to his works related to messianism, Barzanji, authored about 21 treatises in some fields of knowledge. His renowned work, *Sadād al-dīn wa sidād al-dayn fī ithbāt al-najā wa-ldarajāt li-l-wālidayn*, Barzanji argues on the afterlife salvation of the Prophet's parents. It is a rebuttal to a work penned by Meccan Hanafi scholar Mulla ʿAli al-Qari (d. 1606); see Muhibbi, *Khulasat al-athar*, vol. 3, 186. On the opinion of ʿAli al-Qari on this issue, see Patrick Franke, "Are the Parents of the Prophet in Hell? Tracing the History of a Debate in Sunni Islam."

[343] See al-Hamawi, *Fawā'id al-irtiḥāl*.

[344] See MS Laleli 3744, *Qadḥ al-zand*; Friedman also identified other MSS in India, including *Al-Nāshira al-nājira* and *al-ʿAṣab al-hindī*, see his *Sirhindi*, p. 7. Al-Hamawi mentioned the representative of the group, namely Saʿid b. Barakat.

[345] See MS Laleli 3744, fols. 7a-25b.

scholars. Another name who supported Sirhindi thought was Hasan b. Muhammad Murad al-Tunisi al-Maliki, by writing *Al-ʿArf al-nādī fī nuṣrat al-shaykh Aḥmad al-Sirhindī.*[346]

Still, at the same Hijazi milieu, scholars of Mecca responded to the *istiftā* of 1093. One of them namely Hasan b. ʿAli, a Hanafi mufti, penned *al-ʿAṣab al-hindī li-istiṣāl kufriyyāt Aḥmad al-Sirhindī*. There is a shortage of information about its dating. Friedmann assumes that many more works of the same topic appeared to have been authored at the similar epoch. At least sixteen names are mentioned in *al-Nāshira al-nājira*,[347] including Kurani. It has been clearer that all these scholars formulated their anti-Sirhindi polemical treatises after the group of Hijazi scholars, led directly by Barzanji, sent by Saʿid b. Barakat, the Sharif of Mecca, to meet with the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb who already decreed to ban the teachings of Sirhindi in India, demanding that part of the teachings clash with the *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa.* However, unexpectedly, Aurangzeb refused to meet them, and then the group passed to cross the Indian Ocean to reach the Sultana of Aceh, Zakiyyat al-Din (r. 1678-1688).[348] The Sultana received the delegation and gave it presents for the Meccan sharif Saʿid b. Barakat. This alternative plan probably was happening because one of the close students of Qushashi and Kurani, namely the Acehnese ʿAbd al-Ra'uf al-Fansuri (d. 1693), became the chief qadi of the Aceh Sultanate and had good relations with Barzanji as well. Atallah Copty has noted that after returning shamefully to Hijaz, the Sharif persuaded Barzanji to mobilize other Hijazi scholars to write such anti-Sirhindi treatises. This mobilization aimed to satisfy Aurangzeb who had been good relations with the Sharif.[349] Barzanji mentions the political justice of Aurangzeb and the intellectual authority of Ibrahim al-Kurani in his *Qadḥ al-zand.*[350] Kurani's arguments to counter Sirhindi's claim of the supremacy of Kaʿba's existence fueled Barzanji's prose composition in the variety of his works.

The Hijazi scholars experienced their prestige among their Indian interlocutors, showing the close networks between the two cultural milieus.[351] Thus, Medinan scholars had been perceived

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[346] Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, 8-10. Friedman identified other manuscripts relating to the anti-Sirhindi polemical works written by Barzanji including *al-Nāshira al-nājira li al-firqa al-fājira*, completed on 7 Muharram 1095 / 26 December 1683. This was written to refute Muhammad Beğ al-Uzbaki who support the pro-Sirhindi campaign. *Al-Nāshira* is said to become the last ten books written by Barzanji to contest Sirhindi and his followers. In addition to these oeuvres, Friedman identified other titles without successfully locating their whereabouts: *al-Ighāra al-muṣbiḥa, Iḍāʿat al-nibrās* and a Persian work called *Khayl Allāh bar sar-i Khayr Allāh*

[347] Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, 7-8.

[348] On the authority of sultanas of Aceh, see Sher Banu A. L. Khan, *Sovereign Women in a Muslim Kingdom.*

[349] Atallah Copty, "The Naqshbandiyya and Its Offshoot: the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya in the Haramayn in the 11th/17th Century."

[350] See MS *Qadḥ al-zand*, fols. 1a-1b.

[351] On the material and economic donation by the Indians in the Hijaz, see chapter one of Naser Dumairieh's *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*.

as authoritative in issuing thoughtful responsa for the rebuttal of Sirhindi millennial specter over the seventeenth century. The shadows of Barzanji's writings did not stop until his time. Even until the late nineteenth century, the millennial specter found a new body to counter Barzanji's commentary reception. Wakil Ahmad Sikandarpuri, probably belonged to the Naqshbandi mujaddidi offshoot which admired its transmission to Sirhindi, attempted to show people who were interested in reading Barzanji as erroneous. Wakil intended to revive Sirhindi by arguing with eloquent Arabic the liberating theology of Sirhindi, by authoring *al-Kalām al-munjī bi-radd īrādāt al-Barzanjī*. Perhaps Wakil's time become the turning point of the positive image of Sirhindi as the millennial reformer over the twentieth century.

Kurani's writings and scholarly authority was behind the strength of polemical treatises penned by Barzanji. Like the critique on Sirhindi, Kurani did not intend himself to continuously attack or respond further inquiry on polemical issues such as the problem of the Satanic verses and the faith of the Pharaoh as commonly widespread within the circle of Ibn ʿArabi as well as his arch-rival, Ibn Taymiyya.[352] Barzanji was always at the forefront of intellectual bravery to defend anything Ottoman Sunnism and Kurani's teachings. In addition to *Qadḥ al-zand*, Barzanji for instance in 1681 composed *al-ʿIqāb al-hāwī ʿalā al-thaʿlab al-ʿāwī wa al-nushshāb al-kāwī li al-aʿshā al-ghāwī wa al-shihāb al-shāwī li-l-aḥwāl al-Shāwī*,[353] a fierce critique of Barzanji to the Algerian Yahya al-Shawi who attacked Ibrahim al-Kurani's thought as an infidel, as can be seen in Shawi's treatise *al-Nabl al-raqīq fī ḥulqūm al-sābb al-zindīq.*[354] Also, to reaffirm the Sunnism, anti-Safavid Shiʿism appeared in the second half of the seventeenth century. There were political crises in the Kurdish areas in the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, ransacked by the Safavids and caused depopulation of the region, showing by the mass deportations of Kurds, Azeris, Armenians, and Georgians. In 1609-1610, a Kurdish revolt in the area south of Lake Urmia nearby Azerbaijan was crushed by the Safavids, an event remembered in the traditional Kurdish poem *Bayt-i Dimdim* (The Battle of Dimdim). It was part of the Ottoman-Safavid war (1603-1618). El-Rouayheb suggested that relations between the predominantly Sunni Kurds and the Shiite Safavids remained tense thereafter, and some of the most virulent

[352] On the early Islamic attitude toward the incident of the Satanic Verses, see Shahab Ahmed, *Before Orthodoxy: the Satanic Verses on Early Islam*. On Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on this issue, see Shahab Ahmed, "Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses." On further explanation see the subchapter of the Maghrebi connection in this chapter.

[353] MS Garrett 978H; MS Laleli 3744, fols. 26a-52b.

[354] MS Laleli 3744, fols. 53b-72a.

anti-Shiite polemics from the seventeenth century were written by Kurdish scholars such as Zayn al-ʿAbidin Gurani (d. 1660) *al-Yamāniyyāt al-maslūla* (fl. 1656),[355] Ahmad b. Haydar Husaynabadi (d. 1669) *Ghusl al-rijlayn fī radd madhhab al-shīʿa*, and Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Rasul Barzanji (d. 1691) *al-Nawāfiḍ li-l-rawāfiḍ*.[356]

Barzanji completed *al-Nawāfiḍ li-l-rawāfiḍ*, on 17 Rabiʿ al-thani 1097 (13 March 1986). The title has direct meaning as "Some thoughts to shake off to the Rejectionist," i.e. a refutation to the Shiʿis. Barzanji's *al-Nawāfid* excerpted and explicated the identical work, authored one hundred earlier as a critical response to the Safavids by Mirza Makhdum Sharifi (d. 995/1587), the descendant of the renowned Sharif Jurjani, the author of *al-Mawāqif*. [357] The Sunni-converting scholar and an exile from Shiraz, Sharifi penned *al-Nawāqiḍ fī al-radd ʿalā al-rawāfiḍ.* He lived as the contemporary of Shah Tahmasb and his son, Ismail II. The treatise itself was a work which played a crucial role in shaping the Sunni inclinations of Ismail II.[358] A later Safavid scholar, Sayyid Nur Allah al-Marʿashi al-Shustari (d. 1019/1610), wrote a refutation to Sharifi, namely *Maṣāʿib al-nawāṣib fī al-radd ʿalā nawāqiḍ al-rawāfiḍ*. Viewed from this light, Barzanji attempted to engage himself with the long intellectual clash between Sunnism and Shiʿism, reinforced by the political conflict between the Ottomans and the Safavids. Sharifi not only became a source of inspiration for Barzanji, probably because of the popularity of Sharifi's manuscript in the Hijaz,[359] but also the latter creatively used different orthographical modification: from *al-nawāqid* to *al-nawāfid*. Explicitly stated in his work, Barzanji stressed the glorification of Sunnism:

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[355] BnF, MS Arabe 1462. On fol. 5a, Zayn al-ʿAbidin, who lived and died in Constantinople, explicitly presented this work to the young Ottoman Sultan Mehmed IV *avcı* "The Hunter" (*al-Sulṭān ibn al-Sulṭān al-ghāzī al-sulṭān Muḥammad Khān ibn al-Sulṭān Ibrāhīm Khān*, r. 1648-1687)

[356] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Seventeenth Century Islamic Intellectual History*; cf. Dina Le Gall*, Forgotten Naqshbandi and the Culture of Pre-Modern Sufi Brotherhood*; see also Barzanji extant manuscripts of *al-Nawāfiḍ li-l-rawāfiḍ*: MS Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, MS Garrett 704Y, MS Garrett 2816Y, BnF Arabe 1459.

[357] The identical orthographical title, *al-Nawāqiḍ fī al-radd ʿalā al-rawāfiḍ*, was written by Mirza Makhdum Sharifi (d. 995/1587), the contemporary of Shah Tahmasb and his son, Ismail II. The treatise played a crucial role in shaping the Sunni inclinations of Ismail II; see Shohreh Gholsorkhi, "Ismail II and Mirza Makhdum Sharifi: An Interlude in Safavid History," 477-488; Kioumars Ghereghlou, "A Safavi Bureaucrat in the Ottoman World: Mirza Makhdum Sharifi Shirazi and the Quest for Upward Mobility in the *İlmiye* Hierarchy, 153-194. It has been noted that Makhdum's work has been summarised by Barzanji (Rudolf Mach, *Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts in the Garret Collection* [Princeton, 1977]); See also, R. Abisaab, *Religion and Power in the Savafid Empire*, Rosemary Stanfield Johnson, "Sunni Survival in Safavid Iran; Anti-Sunni Activities during the Reign of Tahmasp I,", 123–133. Another title of Makhdum's work is *al-Nawāqiḍ li-bayān al-rawāfiḍ*, see R. Pourjavady, "Muslih al-Din al-Lari and His *Samples of the Sciences*," p. 295. A later Safavid scholar, Sayyid Nur Allah al-Marʿashi al-Shustari (d. 1019/1610), wrote a refutation to Sharifi, namely *Maṣāʿib al-nawāṣib fī al-radd ʿalā nawāqiḍ al-rawāfiḍ* (*The Calamities of the Enemies Refuting the Contraditions of the Rejectors*). See S. Rizvi, "Sayyid Niʿmat Allāh al-Jazāʾirī and His Anthologies: Anti-Sufism, Shiʿism and Jokes in the Safavid World," 234.

[358] Shohreh Gholsorkhi, "Ismail II and Mirza Makhdum Sharifi: an interlude in Safavid history".

[359] I thank Reza Pourjavady for this clue.

ʿizz al-sunna wa kahf al-jamāʿa "the might of the prophetic tradition and the cavern of the community".

There is a wide-accepted assumption that the clash between the Ottomans and the Safavids decreased significantly in the second half of the seventeenth century. In this regard, Barzanji's writing did not mean to intensify the magnitude of conflicts. But it aimed to revive the cultural memory of, as accentuated above, the crises of Kurdish-Sunni areas in the aftermath of the Safavid campaign. Using Mirza Makhdum Sharifi, whose genealogy (the forefather of the kings of Persia, *jadd mulūk al-ʿajam)* was noted by Barzanji as the same with that of Ahmad Qushashi—his admired teacher, as a point of departure and projected straightforwardly the symbolic meanings of a Shafiʿi jurist for which Barzanji was also a Shafiʿi scholar—coming from the Safavid capital who used to be part of the close associate of Ismail II to reverse anti-Sunni policies but then being expelled and seek refuge to Mecca. Unclear, however, is the situation in the 1680s in the Hijaz whether Barzanji penned his anti-Shiʿi treatise to respond to somebody, like the case of anti-Sirhindi treatises, or as a self-reflection on what is happening at the time of writing, like the case of Sabbatean messianism. Shortly, Barzanji's ideas and activism for the protection of the Ottoman Sunnism colored the nuance of Kurani's circle and intellectual fame.[360] Having explained the macroscopically tied knots between Kurani, Medinan circle and the Ottoman elites or religious issues, the broader detail formal and informal networks[361] need to be microscopically exposed to investigate the limitation of such network and how the Köprülü's political reform aided Kurani's authority among the Ottomans.

4.3. Polemics in the Western Mediterranean

While the previous sections stress on the intellectual and political climate behind some responses within Kurani's circle to controversial issues and events outside Medina, this section will portray polemics and controversies triggered by Ibrahim al-Kurani's thought. Most scholars who refuted, attacked, and disliked some Kurani's theological formulae came from the North African Islamic milieu, from Ottoman Tunisia to the Maghreb. Together with Medinan responses to external issues, these polemics contributed to the formation of transregional contexts of Kurani's writings and intellectual authority. In today's life, a scholar or intellectual has staunch proponents and

[360] Cf. Krstić & Terzioğlu (eds.), *Historicizing Sunni Islam in the Ottoman Empire c. 1450-c. 1750.*
[361] On this distinction, see Evrim Binbas, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran*.

critical opponents; similar to this, premodern scholars in the Islamic world had both poles, either admirers or adversaries. However, some of Kurani's opponents had different motivations and attitudes. This section aims to underline that Kurani's active intellectual engagement to some of his Mediterrannean adversaries further facilitated the circulation of his writings and, consequently, bolstered his authority in famous or notorious terms depending on which parties who produced their claims.

The early modern period is a dynamic epoch of Islamic mobility, pertaining to the interactions between human beings, ideas, and materialities. The extensive flux of Maghrebi scholars to the eastern Mediterranean and the Hijaz was part of this progressive era. Many of them did not return to their hometown and therefore forged their careers in favorite places like Cairo, Mecca or Medina. The French orientalist, Jacques Berque, noted that Mecca and Medina were the rich locus of scholarly circumstances as had been viewed by the Maghrebi scholars.[362] In the seventeenth century, the Maghrebis in the holy cities witnessed people mobility and activities. Depicting the centrality of the holy cities, ʿAyyashi wrote that "in the monsoon period people intermingled from the entire horizons and a variety of rulers" (*ihkṭilāt al-nās min jamīʿ al-āfāq wa taʿaddud al-ḥukkām*). In addition to ʿAyyashi whose reports become an important source for the history of seventeenth-century Hijaz, Ibrahim al-Kurani had close relations with other Maghrebi scholars including ʿIsa al-Maghribi. This relationship enhanced the escalation of manuscript circulation pertaining to Kurani's writings in the Maghreb. The circulation of Indian texts such as Ghawth Gwaliyori's *Jawāhir-i khams*, Burhanpuri's *The Gift* and Kurani's commentary namely *The Bestowal* was took place in the Maghreb without negative reactions.[363] MS Arabe 5402 of the French National Library, originally from the Moroccan milieu, contains a copy of Kurani's *Bestowal* that was corrected and noted by the author in 1676.[364] This treatise was added into other treatises that were written with beautiful Maghrebi calligraphy. Moreover, in the inventory of manuscripts belong to the Sufi Academy of ʿAyyashiyya in the High Atlas Mountain, it is evident that ʿAyyashi and Kurani exchanged letters,[365] as also occurred between

[362] Jacques Berque, *Ulemas, fondateurs, insurges du Maghreb*, 53.

[363] In his letter to Kurani, ʿAyyashi wrote in 1668 that *Itḥāf al-dhakī* was received positively in the Maghreb. See Kurani, *nibrās al-īnās bi-ajwibat suʾālāt ahl Fās*, MS Laleli 3744, fols. 7b-8a.

[364] See the colophon of *Itḥāf al-dhakī*, MS Arabe 5402, fol. 57b. Other Kurani's treatises from the French National Library, MS Arabe 6826, contains a variety of Kurani's texts copied in Maghrebi calligraphy, including his treatise on the Satanic verses (see Figure 4.3)

[365] *Fihris Makhṭūṭāt ʿAyyāshiyya*, 11. I have been unable to see this assemblage of letters to look closely at the relevant issues embedded in the dossiers.

Kurani and his Jawi friends (about this, see Chapter Five). It seems that the Shattari connection assisted the circulation of manuscripts from Medina to the Maghreb. Maghrebi Shattari links connected directly to the Sufi authority of Kurani. As shown by a Tabrizi Sufi in his *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, his Sufi transmission was transmitted from two Sufis of Fez, namely Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Salam and Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Rahman; both of these Maghrebi Sufis obtained the chain from Kurani.[366] Manuscript copies pertain to this Shattari fraternity are extant in the Sufi libraries in Morocco back to the time of the seventeenth century through the central circuit of Medina.

Jacques Berque mentioned Kurani briefly in his seminal study of al-Hasan al-Yusi (d. 1691), an important scholar in the Maghreb whose writings were influential in the Islamic Mediterranean. Berque however incorrectly noted Kurani as a Damascene scholar.[367] Clifford Geertz in his *Islam Observed* compared Morocco and Indonesia, one of which relates to the archaic foundation of both modern nations through cultivating the mythic figures of Yusi and Sunan Kalijaga, one of the creative and legendary saints in Java in the fifteenth century.[368] Despite of temporal difference and intellectual development between the two, Geertz often did not aware of any common link between the two religious spheres played by the 'centrality' of Medinan intellectual repertoire. As will be seen in the Chapter Five, Sufi ideas and practices in the late fifteenth-century Java became an important setting for the long debate over two centuries around the maritime Southeast Asia and beyond. Kurani then took a vital part in elucidating the faith of the "Sufi heretics" and saved them posthumously from the death penalty that was demanded by a form of religious strictness. Meanwhile, some of Kurani's ideas and manuscripts obtained positive and negative receptions among Yusi and his contemporaries in the Maghreb. Through this different lenses, Kurani bridged the two furthest Islamic worlds: the Maghreb in the west and the maritime Southeast Asia or the 'far eastern archipelago' as used in the vocabulary of Kurani's writings. This cultural bridge not only related to physical confluence between scholars took place in Medina, but also intellectual encounters and the productive exchange of materiality through the flows of books. Both Yusi and Kurani and their respective Berber and

[366] However, Qushashi and Medinan not always dominated the Shattari line in the broader Arabia. The Tabrizi Sufi also mentions another line from a Meccan scholar who learned from Sayyid Mir Gilan who had a direct Indian line of transmission; see MS Garrett 234Y, fols. 176b, 207b. This alternative chain certainly does not undermine the decisive role of Shattari networks played by the Medinan circle.

[367] Jacques Berque, *Al-Yousi. Problèmes de la culture marocaine au XVIIème siècle*, 77, 111-2.

[368] Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*.

Kurdish proponens moreover represented the intellectual progress in the eleventh Islamic century.[369] Kurdistan and Berber highlands cannot be perceived to have been regressive because of their geographical locations as "margins" or "frontiers". Both regions were in fact among the vigorous producers of theological and philosophical discourses in this era. By showing different pictures and trends of these two regions, El-Rouayheb stresses on the unlikely meeting point between scholars emanated from both far-away geographies.[370]

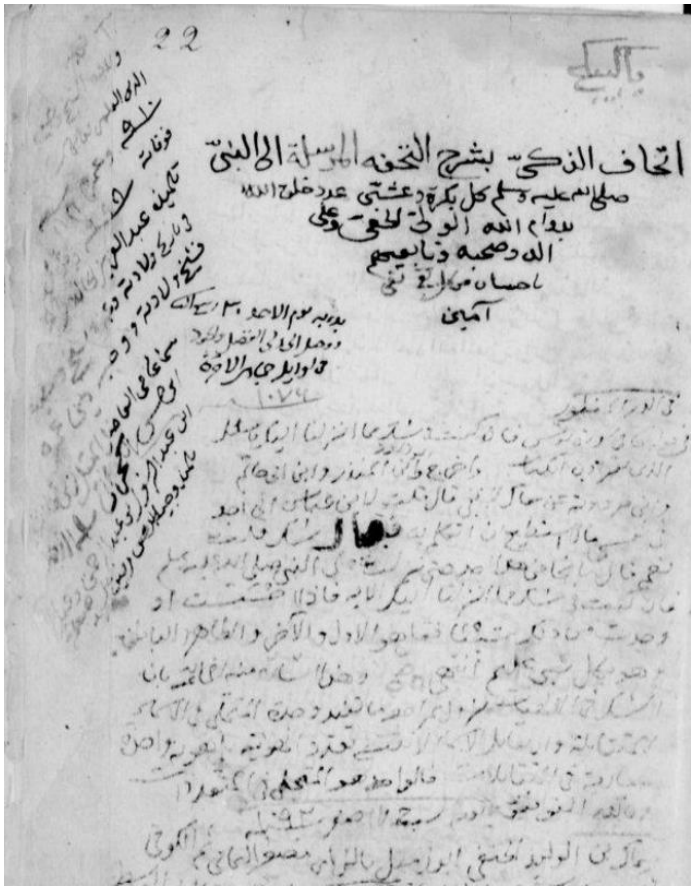

Figure 4.2. A copy of Kurani's *Itḥāf al-dhakī* in Morocco with Kurani's autograph and notes (dated 1087/1676). BnF Arabe 5402, fol. 22a.

However, the meeting point between Yusi and Kurani is demarcated by their different opinion on certain theological issues. One of crucial theological thought developed by Kurani pertains to

[369] On the intellectual achievement of Yusi, see El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*; Justin Stearns, *Islamic Thought and the Natural World in the Early Modern Maghreb.*

[370] El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 131.

the question of *kasb* (acquisition) that become the point of objection raised by Yusi and his Moroccan fellows. Both had never meet. But, Kurani's writings had disseminated to the corners in the Maghreb through the hands of his proponents, especially the ʿAyyashiyya's Sufi academy. Yusi in fact witnessed some of the writings of Kurani (*qad kuntu qabla al-yawm raʾaytu shayʾan min taʾālīf dhālikum al-rajul*) as appeared in his letter rewritten by Muhammad b. al-Tayyib al-Qadiri.[371] While Yusi had not encountered to Kurani's complete writings, surely, Yusi addresed only his objection to Kurani on the problem of human actions as, for instance, appeared in the two writings of Kurani, namely *The Right Method* and its lengthier postscript, *Imdād dhawī al-istiʿdād li-sulūk maslak al-sadād* ("Supplemet to the proponents of the right method"; hereafter: *Supplement*). These two treatises have sometimes bound in one codex, as obvious in MS Garrett 3867Y, although other codices such as MS Resid Efendi 996 in Istanbul or MS Z 3227 in King Saud University reveal different pattern. *The Right Method*, completed in 23 Jumad al-thani 1085 (September 1674), argues that the power of the servant of God has an effect through the permission of God, not independently (*bi-idhn Allāh lā bi-l-istiqlāl*). This is a novel approach in the later Ashʿari thought that aims to reconcile God's omnipotence with the power of human action (*al-qudra muḥdatha*). By using philological examination to Ashʿari's *al-Ibāna*, Kurani aims to bridge between Muʿtazili and Ashʿari thought because, according to his verification, human action has effect (*taʾthīr*) according to the original position of Ashʿari while, at the same time, rejected the Muʿtazili theological stance in general. In later period, Kurani is often portrayed as a bad innovator who is a Muʿtazili because of this 'liberal' opinion. However, most of this incorrect view was conceived because they had no access to read more complete corpus of his writings. As has been discussed earlier, Kurani's responses to the Qasimi imamate critique radically the foundation of Muʿtazili thought adopted by the Zaydi through centuries. Yusi was one of Maghrebi thinkers who criticized Kurani's opinion stated in *The Right Method.* Justin Stearns wrote that Yusi heard Kurani's flawed understanding of Ashʿarism that was widely circulated among Maghrebi scholars who charged Kurani upon his strange opinion.[372] A historical report based on earlier sources written by Muhammad b. Tayyib al-Qadiri (d. 1773) records "Kurani's affair" in the Maghreb clearly.[373] In addition to Yusi's critique, Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi (d. 1704) and his uncle namely al-Mahdi b. Ahmad al-Fasi (d. 1689)

[371] Qadiri, *Nashr al-mathānī li-ahl al-qarn al-ḥādī ʿashar wa-l-thānī*, vol. 3, 10; Justin Stearn, "All Beneficial Knowledge is Revealed," 73.

[372] Justin Stearns, "All Beneficial Knowledge is Revealed," 73-74.

[373] Qadiri, *al-Iklīl wa-l-tāj fī tadhyīl kifāyat al-muḥtāj*, 198-200.

penned treatises to ciritize Kurani's thought on human actions. From all of these three prominent scholars of the Maghreb, Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi exchanged letters to Kurani withough any exaggerated acrimony. This is evident that Kurani's *Supplement* to his own *The Right Method* was written in order to clarify certain questions from his Maghrebi counterpart. According to the information provided by Ibrahim al-Kurani's note under the colophon of MS Z 3227, the clean copy of *The Supplement* was published on 30 Dhu-l-hijja 1088 (February 1678), four years after the completion of *The Right Method*. MS Z 3227 belonged to the ex libris of famous biographer Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli (1893-1976) before being owned by King Saud University. The content of this treatise was scribed with simple Maghrebi calligraphy. The *Supplement* is bound together with other works. In the title page of the *Supplement*, as can be seen in Figure 4.3, Kurani's authograph clearly shows that he exchanged letters with Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi who was trusted by Kurani to pass this manuscript and, the most important thing overall, to convey the correct understanding of his thought on human action that was perceived as deviant from the Ashʿari tradition. Altogether with ʿAyyashi, Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi respected Kurani and conveyed his message to the rest of the Maghrebi literati community.

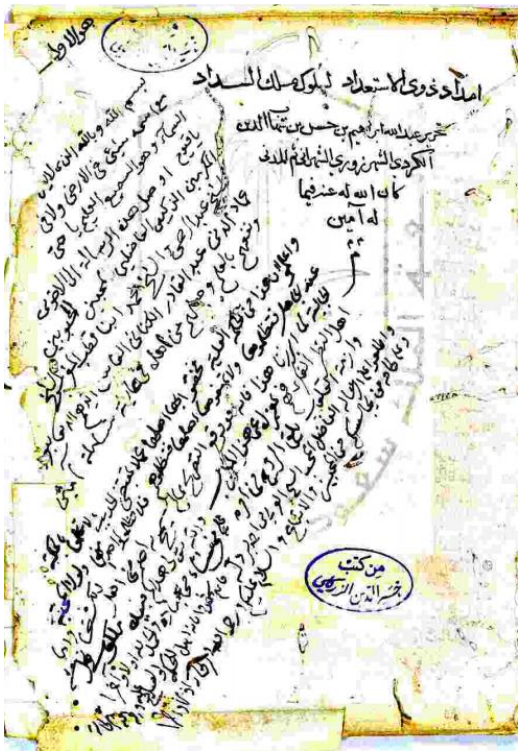

Figure 4.3. Kurani's *Supplement* (*Imdād dhawī al-istiʿdād*) with his autograph

The critical opposition of certain Maghrebi scholars to Kurani's thought on human action was widely occurred because Kurani criticized the most fundamental doctrine of North African Islamicness: the late medieval creed of Muhammad Yusuf al-Sanusi (d. 1490). The emphasis of *The Correct Method* and its lengthier *Supplement* places human acts as the secondary causes while a radical Ashʿari such as Sanusi considered the theological perspective that God has instilled causal "powers" (*qiwā*) into human beings a perilous heresy that leaned to the status of unbelief (*kufr*).[374] Sanusi's form of occasionalism became an uncompromising standard of Ashʿarism in the early modern North Africa. According to Kurani, the rigid occasionalism of Sanusi and his supporters was baseless and amounted to negating divine Wisdom in governing creation. God could create effects through the intermediacy of secondary causes. Here, Kurani used Ibn al-Qayyim's argument in *Shifāʾ al-ʿalīl*, "He has instilled in the world powers and instincts upon which the creation and the divine command are grounded." Kurani then stated in his *Right Method*, "Wisdom, which God the Exalted has freely and mercifully respected in His Creation and Command, therefore dictates that legal responsibility (*taklīf*) be in accordance with capacity."[375] El-Rouayheb, however, argues that Kurani's point of departure was the thinking of Ibn ʿArabi's monist tradition in elaborating "the unity of attributes" (*tawḥīd al-ṣifāt*). According to this doctrine, human power is a manifestation of God's absolute Power. Kurani's further endorsement to the writings of the later Juwayni and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya was secondary to his deep engagement to the Akbarian Sufi theology. Hence, in the view of Maghrebi theology, theological understanding of Kurani had been considered as a heretical version of radical occasionalism. Some of the Maghrebi scholars such as ʿAyyashi and Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi respected Kurani's polymath knowledge, while others attacked Kurani harshly. In the eastern Mediterrannean perspective, Kurani opposed a critique from young contemporary Damascene ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi who shared a common interest in elucidating Ibn ʿArabi's "unity of existence" in the Ottoman Arab lands.[376] In short, Kurani's thought on human actions had been criticized in the Mediterrannean milieus, from North African contexts to Damascus.

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[374] El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 289; cf. Olson, "Beyond the Avicennan Turn: The Creeds of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (d. 895/1490)."

[375] El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 299. Both Ibn al-Qayyim's quotation and Kurani's statements are El-Rouayheb's translation.

[376] More about the contexts of Nabulusi's critique, see Justin Stearns, "All Beneficial Knowledge is Revealed."; Nabulusi's letter to Kurani regarding this issue, can be seen in Samer Akkach, *Letters of a Sufi Scholar*, although

Seen from the cultural geography of the Atlas Mount in Morocco, Kurani's ideas appeared to become notorious. Toward the end of the 1670s, Kurani accepted letters and critiques from his Maghrebi counterpart. His Maghrebi close circle, ʿAyyashi for instance, wrote generously in his historical accounts of his travel activities,[377] especially Kurani and the intellectual depiction of the Hijaz in general. However, ʿAyyashi seems to hide the name of Kurani in his own *ijāza*,[378] very likely to show his social-political allegiance among Moroccan fellows and elites. Several Maghrebi critics of Kurani, such as Hasan al-Yusi, had political affiliation to the rulers of the Maghreb. Taken together, this social and intellectual climate made Kurani's writings an object of 'intellectual censor' under the umbrella of the accussation of unbelief (*takfīr*) bolstered by the theological canopy of radical occasionalism. This polemical debate occured in the apex of Kurani's intellectual career in Medina and previously caused by Kurani's depiction since the early 1660s as *iḥyāʾ al-bidʿa* (revivification of the cruel innovation), as reported by Muhammad b. al-Tayyib al-Qadiri, in the entire scholarly ecology of the Maghreb. This depiction, or accusation to be precise, was started by the circulation of Kurani's writings on the faith of the Pharaoh[379] and the problem of the Satanic verses. Qadiri noted that ʿAyyashi had to be embellish his words to cover Kurani's invisibility of his distortion among the Maghrebi literati. While others, Qadiri's teacher Abu ʿAbd Allah b. Nasir forced to restrict Kurani's writings and encouraged people to oppose Kurani's teaching. Ibn Nasir further noted, "the revivification of cruel innovation is end and died since long time, we seek refuge with God from him (Kurani) and from a trend that the Satan did not find its innovation better uttered from the tongue of this person (Kurani) related to knowledge and religiosity." From this animosity, rejection to Kurani's writings including *The Correct Method* happened widely in the social circumstances of religious learning. Qadiri further noted that, "He (Kurani) sent one of his manuscripts to the people of Tinbuktu in Sudan, and they wrote Quranic verses of *al-Kāfirūn* as an answer to his book, and

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Akkach in his *ʿAbd al-Ghānī al-Nābulusī: Islam and the Enlightenment* incorrectly contextualized Nabulusi's critique to Kurani.

[377] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*.

[378] ʿAyyashi, *Iqtifāʾ al-athar baʿda dhahāb ahl al-athar*.

[379] On the problem of the faith of Pharaoh, I have been unable to consult an extant manuscript (including its digital version) in Cairo. See a relevant discussion in Dumairieh, Dumairieh's *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, 352-264. In my view, Maghrebi scholars raised questions much more significantly to the problem of the Satanic verses than the faith of Pharaoh. Kurani's treatise on the faith of Pharaoh, in my opinion, continued to follow not only Ibn ʿArabi but also Jalal al-Din al-Dawani. Commentaries on the faith of Pharaoh in the the sixteenth and seventeenth century was common among the proponents of Ibn ʿArabi. Besides Kurani, Barzanji and Ottoman scholars followed the same discouse; see MS Garrett 218Y, for instance, fols. 54a-63a.

God accepts us."[380] From this information, we conclude that social and intellectual rejection of Kurani's writings took place from the Maghreb to Sudan where the circulation and transmission of the Maghrebi scholars dominated the cultural milieu of the broader North African region. Maghrebi scholars who admired Kurani's deep knowledge could only hide their position and attempt to embellish the contents of Kuranis's manuscripts to personally disagree with the charge of the accussation of heresy. In the classical period, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* was burnt in Andalus following a generation of Ghazali's death. In the seventeenth century, Kurani's treatisese were rejected widely in his own time. This comparison shows that the same pattern of particular censorship often strengthened with not only religious responsa but also social-political difference. Both Ghazali and Kurani represented the "orient" of the Islamic world, according to the view of the "western" (the Maghrebi people). It is certainly stated in the writing of al-Mahdi b. Ahmad al-Fasi who mentioned Kurani as "the mentioned oriental" (*al-mashriqī al-madhkūr*).[381]

Since the early 1660s Maghrebi scholars had raised their objection to Kurani's acceptance to the historicity of the Satanic verses or what is traditionally recognized as *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* or "the Story of the Cranes". This story narrates the event on which the Prophet Muhammad is reported to utter incorrect words suggested to him by Satan as being an inherent part of the Quran, i.e. QS. 53: 19-20. As meticulously researched by Shahab Ahmed, the problem of the Satanic verses has been a controversial issue during the early Islam. During the first two centuries of Islamic time, the historicity of the Satanic verses had been accepted among the earliest generations of believers. Following this early formative period, the contestation to formulate a form of Islamic orthodoxy occurred in parallel with the ramifications of politics and religious schools within Islam. Thus, the proponents of this historicity pertaining to the Satanic verses' incident was challanged predominantly because of the increasing factors on how to preserve Islamic doctrinal foundation from any fallible elements, mainly to conserve the idea of the Prophet as an infallible character. Islamic orthodoxy arose and this orthodox form permeated the whole construction of the sacred formation of Islam. Shahab Ahmed notes, "… the history of *the formation of early Islamic ortodoxy* is not only the history of how something became the truth; it is also the criteria by which truth is constituted. It is the history of truth, and of its social

[380] Qadiri, *al-Iklīl wa-l-tāj fī tadhyīl Kifāyat al-muḥtāj*, 198-200.

[381] A summary of al-Mahdi's critique, *al-Nubdha al-yasīra wa-l-lumʿat al-khaṭīra fī masʾalat khalq al-afʿāl al-mashhūra*, is cited in Qadiri, *al-Iklīl wa-l-tāj fī tadhyīl Kifāyat al-muḥtāj*, 198-200.

and intellectual infrastructure.[382] However, later generations of scholars reveal different attitudes to the Satanic verses. Ibn Taymiyya for instance did not disagree with the historicity of the verses and its reports and narrations (*riwāyahs*).[383] Ibn ʿArabi has the same opinion with his post-humous arch-enemy, i.e. Ibn Taymiyya. The tendency to accept the historicity of the Satanic verses continued until the early modern period during which Kurani joined in the cohort of those who investigated the historical veracity of the event. His treatise *al-Lumʿa al-saniyya fī taḥqīq al-ilqāʾ fī al-umniyya*, edited by the British Semiticist Alfred Guillaume, was completed its first draft and then finished the manuscript version within one year from August 1663 to August 1664.[384] Kurani presents two opinions proposing and opposing the incident. Kurani inclined to the statement that the Prophet uttered the Satanic verses at the suggestion of Satan who resembled the angelic manifestation as a trial from God himself. This incident does not contradict to the prophetic impeccability and exalted rank, because the utterance did not take place from his free choice but from God's trial that made him confused.[385] Kurani's approach to this historical veracity is not surprising considering that he was trained over the 1650s as the rigorous hadith scholar who examine both contents and narrations of the Prophetic tradition very well. In addition to his, Kurani's position as a leading commentator of Ibn ʿArabi led him to follow the view of this great Sufi Master on the subject.

[382] Shahab Ahmed, *Before Orthodoxy: The Satanic Verses in Early Islam*, 10. *Italics* is original. Ahmed's untimely death affected his long-term project on the reception of the Satanic verses' incident in later Islamic periods (2 other volumes; editorial note), including Kurani's debate with Moroccan scholars for which Ahmed is told to be aware of (I thank Nebil Hussein who told me about this and his personal experience as Ahmed's research assistant).

[383] Shahab Ahmed, "Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses."

[384] Alfred Guillaume, "*Al-Lumʿa al-sanīya fī taḥqīq al-ilqāʾ fī al-umnīya* by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī," 291. Alfred used MS Garrett 3872Y, Princeton, for the critical edition of the text.

[385] Alfred Guillaume, ibid., 296-7.

Figure 4.4. The first page of a Moroccan copy of Kurani's treatise on the Satanic verses. BnF Arabe 6826 fol. 120b-121a.

As noted by Maghrebi scholars, *al-Lumʿa al-saniyya* was spread soon globally and the incident of the Satanic verses became one of some crucial issues addressed critically by North African scholars.[386] From the book completion in 1664 to the writing of further responses to critiques of Maghrebi scholars against Kurani, in 1668, it was happened four years that such polemics took place, as also reiterated later in the 1670s that we already discussed above. The sequel of *al-Lumʿa al-saniyya*, *Nibrās al-īnās bi-ajwibat ahl Fās*, was completed in July 1668 following many questions that was written by ʿAyyashi.[387] Several Maghrebi scholars who critiqued Kurani were members of the same scholar family and followers of the Qadiri Sufi fraternity. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi and his son, Muhammad, as well as his brother al-Amhadi b. Ahmad al-Fasi together defended their own interpretation to orthodox Sunnism to refute Kurani's interpretation of

[386] Ibn Tayyib, *Nashr al-mathānī li-ahl al-qarn al-hādī ʿashar wa-l-thānī*, vol. 3, 7-8; Muhammad al-Ifrani, *Ṣafwat man intashara min akhbār ṣulaḥāʾ al-qarn al-hādī ʿashar*, 350-1.

[387] MS Laleli 3744.

the Satanic verses. Qadiri mentioned that several other scholars in the Maghreb assisted to escalate the debate to critique Kurani. They include *interalia* al-Hasan al-Yusi, Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Qusantini, and Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Misnawi al-Dilaʾi (d. 1724).[388] Dilaʾi's treatise, *Juhd al-muqil al-qāṣir fī nuṣrat al-shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir*, explicitly means that ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi initially started to critique and became the leader among other Maghrebi scholars in collectively refuting Kurani. One of its extant copies were written in Maghrebi calligraphy and contains 52 folia (see the title page of this MS in Figure 4.4). However, not all of these disputes occurred in the 1660s. Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi, for instance, penned his refutation to Kurani in the late 1680s. Although Kurani in his sequel treatise emphasized that there is no contradiction between the veracity of the Satanic verses and the notion of prophetic infallibility, most of these Maghrebi scholars accused him otherwise.

[388] Qadiri, *al-Iklīl wa-l-tāj fī tadhyīl Kifāyat al-muḥtāj*, 198-200; for other information on their book's titles and useful references, see Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Hijaz in the 17th Century*, 365-372.

Figure 4.5. The introductory page of Misnawi's refutation to Kurani. MS Casablanca, nd.

The fierce critic from Ottoman Algeria Yahya al-Shawi, an expert on Arabic grammar and logics, expressed his emotional words as revealed in the title of his treatise, MS Laleli 3744, namely *Nabl al-raqīq fī ḥulqūm al-sābb al-zindīq*, "The fine arrow in the throat of the calumniating heretic" and the infamous appellation on Kurani as *hādhā al-khabīth*, "this evil," and mentioned more mocking words to the classical scholars who proposed the same thought with Kurani. Kurani himself once considered Shawi as one of his teachers; however, Shawi's fierce attack very likely changed his mind which affected his intellectual credentials in his *al-Amam* do not contain Shawi among his teachers. In his rebuttal, Shawi mentioned that Kurani's heretical text on the incident disseminated throughout the Islamic world: to India, the Maghreb and the

broader Ottoman Empire.[389] This statement underscores inherently the role of Kurani's circle in disseminating his ideas. India in this context can be read broadly as to include the eastern Indian Ocean where the Malay world is located and mentioned in the Arabic geographies as the 'archipelago of India' (see the section on Jawi milieus in Chapter Five). In the mid-1660s, Kurani was accused as an infidel by Shawi and his exponents with great envy to broad intellectual networks of Kurani throughout the Ottoman Empire. Shawi's accusation in fact escalated polemical milieus in the Maghrebi contexts where other scholars are reluctant to disagree.

Yahya al-Shawi's sarcastic language extended to be articulated to accuse his contemporary, ʿAyyashi, as one of Kurani's close follower. Shawi accused ʿAyyashi as a scholar with a degree of ignorance to the rational sciences so that he accepted Kurani's theological idea blindly. In addition to this, Shawi accused him as the detractor of the prophetic norms. Apart from his *argumentum ad hominem*, Shawi also shows traditional and intellectual responses to reveal the truth behind the incident of the Satanic verses. What happened during the occasion in which the Prophet Muhammad uttered the mistaken words, Shawi argues, is to underline the prophetic character as human being with a special divine impeccability.[390] Shawi is one of the identifiable figures who used harsh language to accuse Kurani's personae and thought. His accusation probably contributed to disseminate the same indictment by other scholars even survives in the modern age. Considering that earlier encounter between Kurani and Shawi was fruitful, Kurani did not need to reply the harsh critique blatantly. As the avant-garde defender of Kurani's ideas, Barzanji penned a captivating polemic to counter Shawi, namely *al-ʿIqāb al-hāwī ʿalā al-thaʿlab al-ʿāwī wa al-nusshāb al-kāwī wa-l-shihāb al-shāwī li-l-aḥwāl al-Shāwī*, completed in Egypt in 1682. Using classical development of dialectics or *adab al-munāẓara* as referred to al-Baqillani, Isfarayini, al-Juwayni, etc.,[391] he aims to counter Shawi with critical arguments. However, before providing the bunch of arguments, he describes Shawi within a sort of *ad hominem argument* in the opening of the book. Based on undetectable sources, but most likely coming from Maghrebi links in the Hejaz, Barzanji firstly reported the short biography of Yahya al-Shawi who was a type of intellectual adventurer without pursuing official recognition. Shawi is reported to travel

[389] Yahya al-Shawi, MS Laleli 3744*, Nabl al-raqīq*, fol. 55a. Extant manuscripts of this text include MS Garret 978H. The latter elegant copy (*tanmīq)* was completed in Medina on 27 Dhu-l-hijja 1092 or 7 January 1682 by a Naqshbandi Medinan fellow Muhammad Saʿid b. Husayn (see fol. 17b).

[390] Yahya al-Shawi, *Nabl al-raqīq*, MS Laleli 3744, fol. 63a.

[391] Barzanjī, *al-ʿIqāb al-hāwī*, MS Garrett 978H, fol. 7a and fol. 5b for general reference on the genre.

to Istanbul and never obtained any interest of the Ottoman nobles, then traveled to Egypt although he is reported as being greedy among the local officials. He attempted to return to Istanbul and apparently had the same fate as before because of his rejection to the Sufi communities. Two big scholars who are profiled following the depiction of Shawi's vitae of failure: first, Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Maghribi, who is called as "the leader of Maghrebi scholars"; second, Ibrahim al-Kurani who is highlighted as a prominent scholar with considerable fame and admiration within the circles of Ottoman rulers and nobles. Barzanji in addition notes that due to the saintly miracles of Kurani, Shawi had been excluded everywhere, either in the Ottoman capital or among provincial officials in Egypt who revoked permission to hone his career. Barzanji's rationale can be interpreted that Kurani built trusts among a variety of Ottoman nobles and officials. According to Barzanji's report, it seems that Shawi showed his offensive, sarcastic mode both in words and deeds without logics.[392] Overall, Kurani's notorious image among North African scholarly community was created by a series of polemics happened continuously from the early 1660s to 1690 and bolstered by the harsh accusations of Ibn Nasr and Yahya al-Shawi. Despite of this fact, Kurani's friendship and networks among some Maghrebi intellectual enclaves remained in cordial relationship.

4.4. Concluding Remarks

Knowledge production in which Kurani took part in the second half or the seventeenth century was created by the uninterrupted series of polemics and controversies across the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean cultural milieus. In the case of the political and religious frontiers in the southern Arabia, Kurani and his Medinan circle produced writings to counter the very foundation of political theology endorsed by the Zaydi Qasimi imamate. Meanwhile, messianic currents that began from the estimation of the second millennial age in the sixteenth century persisted to influence Muslims and Jews across empires in the following century, from Anatolia to Yemen to India, for which Kurani and his Medinan circle made counter discourse to provide a correct understanding of apocalypticism according to Sunnism. These two cases, taken together, represented the intellectual stance particularly to support a specific form of Ottoman Sunnism and sover-

[392] Barzanji, *al-ʿIqāb al-hāwī*, MS Garrett 978H, fol. 10a.

eignty spearheaded by either social and intellectual networks of the Medinan circle and their supporters. In the Mediterranean cultural enclave, Kurani confronted a sequence of bitter opposition and accusation that made some of his treatises censored, prohibited, and perpetually blamed. Different from the first two cases, this third case shed particular light that certain aspects of Kurani's writings and intellectual propagation was created by oppositional, yet productive encounters between him and his Medinan circle and his Maghrebi counterparts or opponents. All of these three cases significantly reshaped the formation of intellectual authority of Kurani in Medina from where cultural exchanges, reception, and transmission took place in forms of letters and manuscripts, ideas and materiality as well as people communication.

The three cases of this chapter have been considered in general as Ibrahim al-Kurani's attitude towards or against "religious difference." This term is specifically used here to describe different opinions, identities, politics, or even religions to which Kurani and his proponents addressed, debated, and commented in the form of manuscript and knowledge production that was scribed or copied by different agents who contributed to produce specific writings for specific communities (Maghrebi style for the Maghrebi scholars, for instance). Kurani's autographs to specific manuscripts in this cultural exchange attests their historical facticity. However, this term in the perspective of Kurani's opponents is also useful to portray Kurani's thought as "different" or even "deviant" from their thought. This is certainly obvious in the case of the different interpretation of Ashʿarism in many of the writings of Kurani as opposed to radical Ashʿarism in the entire North African intellectual culture underpinned by Sanusi's theological formulation. Kurani's peculiar stance to the problems of the Satanic verses and the faith of Pharaoh also demonstrates this context. What is the difference between the above two forms of "religious difference" lies in the way that Kurani used his philological and theological skepticism to radically ask everything that had been considered as "true" by interrogating the Ur-texts of, for instance, the Zaydi founder, the original opinions of Ashʿari, the original ideas of Ibn Taymiyya, etc. This critical impulse made Kurani's authority was challenged and contested through a transregional process of intellectual crucible. This cultural contestation was central in the development of Kurani's career for three decades until his death in 1690. By making polemics and controversies, Kurani and his Medinan circle further developed his route of *translatio studiorum* by offering—to borrow a classical terminology—*jadal* or intellectual dialectic. Another portray of *translatio studiorum* represented in the circulation, transmission, and mutual exchanges between Kurani and his proponents is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Leniency and Tolerance:

Ibrahim al-Kurani's Writings and the Malay world

"His conquest was not territory, but knowledge."

—**Benjamin Hartmann**[393]

"A better method of understanding the history of an idea or a tradition is to investigate the *translatio studiorum*, as an act of fully implicit in the most rudimentary communication, and fully explicit in the coexistence and interaction of the thousand of spoken languages and lived cultures."

—**Marco Sgarbi**[394]

While Chapter Three and Four contextualize Ibrahim al-Kurani's writings and authority in the Ottoman Empire and some trans-imperial contexts, the present chapter specifically aims to examine his writings in the context of the Malay world. The Jawis were among the closest followers of intellectual development in Medina in the second half of the seventeenth century. Following Ahmad al-Qushashi, Ibrahim al-Kurani became the main teacher for most Jawi residents in Arabia. Thus, they constituted themselves as one of his primary proponents, whereby he extended his networks into the eastern Indian Ocean and transmitted Islamic knowledge to the region. In the first part of this chapter, Kurani's closest students are described, as evident from manuscripts. The specific term referring to the Malay world is initially explained to better understand Kurani's texts pertaining to this geographical-spatial knowledge. In the second part, Kurani's responses to the inquiries asked by the Jawis are examined. The Malay world became one of the dynamic transmitters of Kurani's ideas and this scholarly and cultural connection formed

[393] B. Hartmann, *The Scribes of Rome*, 1.
[394] M. Sgarbi, *Translatio Studiorum*, x.

the basis for the much-acclaimed vibrant exchange and engagement between Ottoman Arabia and the Malay World.

5.1. Kurani and his Jawi Milieus

For a better understanding of the history of books penned by Kurani, which were requested by and intended for the Malay world, this subchapter has two sections. The first section examines the historical-semantic use of the term *jāwī*, which has been mistakenly narrowly referred as "Javanese". The second section aims to describe scribes, scholars, and students who came from the region in the intellectual circle of Kurani in Medina. Taken together, this subchapter will examine closely how Kurani's books, religious authority, and knowledge transmission proceeded from the perspective of the leading scholars and milieus of the Malay world.

5.1.1. The Anthroponym of *Jāwī* and Kurani's Written Corpus

Geographical knowledge of early modern Southeast Asia comes from the Islamic empires of the Middle East, even before the Ottomans reached the region in the sixteenth century. The period between Ibn Battuta (d. 1369) and Ibn Majid (d. ca. 1500)—the latter helped Vasco da Gama "discover" India via Africa—who visited Southeast Asia and wrote sections on Islam and local cultures in Southeast Asia was an indispensable reference point for finding some geographical conceptions that were transferred to the Malay Archipelago. Islam was particularly active in Malacca, one of the rich cities of the fifteenth century before the Portuguese conquest in 1511, and along the coastal cultures encountered Hindu-Buddhist laws and cultures. However, the lack of Islamic official gazetteers prevents us from investigating the origins of this milieu more closely. We only rely on the modern language of geography in Malay or Indonesian languages, e.g. *khatulistiwa*, *syahbandar*, *nakhoda*, *zamrud* and other Perso-Arabic loanwords in seafaring and navigation, which encourage us to argue about the cultural exchange between Arabia, India, and

the archipelago of India (*jazā'ir al-Hind*)[395] i.e. the Malay Archipelago through the multifaceted configuration in the Indian Ocean.

The Islamic encounters between the Middle East (extended to Transoxiana, *mā warā' al-nahr*), India, and Southeast Asia have long been a perpetual debate, especially before the sixteenth century. While there are many epigraphic testimonies, written evidence on papers are rare. Thus, stories about the saints who Islamised Sumatra and Java in the fifteenth century or earlier have became myth. It is extremely difficult to find papers that were used as documents during this period; the Hindu and Buddhist people in the region used *lontar* or palm-leaf manuscript to write documents, histories, and literatures. When Ibn Battuta and Ibn Majid arrived in Sumatra, they were probably among those who used papers for writing. Although the Islamic sultanate was already established, manuscripts from this era are difficult to find as manuscripts were prone to decay in tropical situation and conflicts. Traditional Malay literary classics before the sixteenth century such as *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai* (Chronicle of the Kings of Pasai), *Sejarah Melayu* or *Sulālat al-salāṭīn* (Genealogy of the Kings), and *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah*[396] are extant only in copies from later epochs. The oldest surviving manuscripts date only from 1600; a fragmen of QS 58 (*al-Mujādila*) is bound within a manuscript that was collected in Aceh in 1604 by the Dutch navigator Pieter Willemsz van Elbinck before it was in the possession of the celebrated Dutch Orientalist Thomas Erpenius (d. 1624).[397]

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Muslims from the Middle East and India increasingly travelled, worked, and lived in the Islamic sultanates of Southeast Asia. Preaching activities were recorded, including the request to the famous Shafi'i scholar in Mecca, Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 1566) to send his son Abu al-Qahhar to the court of Aceh as a teacher of Islam. Abu al-Qahhar is mentioned to teach Islamic law, as well as his writing on Sufism entitled *Sayf al-qāṭi'*. The famous figure of the Gujarati Arab scholar, Nur al-Din al-Raniri (d. 1658), became a chief judge in Aceh, the most powerful power in the Malay world, between 1637 and 1644, after

[395] Note that this term is already used by the Andalusian Ibn Tufayl (d. 1185) in his *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān*. The Arabic nomenclature of *jazā'ir al-Hind* has its cognate with nineteenth century nomenclature of "Indonesia" (*indos* and *nesos* means "the archipelago of India") from Greek lexicons coined by George Earl and James Logan in 1850 and was popularized by German Adolf Bastian in the 1880s. It is not clear whether Earl and Logan knew of its Persian or Arabic term circulated in the British colonial India. Another Arabic term is *bilād Jāwa(h)* and the Persian *zīrbādāt* ("Below the Wind") to replace the Sanskit *Yavadvīpa*, the isle of gold and silver; cf. Russel, "Earl, Logan, and 'Indonesia'."

[396] Winstedt 1969; Brakel, 1980, Braginksy 2004.

[397] See Peter Riddell, *Malay Court Religion, Culture, and Language*, 6, 11-13. The only Arabic letter from the Sultanate of Samudera-Pasai dated 1516 is analyzed by A. Peacock, "Three Arabic letters from North Sumatra of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries"; Bertrand, "The Making of a 'Malay Text'."

he proliferated political maneuvers to burn books and to persecute people proposing "the unity of being" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), particularly influenced by Ibn Fadl Allah Burhanpuri's (d. 1619) interpretation of being in *al-Tuḥfa al-mursala ʿalā rūḥ al-nabī* ("The gift addressed to the spirit of the Prophet"; hereafter: *The Gift*). Other personalities who lived in the region were understudied subject, especially from the Ottoman world, popularly referred to in the Malay chronicle as *Rum,* which comes the westwards from the "lands below the winds" (*zīrbādāt*, Persian name for the Malay world), which is related to the formation of the heir to the Byzantine Empire. In the sixteenth century, an Ottoman historian of Süleyman's reign, Firaki Abdurrahman Çelebi (d. c. 1580-1583), mentioned *Milk-i Cava* or the Kingdom of "Jawa", very likely adopted from Arabic nomenclature to name the Malay world.[398] Some names from the Ottoman Empire appear to have been identified. Three Ottomans who were active in the seventeenth-century Malay world include: "a Rumi called as Chelebi in the service of King Narai of Siam, described in a famous Persian account of an Iranian embassy to Siam in 1685; an Armenian merchant from Aleppo, Khodja Murad, active in Batavia, recorded in the Dutch East India Company archives; and a religious scholar, Mansur b. Yusuf, who travelled throughout Southeast Asia before returning to the Middle East, who appears in a seventeenth-century Yemeni chronicle."[399]

On the contrary, native Muslims from Southeast Asia also increasingly travelled to the Middle East. At the first half of the seventeenth-century, the considerable number of Jawi people studying in Mecca and Medina increased due to the welfare, vessel facilities and relatively rapid connections or competitions between Islamic and European empires. *General Missiven*, the Dutch East Indies Company's records of Dutch activities across the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian Ocean, mentioned the activities of Jeddah as a trading center and religious terminus for transregional pilgrimage as early as 1639—not long after the year, ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri, whose figure will be explained below, travelled to Mecca and made a career in Medina for two decades. In the 1670s and the 1680s, the Dutch reviewed the development of commercial

[398] Firaki in his *Seʿâdetnâme* used this term with other classical terms such as 'Melaka' (Melacca), 'Milk-i Sin' (the Kingdom of China), 'Shahr-i Naw (Ayutthaya), and 'Ava iklimi' (the region of Ava). See Andrew Peacock, "India and the Indian Ocean World as Seen by Firâkî, an Ottoman Historian of Süleyman's Reign," 307.

[399] A. Peacock et. al. (eds.), *From Anatolia to Aceh: Ottomans, Turks and Southeast Asia*, 11.

negotiations in the ports with the local commissioners and some other issues concerning Jeddah.[400] The Indian Ocean world of the seventeenth century created the journey of ecumenical Islam for which Southeast Asian Muslims were an integral part. Against this backdrop, they not only performed hajj[401] but many of them studied and developed careers for years with the luminaries of the two holy cities. In this environment they were influenced by scholars of the Ottoman Arab lands, and their ideas spread, translated, and became a source of intellectual and spiritual inspiration for centuries.[402] Many of them continued to travel to other urban centres of Islamic learning, such as Cairo, Damascus, and Yemeni cities, at least for a while, as can be seen from historical narratives, bibliographical dictionaries and books of *ijāza*s. While previously *ruwāq al-jāwiyya* or "the living quarters of the Jawis", one of the renowned student communities of al-Azhar, was only recognized in the nineteenth century, it was in fact first established in 1736 under the direction of Ottoman foundation led by Ottoman Egyptian governor Usman Katkhuda Kazdaghli.[403] Had it been built in the early eighteenth century, the previous century would have had at least a considerable numbers of Jawi students at the university.

The seventeenth century of Arabia well recorded the existence of the community of Jawa, the term that was already used during Ibn Battuta's time.[404] Muslims from maritime Southeast Asia

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[400] Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 48. See also Tagliacozzo (ed.), *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*.

[401] The Dutch officially recorded 'hajj' as *bedevaart* (pilgrimage) in 1699, see Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 29.

[402] Cf. A. Peacock et.al. (eds), *From Anatolia to Aceh: Ottomans, Turks and Southeast Asia*. For the role of the Hadrami scholars, see Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*.

[403] H. M. ʿAbd al-Muʿti, *Shaykh al-jāmiʿ al-Azhar fī-l-ʿashr al-ʿuthmānī*, 74. There were only four considerable student communities at al-Azhar as the recipients of endowment from Katkhuda's foundation: *ruwāq al-jāwiyya* obtained annually 213 *niṣf fiḍḍa*, then *ruwāq al-akrād* for the Kurds 310, *ruwāq al-shawwām* for the Syrians 640, and *ruwāq al-sulaymāniyya* for the Turks 307. *Niṣf fiḍḍa* was the colloquial name of the official Ottoman *pārā*. *Pārā* was the main coin of account with few exceptions in all Ottoman financial registers inventing in Egypt. *Waqfiyyāt* of the *mamlūk amīrs* invariably use the term *niṣf fiḍḍa*. *Niṣf fiḍḍa* were divided into purses, *kīs* or *kīsa*. The Egyptian purse equaled 25.000 *niṣf fiḍḍa*. Forty *niṣf fiḍḍa* equaled one piaster. See Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt: 1517-1798*, xxii; D. Crecelius, "The Waqfīyah of Muhammad Bey Abū al-Dhahāb, II," 145, fn67.

[404] See Ibn Battuta, *Riḥlat ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, 635-636. There is no certain information on the first hajj from Southeast Asia. While no Malay text can be physically dated prior to the fifteenth century, a Yemeni biography from the same period records for for the first time a *Jāwah,* a term signified to Southeast Asia from medievale era until the early twentieth century, present in the Hejaz sometime between 1277 and 1367; Laffan, "Finding Java: Muslim Nomenclature of Insular Southeast Asia from Srivijaya to Snouck Hurgronje," in Tagliacozzo (ed.), *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*, 40; R. Michael Feener and Michael Laffan, "Sufi Scents across the Indian Ocean: Yemeni Historiography and the Earliest History of Southeast Asian Islam," *Archipel*, 70, 2005: 185-208. Al-Ḥamawī in his *Muʿjam al-buldān* states that "*bilād tuʿraf bi-l-Jāwah ʿalā sawāḥil al-baḥr [baḥr al-Ṣīn] shabīha bi-bilād al-Hind yajlib minhā al-ʿūd wa al-kāfūr wa-l-sunbul wa-l-qaranfil*" (see the critical edition of Kurani's *al-Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm shaṭh al-walī*, 25, footnote 1) – this description on the coastal geography of Jawa between the Indian Ocean and South China Sea and imported the natural sources such as wood, camphor, spice, and clove had been well-known since the time of Prophet in the seventh century.

are described by Kurani as "the Jawi community" (*jamāʿa min al-jāwiyyīn*) from the "region of Jāwa" (*bilād Jāwa*).[405] What does the real meaning of this term? Some Arabists and scholars of Islamic Middle Eastern Studies are repeatedly mistaken when they render the term *al-jawiyyīn* as Javanese and *Jāwa* for Java.[406] At first glance, the term misleads modern readers when it is attributed only to the island of Java. In the premodern era, before the emergence of nation-state, the term referred to the entire, plural Islamic territory in the Malay world, including today's Indonesia, southern Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and southern Philippines. The Jawis were therefore named so in the premodern era to designate Muslims from the whole region, formed as a collective identity regardless of their ethnic, linguistic, and spatio-cultural differences. They spoke Malay as a lingua franca and the language which is written in Arabic script has still been named as *Jawi* language especially. Bibliographical dictionaries written in Arabic from the seventeenth century until the nineteenth century used this attribution. The origin of the term has been a subject of debate,[407] although "Java" may well be a pars pro toto to name the entire area employed by them through a common parlance in Arabic.

Jawis' study activities and cultural interaction formalized the structure of the networks between Southeast Asia and Arabia,[408] which continues intensively as a longue durée of connections to this day, even though some radical changes in the modern Saudi state have affected the nature and configuration of such contemporary networks. Ibn ʿAllan (d. 1648)[409] is the first

[405] Ibrahim al-Kurani, *Itḥāf al-dhakī*, 176. For other similar terms used by Kurani, see the second part of this chapter.

[406] See, in this specific case, all renderings of *Jāwī* as 'Javanese' in Nasser Dumairieh, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*; Andrew Peacock, "Sufi Cosmopolitanism in the Seventeenth Century Indian Ocean: Sharīʿa, Lineage and Royal Power in Southeast Asia and the Maldives"; Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*; and Naoki Yamamoto, "Ibrahim al-Kūrānī's Explanation of *Waḥdat al-wujūd*: A Case Study of Indonesian *Walī* and the *Shaṭḥ* Dispute".

[407] The earliest use of this term was recorded in the fifteenth century. Michael Feener researched the term *jāwī* in a fifteenth-century Sufi biographies, *Ṭabaqāt al-khawwāṣ* of Shihab al-Din Ahmad al-Sharji (1410-ca. 1487/8)—there is a certain Abu ʿAbd Allah Masʿud b. Muhammad al-Jawi; cf. Michael Feener & Michael Laffan, "Sufi Scents Across the Indian Ocean: Yemeni Hagiography and the Earliest History of Southeast Asian Islam."

[408] Azra, *the Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesia and Middle Eastern "Ulama" in the Seventeenth and Eigteenth Centuries*.

[409] Muhammad ʿAli b Muhammad ʿAllan b Ibrahim b ʿAllan b ʿAbd al-Malik, known as *mufassir*, *muḥaddith*, and a jurist, born in 996/1588 and died in 9 Dhu al-hijja 1057/5 January 1648 when he was buried next to the celebrated Ibn Hajar al-Haytami. He was called as Suyuti of his time (*Suyūṭī zamānihi*). He taught the hadith canons of Sahih and Bukhari inside the captivity of Kaʿba in 1039 (1630) when it was reconstructed due to the huge flood that swept Mecca. His books numbered around 60s, including the prohibition of tobacco and smoke as well as the commentaries of works by al-Nawawi, al-Suyuti, Ibn Hajar Haytami, and Mehmet Birgivi. He also composed poems, although they are not popular. See Ibn ʿAllan, *Dalīl al-fāliḥīn li-ṭuruq Riyāḍ al-ṣāliḥīn*, I, p. 10-12.

known Meccan scholar to mention the presence of many Jawis in his forum before 1650.[410] One of his works entitled *al-Mawāhib al-rabbāniyya ʿan al-asʾila al-jāwiyya* ("The divine gifts in response to the Jawi questions") confirms the request of responsa from the Jawis. The work is a response to questions of the ruler of Banten Sultanate, Sultan Abu al-Mafakhir Mahmud ʿAbd al-Qadir (r. 1626-1651) who sent delegates to Mecca in 1638. *Al-Mawāhib al-rabbāniyya* is an attempt to elaborate Ghazali's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*,[411] which shows the common practice of *naṣīḥatnāme* or "Mirrors of the Prince" literary genre outside the Perso-Ottoman culture. This treatise was asked to guide a Muslim ruler in Banten to govern justly according to the Islamic values and ethics. Although few studies mention Ibn ʿAllan and his connections to Jawis,[412] he was one of the first teachers in the Hijaz whose authority reached Jawi rulers.

However, Ibn ʿAllan's friend, Qushashi gained more fame among the Jawis, most likely because ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri, the most prominent figures among them, opted to study with Qushashi. This choice corresponds to the fact that Qushashi was dominant in the Sufi authority of Arabia which Fansuri had admired. Until the early 1650s, Qushashi did not seem to have been asked any common questions. This implicitly means that the Jawis, who was represented by Fansuri, regarded Kurani as a shaykh for personal studies at private or public readings. For this reason, in the late 1650s, questions were asked to Qushashi by the Jawis and Kurani referred to such collective questions as "the Jawi inquiries" (*al-masāʾil al-jāwiyya*) without giving individual names. From this context, a number of Kurani's works authored between 1660 and 1680, mentions the Jawis (*jamāʿa min al-jāwiyyīn*) and the Malay world (*bilād Jāwa*). The Jawi inquiries then became crucial in determining the authorship of several of Kurani's writings. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Kurani would not write some answers if the Jawis initially did not

[410] Ibn ʿUjaymi, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*, 107a-107b; Abi Hashim Ibrahim, *Al-ʿAllāma Ibn ʿAllān al-Makkī (980-1057), ḥayātuhu wa āthāruhu wa juhūduhu fī khidmat al-balad al-ḥarām*, 59-60. I thank Saud al-Sarhan and M. Abu Bakr Badhib for their information on the latter book.

[411] Vorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Collections in the Netherlands*, 204-205; Voorhoeve, Jajat Burhanudin, "Islamic Knowledge, Authority and Political Power: the ʿUlama in Colonial Indonesia," 30-31; Oman Fathurrahman, *Itḥāf al-Dhakī, Tafsir Wahdatul Wujud bagi Muslim Nusantara*, 49. On the skeptical reading of the authorship of *Naṣīḥat al-muluk*, see Patricia Crone, "Did al-Ghazālī Write A Mirror for Princes?" In 1603 such literature was authored by Bukhari al-Johori, titled *Tāj al-salāṭīn*. On the importance of *Tāj al-salāṭīn* vs Hugo Grotius's international law of sea in his *Jure Praedae*, see A. Weststeijn, "Provincializing Grotius: International Law and Empire in a Seventeenth-Century Malay Mirror."

[412] Ibn ʿAllan's father (d. 1624), a Naqshbandi Sufi, wrote a commentary on *Qaṣīdat al-shaykh ibn Bint al-Mīlaq*, which become a source for Naqshbandi and Shattari literati in nineteenth-century Minangkabau, Sumatra, especially Syekh Jamaluddin Pasai, see Chambert-Loir (ed.), *Naik Haji di Masa Silam I: 1482-1890*, 2013: 210.

ask Qushashi, who was too old to write elaborative answers or any religious questions and consequently encouraged Kurani to do so. Kurani often associates the Jawi inquiries with Qushashi and this results in a textual testimony in Kurani's body of writing.

5.1.2. Prominent Jawi Scholars, Scribes, and Nobles as Kurani's Students

When Kurani arrived in Medina in 1651 and was then affiliated to the Sufi Academy of Qushashi, the Jawis began to acquaint him closely. With an assemblage of rational sciences pursued in Kurdistan, Kurani's credentials quickly rose into prominence in Medinan and Arabian scholarly environment. Within a decade, he rapidly became a sought-after teacher for many students and fellows within which the Jawis were no exception. The trust Qushashi placed in his Kurdish student and son-in-law was followed accordingly by the Jawis. They, in consequence, regarded Kurani to a considerable extent as a theologian turned into a Sufi Master. The Shattari brotherhood, for which Qushashi and Kurani were the leading masters, aroused a great interest among the Jawis. Remarkable Shattari silsilas have been found in many parts of the Malay world, bearing the legacy of Qushashi and Kurani.[413] Other silsilas of the Naqshbandi brotherhood was also important in this connection (as an example, see Figure 5.2). Nevertheless, these Sufi genealogies were not the only fascination for the Jawis. As explained below, Kurani's expertise in rational theology attracted some prominent Jawi scholars and nobles who studied under his close guidance.

There are at least three prominent Jawis who are known to have studied with Kurani. First, the abovementioned ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri, who first studied Arabic and Islamic sciences with Qushashi from 1641 and with Kurani in the 1650s. Fansuri's writings, which include translations and adoption of two Medinan Sufi masters, reflect the intellectual and spiritual imprint of both.[414] Following his studies in Arabia for two decades, he returned to the Aceh Empire and became the chief judge and advisor for sultanas from 1661 until his death in 1693. Fansuri's presence at the court of Aceh ruled by female sovereigns and his legal approach to their verdicts allowed in part the empire survived as the most significant power and intellectual center in the

[413] See Oman Fathurahman, *Shaṭṭārīyah Silsilah in Aceh, Java, and the Lanao Area of Mindanao*.
[414] See, for instance, *Tanbīh al-Māsyī: Menyoal Wahdatul Wujud* (ed. Oman Fathurahman) and *Sullam al-mustafidīn*.

Malay world. In this milieu, Kurani's idea and writings copied and spread relatively rapidly, then permeated to other islands in the region. The combination of the political-imperial regime and intellectual excellence in Aceh made the transfer of knowledge, including Kurani's ideas, possible. This combination was followed by the example of other contexts in the Banten Sultanate, located centrally in western Java.

Second, Yusuf al-Maqasiri (d. 1699). He based his studies mainly in Yemen and undertook intellectual journeys back and forth from Yemen to Arabia and Syria.[415] His deep engagement with scholars in Ottoman Arabia made him the first Jawi scholar to be included in a bibliographical dictionary written by ibn Hasan al-ʻUjaymi, a close associate of Kurani. His close studies with Kurani took place between 1661 and 1665, proved by an incomparable textual evidence that will be explained in detail below. His close association with Muslim nobles in Sulawesi and Java prompted him to join the political circle of the Banten Sultanate following his return from Arabia in 1667. He was the chief judge and advisor, as much identical as Fansuri to female rulers in Aceh, to Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (r. 1651-1683), before becoming a political opponent and exile in Ceylon and South Africa following the intervention and intrusion of the Dutch East India Company (VOC, Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) to the court of Banten. Maqasiri's writings reflect a significant admiration of Sufi philosophical thought, which he learned as a student and scribe under Kurani's philological and intellectual supervision.

Third, ʻAbd al-Shakur al-Bantani (d. unknown). This figure was unknown until a Batavian codex of Kurani's *Qaṣd al-sabīl* briefly tells us about his studies at the Sufi academy of Qushashi, which was led by Kurani. Figure 5.1. attests an example of Bantani's studies closely with Kurani. The codex contains marginal notes with valuable information about his studies with Kurani, especially the study of the rational theology. Bantani wrote that he studied *Qaṣd al-sabīl* with Kurani took place on 1080/1669.[416] Kurani's autograph is also present in the codex and entitled him to teach and to transmit. Bantani seems to have studied with Kurani between 1665 and 1680. He was a pedigree of the kings in the Banten Sultanate,[417] probably a niece of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa; this story demonstrates that he was one of nobles who studied religious

[415] My article "The Scribe of Sufi-philosophical Letters: the Arabian Years of Shaykh Yusuf from Makassar" will be a forthcoming chapter in an edited book (EPHE, Paris).

[416] Kurani, *Kitāb al-ghāya al-quṣwā fī kalimat al-sawāʾ wa-l-taqwā wasamaytu aʿḍan Qaṣd al-sabīl ilā tawḥīd al-ḥaqq al-wakīl*, MS Batavia A 135, fol. 1a.

[417] I thank Ginanjar Sya'ban for his information about this newly discovered genealogy of Banten Sultanate.

knowledge in Arabia. In addition, Bantani was most likely a student of Maqasiri before he traveled to Arabia and learned from Kurani. Maqasiri could recommend Bantani to study with the Kurdish master. Like Maqasiri, the textual evidence says that his main interest is in rational theology. One of Kurani's short responses on the problem of Sufi idea "the fixed prototype" (*al-aʿyān al-thābita*), that was completed on 20 Muharram 1089 or 7 May 1673, were asked privately Bantani.[418] The dearth of information about his life and career in Banten is very likely a consequence of the post-rebellious action at the court of Banten, which was infiltrated by the alliance of the VOC from the internal court family.

The three examples of prominent Jawi students, who came from high class of scholars and nobles, also reflect the proponents of Kurani in the Jawi milieus.[419] The political and intellectual significance is an important factor in the reception of knowledge. Kurani's writings were read, disseminated, and discussed through this cultural conduit, so his oeuvres inspired the production of Islamic knowledge in the latter period among the Jawis in their own tradition. Medinan alumni were the most sought-after teachers and authors, facilitated by the imperial infrastructure in Aceh, Banten, Johor, Celebes, Central Java, and other Jawi spheres, who continued to build cultural importance for intellectual development in the region. These transmitters of Kurani and Medinan intellectual tradition did not, in fact, produce numerous copies of Kurani's oeuvres. On the contrary, Kurani's ideas and approaches were adopted in vernacular languages which can be easily understood by the common audience in the Malay world. Fansuri and Maqasiri at least echoed this vernacular approach, for the use of the lay language, which can impart sophisticated arguments to a broad audience across the Malay world, had been strategically more effective.

[418] See Kurani, *Kashf al-mastūr fī jawāb suʾāl ʿAbd al-Shakūr*, MS Hamidiyye 1440, fols. 29b-30a.

[419] Other prominent Jawi students of Kurani from later period include ʿAbd al-Mahmud b. Salih al-Matarami (d. unknown), from the Islamic kingdom of Mataram in central Java and ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿAbd Allah *alias* Tok Pulau Manis (d. 1736), from the Malay Peninsula. I thank Ayman Akiti and Ginanjar Sya'ban for this information.

Figure 5.1. Ibrahim al-Kurani'a autograph on ʿAbd al-Shakur's reading of *Qaṣd al-sabīl*. MS Batavia A 135, National Library of Jakarta

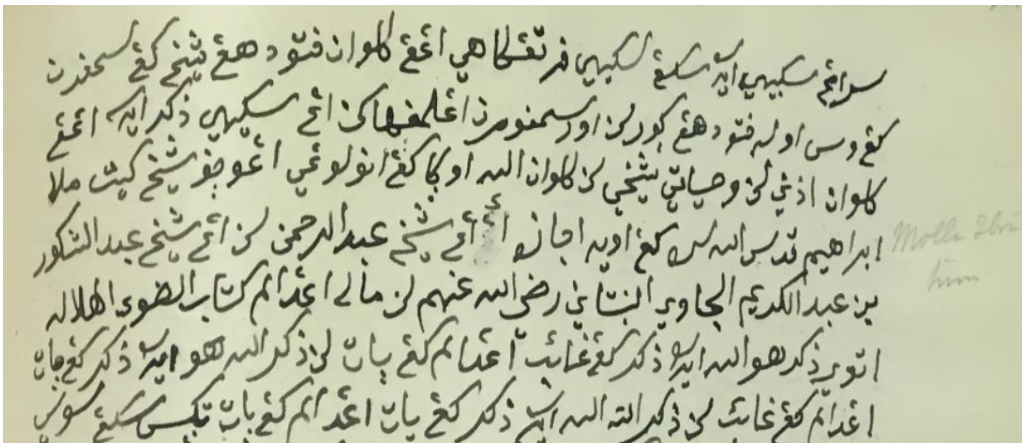

Figure 5.2. Javanese/*pegon ijāza* of the Naqshbandi and Shattari brotherhoods, mentioning Ibrahim al-Kurani, "the perfect shaykh" (*shaykh kang sempurna*), who gave authorisation to two Jawi scholars namely ʿAbd al-Rahman and ʿAbd al-Sahkur al-Bantani; it also mentioned

Qushashi's secret book of dhikr manual, albeit written in a corrupted version, *Ḍaw' al-hāla fī dhikr huwa al-jalāla*. MS Or7054, fol. 101a (Snouck Hurgronje collection, with Snouck's notes)

During about four decades of his career in Medina, Kurani not only taught the Jawis, but also assisted many of them to become scribes or copyists of manuscripts. Apart from Yusuf al-Maqasiri, there are only few names that are mentioned as Medinan scribes under Kurani's patronage. As appeared in the colophons of MS Garrett 3872Y, among other Jawi scribes are ʿAbd al-Rahman b. ʿAbd Allah al-Jawi al-Katunukani (the modern Philippines) and ʿAbd al-Hakim b. ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jawi al-Fatani (of Patani, present day southern Thailand).[420] Of these scribes, it is known that they studied ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami's (d. 1492) *al-Durra al-fākhira* (The Precious Pearl)—a treatise that defends the attitude of monist Sufis on a variety of issues vis-à-vis theologians and philosophers presented to Fatih Sultan Mehmed—with Kurani. According to Hamid Algar, the *Durra* is "a further exposition of the teachings of Ibn ʿArabi" aiming for "an adjudication of the partially conflicting views on eleven key matters of doctrine espoused by the Sufis, the theologians, and the philosophers." It was completed in 886/1481 at the request of Fatih Sultan Mehmed. Jami's intellectual carrier was beyond his affiliation with the Timurids of Herat. He permeated into the Ottoman intellectual culture, becoming one of the most admired scholars to be read up to following centuries.[421]

Some extant manuscripts of the *Durra* and other Sufi philosophical texts worldwide were copied by Maqasiri in a variety of occasions during his intellectual journeys in Arabia and Syria. Some of these copies include: *first*, MS A 651 (Aleppo, 1065/1654) at the National Library of Indonesia; *second*, MS Sprenger 677 (Damascus, 1066/August 1656) at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin; and *third*, MS Garrett 3872Y (Medina, 1075/1664) at the Firestone Library, Princeton. These three manuscripts are proofs of the way Maqasiri sought to learn the "post-Timurid curriculum" as represented by Jami's *Durra*, the popular and important book in the Persianate and Ottoman worlds. MS Garrett 3872Y is much more special in that it bears crucial notes that recorded

[420] Cf. Laffan, "Book Review of *Le Bustan al-Salatin*," 571. Another scribe from Mataram Sultanate, ʿAbd al-Mahmud al-Matarami al-Jawi (d. unknown), copied Kurani's *al-Asfār ʿan aṣl al-istikhārat aʿmāl al-layl wa-l-nahār*. I thank Ginanjar Syaban for this information. These scribes studied in Medina very probably after learning in Aceh and pursued advice and recommendations to study further in Medina. It is obvious that one of the important scholars in the Malaysian Peninsula, Tok Pulau Manis, studied with Kurani after getting recommendation from ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Fansuri.

[421] Hamid Algar, "Jāmī and Ibn ʿArabī: *Khātam al-shuʿarāʾ* and *Khātam al-awliyāʾ*," 150.

a close reading of the *Durra* under Kurani's guidance. The codex was completed between August and October 1664 at the *ribāṭ* of Imām ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā, near Kurani's residence. Autograph glosses by Kurani appear on the margins of the *Durra* and other texts namely *Risāla fī-l-wujūd* (A Treatise on the Existence), also penned by Jami. The multiple text manuscript also contains two autograph clean copies (*tabyīḍ*) of treatises by Kurani, both produced in the same year between one and six months after the completion of the original final drafts (*taswīd*). In the making of this codex, several Jawi individuals to the circle of Kurani in Medina played specific roles as scribes and readers. Names of scribes are given above. Among the readers who contributed to the correction of the codex are ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri, who visited Medina again seven years after his return to Aceh, and two Arab students of Kurani, namely Ahmad al-Dimyati and Muhammad Saʿid al-Kawkani.[422] Ahmad al-Dimyati is known through a manuscript as a fellow student of Maqasiri.[423] Studies on this particular codex conducted by Nicholas Heer and Florian Schwarz underscore the importance of this codex as the most reliable source for the completion of the modern edition of the *Durra*, as well as the thorough historical and codicological examination of Jami's works in the Ottoman Arab world.[424] Many scholars seeking a deep understanding of Sufi, theological and philosophical issues raised by Jami came to Kurani for an in-depth study. In addition to MS Garrett 3872Y, MS Garrett 3049Y contains another copy of Jami's *Durra*, which bears readers' commentarial notes including Kurani's statement on absolute being.[425] This means that Kurani's authority helped readers to absorb the intellectual discourse of fifteenth-century Timurid texts.

Why did Maqasiri consider learning Jami under Kurani's guidance in Medina, and not in Yemen where he spent a considerable amount of time studying and teaching? To emphasize Kurani as one of the most authoritative mystic scholars in the Ottoman Arab lands is simply insufficient. One of the possible sociological considerations is that both Kurani and Maqasiri shared the same extensive Yemeni connections, especially the Arabian networks of the Naqshbandi fraternity which classified Jami's texts as canonical, especially after Taj al-Din al-ʿUthmani established the pan-Arabian nexus of the order in the early seventeenth century. The fact that Kurani

[422] About these two Arab scholars and their relations to Kurani as seen from other manuscripts, see Florian Schwartz's article, "The Arab Receptions of Jāmī in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries."

[423] See MS Garrett 1116H.

[424] Nicholas Heer, edition of *al-Durra al-fākhira fī taḥqīq madhhab al-ṣūfiyya wa-l-mutakallimīn wa-l-hukamāʾ al-mutaqaddimīn: bi inḍimām-i ḥawāshī-yi muʾallif va sharḥ-i ʿAbd al-Ghafūr Lārī*; Florian Schwarz, "The Arab Receptions of Jāmī in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 178-195.

[425] MS Garrett 3049Y, fols. 2b, 5a. This codex is excluded in Schwarz's analysis.

wrote the *Durra* with a particular title, *ḥuṭṭu raḥlak* ("put down your saddle bag") as it appears in Maqasiri's copy as well as in the list of Kurani's extensive intellectual credentials, *al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam*, also signifies an interesting link to the Yemenis who, according to Tash-koprüzade, named the book as such. Another copy of the *Durra* under Kurani's commission scribed by Ahmad al-Dimyati, identified as ʿAqā'id Taymūr 393 at Dar al-Kutub Cairo was completed in Medina in January 1675 under the same title: *al-Durra al-fākhira al-mulaqqaba bi-Ḥuṭṭa raḥlak*.[426] The Khalwatis, to whom Maqasiri mainly affiliated, did not particularly refer to the in-depth study of Jami's texts. The title page of MS Sprenger 677, which was written a decade before MS Garrett 3872Y, does not have *Ḥuṭṭ raḥlak* in the title. The Aleppan copy, as it appears in MS Batavia A 651,[427] that was produced one year before MS Sprenger 677, however, has *Ḥuṭṭ raḥlak* in the title page. The combination between the Naqshbandis, the Yemenis, and pan-Arabian connections of the Medinan Sufis therefore attracted Maqasiri in particular to study Jami's texts under the authority of Kurani who made extensive commentary notes and penned extant glosses namely *Al-Taḥrīrāt al-bāhira li-mabāḥith al-Durra al-fākhira*.[428]

From Kurani, Maqasiri studied a significant portion of knowledge. Kurani is known to have transmitted other books, including the *Durra*, and his own works to students such as Maqasiri. MS Garrett 3872Y was especially used as a learning medium between the teacher and the student. Maqasiri made some lengthy notes with corrections from Kurani. As a scribe and student, Maqasiri made additions (*ziyādāt*) to the scribed text, by interpolating a more substantial segment of the text in the form of marginal notes.[429] While there are cases where scribes made additions to emend the word or passage, because of difficult to understand or even corrupt, Maqasiri's additions apparently operated as explanatory apparatus to the subject that he needed

[426] Florian Schwarz, "The Arab Receptions of Jāmī in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 191-2; Nicholas Heer's edition of Jāmī's *Durra al-fākhira* (Tehran: McGill University-Tehran Branch, 1358/1979), 9-10. Jacobus Ecker mentions that Gotha MS. No. 87 also bears the same title. He further notes that the copyist of the manuscript wrote that the meaning of *Ḥuṭṭ raḥlak* is *inzil hāhunā fa-mā baʿd ʿAbbādān qarya*, "Dismount here, for there are no towns after ʿAbbādān." According to Ecker, it means, "If you read this small treatise on God's existence and attributes, and if you learn those things contained in it, that is sufficient, for there is no other work on these matters to be read or known." There is, however, another title. Houtsma 464 bears another title, *Risālat al-muḥākamāt* or *Treatise of Adjudications*, referring to the adjudication request of of Jami by Fatih Sultan Mehmed.

[427] This collection was part of the royal library of the Banten Sultanate before confiscated by the Dutch people and then became the collection of the Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences (Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen), founded in 1778.

[428] See MS Garrett 4049Y. This codex was copied in 1118 AH/1706 AD by Kurani's student namely Musa b. Ibrahim al-Basri al-Madani. The title was exclusively written by Ottoman shaykh al-Islam, Ahmad Efendi. Abu Tahir, son of Kurani, collated it; cf. MS Garrett 5373Y, fols. 189b-203a; MS. Hudai Efendi 381, fols. 1b-25b.

[429] On this practice, see Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers*, 235.

to comprehend. From philological and Sufi-philosophical point of view, the codex is an excellent example of how Kurani, the teacher, and Maqsiri, the student, aimed to understand, elaborate, and comment on many parts of the *Durra* and other texts side-by-side. Throughout 21 folios, Kurani's commentary notes offer theological-philosophical arguments and certain historical figures mainly serve to clarify issues that need to be understood in detail, and which were practically functioned to enable a learner, in this case Maqasiri, to absorb and to verify certain problematic ideas. Kurani also corrected some Maqasiri's comments. The vibrant engagement of various notes, which are called as *taʿlīqāt*, in the codex offers a curious case of a learning process between teacher and student through a philological production richly colored with different lines and segments of handwriting. Although this codex certainly reflects the intellectual practices of interaction between Kurdish and Jawi scholars, it was one of the valuable private collections owned by Kurani. For instance, there are some commentary additions that Kurani made in 25 Rabiʿ al-awwal 1080 or 23 August 1669 to clarify Ibn Sina and Nasir al-Din al-Tusi on the problem of existence in post-classical Islamic thought.[430] There is also a note where Kurani explicated mental existence (*wujūd dhihnī*) and external existence (*wujūd khārijī*) as thought by ʿAbd al-Ghafur al-Lari, as well as cited Jurjani's *Mawāqif* and mentioned a part of *Ilāhiyyāt* from Ibn Sina's *al-Shifā'* in 1080/1669.[431] This addition was completed five years after the production of the text and it is assumed that Maqasiri had returned to Makassar in Sulawesi and then Banten in Java as early as 1666. Maqasiri's scribal role was certainly crucial as it helped Kurani to solicite information through a variety of notes. Kurani personally treated this codex not only as an intellectual reflection for himself to critically review the discussion between Jami and various thinkers in the post-Avicennan period, but also as a basis for writing his own commentary upon Jami' canonical text, as seen in MS Garrett 4049Y.

[430] MS Garrett 3872Y, fol. 13b.
[431] MS Garrett 3872Y, fol. 3b.

Figure 5.3. An example of scribal traces of Yusuf al-Maqasiri (core texts and a few comments in the upper left) and extensive commentarial notes by Ibrahim al-Kurani. MS Garrett 3872Y, fols. 10b-11a.

Furthermore, Maqasiri noted a complete information on the authorship of Jami's *Durra* by quoting Tashkoprüzade's information in his *al-Shaqāʾiq al-nuʿmaniyya fī ʿulamāʾ al-dawla al-uthmāniyya*. This information is particularly common if we compared to other copies of the *Durra* reproduced by other scribes. Apparently Kurani wrote several notes in the title page of the codex a few information on the births and origins of some Sunni luminaries such as Jalal al-Din al-Dawani, ʿAlaʾ al-Din al-Mahaʾimi, Ghawth Gwaliyori and his student Wajih al-Din al-ʿAlawi of Gujarat. These names are of importance in the formation of Kurani's scholarship as he read, commented, and transmitted the rational theology of Dawani and the Sufi thought and practice of the Indian Shattaris. In addition to this, Kurani wrote other notes in the title page. The first refers to Ashʿari's *Al-Ibāna fī uṣūl al-diyāna* ("The clarification of the principles of religiosity") which

Kurani highlighted as the last treatise of Ashʿari and was functioned to explain Kurani's defence on neo-Hanbali traditionalism.[432] The second refers to an explanation of the quiddity (*māhiyya*).

It is also obvious that Maqasiri, like other Jawi scholars, transmitted Kurani's works. One of Kurani's works on the meticulous aspect (linguistic, theological, and prophetic) of the *tawḥīd*'s statement, *Inbāh al-anbāh fī iʿrāb lā ilāha illa Allāh*,[433] had been summarized by Maqasiri in the Malay language. Previously, few scholars argued that he wrote a super-commentary on Kurani's thick work. Meanwhile, others argue that he wrote the *Inbāh*. Both is not true and unconfirmed. There is no evidence, notwithstanding, about the extant copies of Maqasiri's work related to his teacher's treatise. But the distribution of the short translation of *Inbāh* in the Malay world, has been mentioned. Leiden and Princeton libraries collected some of its translations (see figure 5.4).[434] Some of these copies most probably pertain to Maqasiri's rendering. Neither the folios of the manuscript nor the colophon mention any names. Another suggestion could also lead to the conclusion that some Jawi readers or students of Islamic sciences later copied Maqasiri's summary of *Inbāh*. Although we have three examples of Maqasiri's handwritings as a scribe, it is difficult to rediscover his writings from his own time. All his extant manuscripts are mostly some copies from the nineteenth century.

[432] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 272-305.

[433] Extant manuscripts of this work are many. It has been recently edited and published. Kurani completed the work about one decade in the late 1650s; see Chapter 2.

[434] MS Garrett 479L(a) at the Firestone Library, Princeton; cf. MS Or 5660, Leiden. Princeton's collection contains 11 folios, and probably completed in the end of the seventeenth century or the early eighteenth century; meanwhile, Leiden's collection which was copied in nineteenth century contains only four folios.

Figure 5.4. A fragment of Kurani's *Inbāh al-anbāh* with Javanese interlinear translation. This fragment was very likely completed by Yusuf al-Maqasiri (MS Garrett 479L[a])

The scribal case of Yusuf al-Maqasiri, along with other Jawi scholars, including ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri and ʿAbd al-Shakur al-Bantani, has been a window to look at the scholarly ecology endorsed, built, and developed by Ibrahim al-Kurani in the Sufi-intellectual culture in Medina previously formed by Ahmad al-Qushashi. Through the light of the Jawis living and studying in Arabia, we see a cultural shift happened in the intellectual career of Kurani, from "the shadow of Qushashi" until 1661, as experienced by Fansuri's interaction with Kurani, to the sole significant thinker and author in his own right, as proved by the manuscript evidence for which Maqasiri and Bantani, other Kurani's close students, experienced intellectual-philological involvement. While, according to his Moroccan student, ʿAbd Allah al-ʿAyyashi, Kurani's teaching method triggered dialectical ways of learning allowing audience or students to think broadly and rigorously about certain topics deeply rooted in the post-classical tradition of *munāẓara* and *ādāb al-baḥth*,[435] the Jawi case of Yusuf al-Maqasiri offers a different perspective

[435] Khaled el-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 35, 255; cf. Belhaj, "*Ādāb al-Baḥth wa-al-Munāẓara*: the Neglected Art of Disputation in Later Medieval Islam."

on manuscript-making as a medium of learning through a more personal level of textual interaction or what is called as *translatio textuum*.[436] Both the Maghrebi and Jawi views, however, allow us to imagine Kurani's rigorous approaches to teaching and learning.

5.2. Kurani's Responses to Jawi Questions

The Jawis were present in Arabia, especially in Medina, before the arrival of Ibrahim al-Kurani in 1651. ʿAbd al-Rauf al-Jawi al-Fansuri is known to have studied in the city since a decade before Kurani's arrival. The socio-cultural interaction between them and Kurani was naturally bound up in the Sufi academy of Qushashi. The unparalleled qualifications of Kurani's training in the rational sciences in Kurdistan brought him a prominent figure as he began to learn the Sufi world under Qushashi's guidance. Between 1655 and 1659, the Jawis started to solicit collective inquiries to Qushashi in addition to their personal studies with the Sufi master or other teachers in the Hijaz. Some of these collective inquiries were among the first intellectual exercises Qushashi personally adressed to Kurani in order to respond to them directly. Qushashi's trust made Kurani special among the Jawi audience and others too; the Kurdish scholar was considered as the most leading students of Qushashi and, therefore, the epitome of Qushashi's intellectual and institutional infrastructure in Arabia. From a chronological point of view, the Jawi inquiries were a litmus test for Kurani's willingness to take over the position of his teacher and father-in-law in due time. There are at least five Jawi collective questions from the 1650s onwards to which Kurani attempted to respond and which became the setting of his works including:

a. *Al-Jawābāt al-gharrāwiyya li-l-masāʾil al-jāwiyya al-juhriyya* ("The Medinan responses to the questions of the Jawis in Johore")
b. *Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm saṭh al-walī* ("The lofty path to the determination of saintly ecstatic utterance")
c. *Mirqāt al-suʿūd ilā ṣiḥhat al-qawl bi-waḥdat al-wujūd* ("The fineness of good fortune to the health of opinion referring to 'unity of existence'")
d. *Ijābat al-sāʾil ʿan-mā istashkalahu min al-masāʾil* ("The response to the inquirer on questions that he asked")

[436] See Claudio Leonardi, "Translatio Textuum."

e. *Itḥāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* ("The bestowal dedicated to one of discriminating intelligence in explanation of the gift addressed to the spirit of the Prophet")

This subchapter is divided into four sections. Point (a) is dealt with first. Point (a) (b), (c), and (d) form the second section. Point (e) becomes the third.

5.2.1. The Questions from Johore, Malay Peninsula

The earliest response written by Kurani pertains to a request of the Jawis of Johore who posed five questions to Qushashi in the late 1550s. Johore, which is located in the southern Malay Peninsula, was itself an important locus of power and Islamicness in the Strait of Malacca before and after the Portuguese conquered the capital of Malacca in 1511. During the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (r. 1607-1636), Malacca was once annexed by the Aceh Empire, but then became an independent polity following the death of the sultan. The nomenclature of Johore in a writing penned by Kurani, contrasted in some other texts with the Acehnese, Buginese and Bantanese, illustrates the importance of the provinciality of Johore, which was probably represented by many students within the Qushashi's forum. It is also possible that the rulers of Johore, resembling the questions sent to Ibn ʿAllan in Mecca by the representatives of the Sultanate of Banten, put some questions to Qushashi, which were brought by the delegates in Medina. In the source MS Islamic University of Medina 5343 entitled *al-Jawābāt al-gharrāwiyya li-l-masā'il al-jāwiyya al-juhriyya*, "The Medinan responses to the questions of the Jawis in Johore (*al-juh[u]riyya*); hereafter: *The Medinan Responses*,"[437] which previously erroneously referred as "Medinan responses to the *lucid* Jawi questions" (*al-jahriyya*), no further cules on the delegates are found. The attribution of Johore is of clarity in the title and the delegates who asked the questions correctly mentioned the geography of Johore as textually reproduced by Kurani in the introduction of the work: "These questions arrived from the state of Johore from the territory of Jawa,

[437] In Jawi/Malay texts 'Johor' is written as جوهور. In the title page of MS Islamic University of Medina 5343, the term *al-gharrāwiyya* is denoted as "one of the names of al-Madīna al-Munawwara."

on the shore of the South China Sea, near China, traveling by sea for about 13 days as the delegates in Medina told our shaykh Qushashi."[438] On behalf of Qushashi, Kurani finally completed the treatise on 25 Safar 1070/November 1659; while the available manuscript from Medina was copied by a Meccan copyist Muhammad b. Ahmad on 7 Jumad al-thani, probably shortly scribed prior to the collation of the text with the author's original writing by Abu Tahir, son of Ibrahim al-Kurani on 2 Dhu al-qaʿdah 1101/August 1690.

The surviving sole manuscript was produced three decades after its first manuscript publication. Since Kurani's death occurred in the same year of this dating, this means that he died earlier before the manuscript was completed and collated. A note at a manuscript at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin attests the date of Kurani's death: 29 Rabiʿ al-thani 1101/February 1690.[439] Considering this provenance, some Kurani' students would reproduce their teacher's rare writings in the same year following his death. *The Medinan Responses* was cited as a marginal note by a reader of Kurani's theological manuscript *Maslak al-taʿrīf bi-taḥqīq al-taklīf* 'The Path of Identification on the Verification of Injunction' which was completed on 24 Muharram 1091/25 February 1680 in Medina by a Baghdadi scribe of Kurani's manuscripts namely Mulla Kazim. This reader's note, as appeared at codex MS Garrett 3869Y,[440] was probably added in the same year based on the original handwriting of Kurani or perhaps in the later period based on the copy of MS Islamic University of Medina 5343. Apart from this possible estimation, it reveals that the reader intertextually connected the text that was read with other Kurani's texts—in this regard *The Medinan Responses*. It also shows that the readership of *The Medinan Responses* reached beyond the spatio-cultural scope of the Jawis. Intertextual proofs narrate the coherent unity of Kurani's corpora for which readers or students of Kurani's texts did not differentiate his texts specifying for a particular group of people. For the case of wide readership of Kurani's responsa to another collective question addressed by the Jawis, the third section of this subchapter offers a different reception during his own time.

The Medinan Responses consists of answers to five Jawi questions. Two concern Sufi theosophy, three refer to jurisprudence. The questions are:

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[438] *Fahādhihi suʾālāt waradat min baldat Juhr min bilād Jāwah bi-sāḥil baḥr al-Ṣīn al-qarīb ilā al-Ṣīn naḥwa thalāthata ʿashar yawman fī-l-baḥr kamā akhbara bih al-wārid minhā waradat ilā al-Madīna al-munawwara … bi-ḥaḍrat shaykhinā … al-maʿrūf bi-l-Qushāshī*; Kurani, *al-Jawābāt,* MS Islamic University of Medina 5343, fol. 1b.

[439] MS Landberg 819, fol. 49b.

[440] MS Garrett 3869Y, fol. 60b.

a. Regarding the conception of the fixed prototype (*al-aʿyān al-thābita*), whether is it a 'parte ante' (*qadīma/azaliyya*) or a 'parte post' (*ḥadītha/abadiyya*)? What are they really?
b. Is it necessary (*wājib*) or recommended (*sunna*) to declare out loud the intention (*niyya*) before *takbīrat al-iḥrām* (the inaugural, obligatory statement of *Allāhu akbar* 'God is the greatest') for each of the five prayers?
c. What is the legal status of those who say the monistic apothegm, *inna Allāha nafsunā wa wujūdunā wa naḥnu nafsuhu wa wujūduhu*, "Indeed, God is our soul and our existence and we are His soul and His existence"?
d. Is it advisable to perform Friday prayers when traveling outside of one's place of residence or not?
e. What is the legal status of the wedding ceremony when the groom wears gold or silver decorations on his clothes?

Questions (a) and (c) pertain to the Sufi theosophy, meanwhile questions (b), (d), and (e) relate to Islamic jurisprudence. These questions were addressed to Qushashi, who in his time was the highest level of reliable authority for most of the Jawis after having passed through several levels of hierarchy. The Jawis of Johore, who were either laymen or unknowledgeable elite, would be dissatisfied with some opinions of Jawi scholars in the region, who made different judgements, as was noted following the first question. Reflecting on nineteenth-century Java,[441] some of the above would be asked after various dissatisfactions arose during the religious consultation with local Jawi scholars. The same analogy applies, for example, to the fact that ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri and Yusuf al-Maqasiri travelled to Arabia to obtain knowledge that went far beyond what they were pursuing at the Jawi centre of excellence at that time, i.e. in Aceh. Be that as it may, the superiority of Qushashi as an extraordinary Sufi master, legal scholar, and theologian, then succeeded by Kurani, was the unique figure in the Hijaz who combined high aptitude in the Sufi tradition and legal qualifications—allegedly belonging to both Maliki and Shafiʿi schools of law—in accordance with the religious belief of the Jawis.

[441] See the contexts of the religious authority of Arabian scholars among the Jawis in the colonial period of the Dutch East Indies: Nico Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and the Modern Age in the Netherlands East Indies: A Biography of Sayyid Uthman (1822-1914).*

The three legal questions within *the Medinan Responses* are rarely found in the writings of Kurani. By zooming out the entire Kurani's corpus, only seven identified oeuvres correlate categorically with Islamic law. These three questions thus contribute to our understanding of the Jawi's reliance on Shafiʿi legal tradition, which Kurani maintained genealogically from his Kurdish intellectual tradition.[442] However, unlike Kurani, Qushashi was both the Maliki and Shafiʿi jurist. Qushashi's attachment to the Maliki school of law can only be traced through his study with Maliki jurists. What is unclear is the state of Qushashi's story of *talfīq*, who moved from one school to another or, what is feasible, used both schools interchangeably. As seen in Chapter One, the portrayal of Kurani's education in Kurdistan provides a clear picture of his vitae pertaining to the Shafiʿi tradition, including his studies with his uncle who wrote a commentary on Shafiʿi school of law.[443] Kurani responded to these three legal questions with several opening statements. To answer the second question (b) which refer to intention, for example, he quoted Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani's *Fatḥ al-bārī* 'Victory of the Creator', "the intention correlates to the will of action", accordingly it becomes lawful.[444]

He moreover cited the legal maxim that the moral obligation can be applied if there is action.[445] By relying heavily on the various arguments of the Shafiʿi luminaries from the Seljuk time, the Mamluk era, to the Ottoman period, such as Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, ʿAbd al-Karim al-Rafiʿi, Abu Zakariyya al-Nawawi, Taj al-Din al-Subki, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, and Muhammad Zarkashi,[446] Kurani does not provide a clear explanation on this matter. Before concluding his statement and referring to the opinion of Haytami, who declared intention as recommended before the obligatory, inaugural statement of the prayer, because the verbal proclamation of such worship can support the commitment of the heart, Kurani additionally referred to the opinion of his Hanbali teacher, who was called as *al-fard al-rāsikh* 'the thoroughly versed sole one'—very likely his Damascene teacher, ʿAbd al-Baqi—and who narrated from

[442]As argued by Martin van Bruinessen, the Jawis who studied in Arabia often sought out Kurdish scholars as their teachers, partly because the Jawis, at least by the seventeenth century, were Shafiʿi like most of the Kurds. This legal attachment however is not the only reason to study with Kurdish scholars, let say Kurani alone. Van Bruinessens emphasis on the spiritual kinship between the Jawis and the Kurds constitutes the major reason of this connection that, in my opinion, originated with Qushashi's superiority. Bruinessen (1998), "Kurdish ʿUlama and their Indonesian Disciples."

[443] Regarding manuals on the Shafiʿi school of law and comparative laws, Barzanji wrote several treatises, one of which relates to the importance to establish *bayt al-māl* upon the request of Kurani; see MS Garrett 1941Y, fol. 53a.

[444] Kurani, *al-Jawābāt*, MS Islamic University of Medina 5343, fol. 17b.

[445] *Annahu lā taklīf illā bi-fiʿlin wa inna al-mukallaf bihi fī al-nahy kaff al-nafs ʿan al-nahy (*or *fiʿl?) ʿanhu wa huwa fiʿl wa anna al-fiʿl al-mukallaf bihi huwa al-fiʿl bi-maʿnā al-ḥāṣil* (ibid., fol. 18a)

[446] Ibid., fols. 17b-24a.

Qastallani's (d. 1517) *al-Mawāhib al-laduniyya* 'Divinely Esoteric Gifts', which can be traced back to the opinion of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350). In Jawziyya's work,[447] it is reported that the Prophet did not say anything before the prayer, not even he said declared any intention statements, neither *uṣallī* "I am praying" nor *arbaʿa rakaʿāt mustaqbil al-qiblat* "four *rakʿā*s facing the direction of the holy shrine". In addition to this statement, Kurani also quoted the opinion of the Zahiri and Hanafi schools of law that it is sufficient to say *niyya* 'intention' out loud. By referring to a variety of opinions beyond the Shafiʿi school of law, Kurani seems to have offered different answers in the text to instruct the Jawi inquirers in Johore, in particular, about the plurality of legal postulations.

In contrast to the above answer, Kurani's response to the fourth question (d) exclusively followed the Shafiʿi school of law on the permissibility of not performing the Friday prayer when the men were traveling across the borders of their residence in an independent country (*balda mustaqilla*). He explained the situation of the inhabitants of large rivers such as the Nile in Egypt and the Tigris in Iraq, who should travel to other adjacent shores if their number is less than 40 people as required and legally bound by the Shafiʿi legal ruling.[448] This aquatic analogy was indeed conceivable to the logics of the Jawis of Johore who lived in a maritime culture. For the Jawis, this analogy was perceptively tied to their spatial imagination and is a particular attempt to employ Arabic eloquence and rhetoric in the most effective way. In order to solve the problem of territorial distance, Kurani's postulation based on the opinion of a later Shafiʿi scholar that a repetition of the Friday prayer is lawfully permissible. He testifies that this verification does not belong to the founder, Idris al-Shafiʿi (d. 820), neither in his old nor new legal opinions. At the end Kurani mentioned the statement of Shafiʿi the founder, narrated completely by his Damascene teacher *al-fard al-rāsikh*, about the fallibility of the Shafiʿi's arguments due to errors (*khaṭaʾ*) or disagreement (*khilāf*) with the Scripture and the prophetic tradition. As a theologian who followed the Shafiʿi school of law, Kurani in various occasions employed *taḥqīq* or total intellectual

[447] The text refers to *al-Hudā al-nabawī* (*sic!)* 'The prophetic guidance'. It is probably a corrupted orthography of Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya's book on the prophetic medicine namely *al-ṭibb al-nabawī*. The citation of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya in Kurani's works relied heavily on his transmission from the Hanbali circle in Damascus, as much as his reliance on Ibn Taymiyya's (d. 1328) work. This considerably means that extant corpus of both Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya were limited in Medina. For Kurani's critical attitude towards and defense of Ibn Taymiyya, see Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History of the Seventeenth Century*, 273-275, 282-285, 321-322; Copty, "Taḥqīq Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan al-Kūrānī li-masāʾil kalāmiyya ʿinda Aḥmad b. Taymiyya al-Ḥarrānī."

[448] Kurani, *al-Jawābāt*, fol. 34r; fols. 34r-46r consist of longer verification on how to solve the problem of the Friday prayer.

verification to any of statements and ways of thinking of his predecessors, in different fields of knowledge, including within the legal tradition of the Shafi'is. This verification is much broader than what in legal tradition is called as an independent reasoning or *ijtihād*. Both *taḥqīq* and *ijtihād*, nonetheless, have the same opposition, namely 'blind following' or *taqlīd*.[449]

The same circumspection was applied in answering the fifth question (e), and Kurani believes that men who wear silver or gold attire cannot revoke the marriage, and that the men cannot be charged as impious (*fāsiq)* if his religious observance to the otherworldly reality overcomes the profanity of the attire. The answer also provides different opinions related to the subject. Kurani approaches things, as revealed in this case, with an Aristotelian Golden Mean permeated in the Islamic tradition especially in the system of thought developed by Ghazali (d. 1111),[450] as can be explained in the next section, which allowed him to look at a moderate way, the middle path, not trapped by the rigidity of legal criteria nor the unruly path of the mystical wanderers. This method had once loosely called as a 'neo-Sufi' approach, although this is misleading. The permissibility to wear golden or silver for men, as asked by the Jawis of Johore, has still been regarded as impious; however, Kurani's opinion offers another careful consideration that leans to the heaviness of spiritual pursuance, rather than merely looking at the worldly appearance or physical ornaments. Kings, queens, and noble elites in Southeast Asian courts used jewels not only in the form of regalia like other kingships in other parts of the world and were perceived as symbols of sovereignty and power, but such jewels could also popularly functioned for *kesaktian* (magics) and divine power.[451] The fifth question could relate to this extravagant and mystical culture emulated by certain classes of Jawi societies that used gold and silver jewelry gender-neutral decorations even during marriage festivities. Therefore, Kurani's response did not reject the mundane practice of such ornaments among certain segments of the Jawis but endorsed the elevation of spiritual pursuit. Despite of its simple question and topic, the fifth question reflects Kurani's personal approach who, according to the British historian Anthony Johns, was generous to the Jawi communities.

[449] For the broad, thoughtful discussion of this category in the post-classical period, see for instance Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*; Ahmad Dallal, *Islam without Europe*; M. Melvin-Koushki, "Tahqiq vs. Taqlid in the Renaissances of Western Early Modernity."

[450] Cf. Kenneth Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver*, 76.

[451] For the cultural and political roles of jewels in the seventeenth-century Southeast Asia, see Sher Banu Khan, *Sovereign Women in a Muslim Kingdom: The Sultanahs of Aceh, 1641-1699*, 66-73.

Given that there were no further legal queries from the Jawis to Kurani after the death of Qushashi in 1661, this most likely means that the Jawis were satisfied with the return of leading Jawi scholars such as Fansuri who became a court jurist and Sufi theologian in Aceh supported by the dominant power of female rulers[452] in the second half of the seventeenth century. Fansuri authored the first complete imperial law and other treatises under Sultana Safiyatuddin (r. 1641-1675) and her female successors. Kurani's imprint appears on Fansuri's intellectual tone, supporting the foundation of strong, yet lenient kingship under female rule. Under this politico-intellectual circumstance, Kurani's ideas were disseminated in maritime Southeast Asia.[453] Kurani's other works, including that will be discussed soon, reflects his wide popularity as a respected authority in Sufi, hadith, theological, and philosophical discourses. The contexts of theosophical questions in *The Medinan Responses* will be elaborated in the next section.

5.2.2. A Re-examination of Sufi Heretics

The theosophical questions on pantheism in *The Medinan Responses* has a long historical memory. It goes back to fifteenth-century Java when the concept of *manunggaling kawula gusti* (union of human being and God), which was linked to the Hallajian affairs, cohabited with early Islamization.[454] In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, two Acehnese Sufis and belles-lettrists played a crucial role in the spread of this concept, including Hamzah Fansuri (d. ca. 1590s) and Shams al-Din al-Sumatraʾi (d. 1630). Against this backdrop, the Jawis of Johore asked on the Sufi parole, "God is our soul and existence, and we are His soul and His existence." Fourteen years after the completion of *The Medinan Responses*, Kurani had to author another response to the same question which came from some Jawi fellows, mostly from Sumatra and Java, occurred in the early 1670s. This rejoinder is called *al-Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm al-saṭḥ al-walī* ("The lofty path to the determination of saintly ecstatic utterance"; hereafter: *The Lofty Path*) which was completed in 7 Rabiʿ al-awwal 1084/22 June 1673, as a textual progeny of one of points made in

[452] On the group of these Sultanas and their merciful politics in contrast to Sultan Iskandar Muda, see for example Sher Banu Khan, *Sovereign Women in a Muslim Kingdom: The Sultanahs of Aceh, 1641-1699*; Takeshi Ito, "The World of the Adat Aceh: A Historical Study of the Sultanate of Aceh"; Saiful Umam, "Controversies Surrounding the Aceh's Sultanahs: Understanding the Relation between Islam and Female Leadership."

[453] See Anthony Johns, "Friends in Grace: Ibrahim al-Kurani and Abd al-Rauf al-Singkeli."

[454] Sources on this theme include Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*; Zoetmulder, *Pantheisme en monisme*; Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200*, 425; Ricklefs, *Mystic Synthesis in Java.*

The Medinan Responses. This time Kurani used archipelagic terminology for the "isles of Jawa[h]"[455] and was asked whether those who held this view could be allegorically measured (*taʾwīl ṣaḥīḥ*) or included in an explicit unbelief (*kufr ṣarīḥ*). Since *The Medinan Responses* was not circulated expansively, either in Ottoman Arab lands, the Malay world or elsewhere, it seems that many Jawis outside Johore did not read the treatise and required to turn directly to Kurani—now completely shifted as an independent scholar who received the Jawi collective inquiries—for writing a single treatise on the subject. The request required Kurani to clarify the hermeneutics of the teaching by considering the scale of divine law and the depth of philosophical Sufism (*qawāʿid al-sharʿ wa-l-taḥqīq*). Unlike the *The Medinan Responses*, which did not draw significantly other scholars' interests, *The Lofty Path* appealed to Kurani's younger contemporary, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nabulusi (d. 1731), to comment upon the text. Nabulusi correctly pinpointed the geography of the Malay Archipelago as the farther away from India (*baʿḍ jazāʾir Jāwa min aqṣā bilād al-Hind*),[456] resembling modern rendering 'the Far East'. Only one copy of *The Medinan Responses* has survived to date, while its reproduction occurred only after Kurani's death, inferring its scarcity in libraries compared to *The Lofty Path*, which—despite the fact that this work is a specific response to the Jawis—speaks a common problem of Sufism at this period. Eventually, when *The Lofty Path* was penned and Kurani was intensively personified as the renowned Sufi master and hadith prodigy, his scholarly fame reached its zenith. In addition, the available text of the *Medinan Responses*, which was copied and collated in 1690 and reproduced three decades after its first completion, has its lowest circulation for at least two conceivable reasons. First, the specific audience on the title, *al-masāʾil al-jāwiyya* "the Jawi inquiries", did not entice Hijazi or other scholars to copy it, as it was detailed for a specific region. Second, other Jawi fellows outside Johore were not interested in reading the subject, therefore no copies are extant. The second motive urged the Jawis of Sumatra and Java, at least, to re-ask the same question that prompted Kurani to write *The Lofty Path* with a general audience in mind—the same motive that overshadowed the production of one of Kurani's most well-known works namely *Itḥāf al-dhakī* (The bestowal dedicated to one of discriminating intelligence), which will be the subject of the next section.

[455] *Faqad warada suʾāl fī baʿḍ jazāʾir Jāwa[h] sana 1084*; Kurani, *al-Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm ṣaṭḥ al-walī*, fol. 25.

[456] *Muqaddima ʿalā al-Maslak al-jalī fī ḥukm shaṭḥ al-walī li-l-Kūrānī*, by Nabulusi, MSS 6024, the Library of King Saud University, fol. 4a; MS Garrett 499Y, fols. 1a-2b; Badawi, *Shaṭaḥāṭ al-ṣūfiyya*, 189-190.

The Medinan Responses itself offers an explicit account for the Jawi audience to edify that God is not resembling human being, and Muhammad or Jesus, are the messengers of God. Kurani's explication follows the Quranic verses, which declares the prophecies of both and the quality of human being, and it is is impossible to personify all God's attributions (*ulūhiyya, rubūbiyya, mālikiyya, raḥmāniyya*).[457] Kurani's accentuation on the contingent existence of Muhammad, while God is the Necessary Existence, also found an echo in his further retort to a scholar from the "Far Eastern archipelago," who reported on the teaching: "God is Muhammad", similar to "God is Jesus," in his short treatise entitled *Mirqāt al-suʿūd ilā ṣiḥḥat al-qawl bi-waḥdat al-wujūd* (The fineness of good fortune to the health of opinion referring to 'unity of existence'; hereafter: *The Fineness of Good Fortune*) completed on Thursday, 14 Jumada al-thani 1078/1 December 1667.[458] This treatise is included in Kurani's codex at the British Library, MS Delhi 277. This codex includes several popular texts including *Inbāh al-anbāh*, *The Lofty Path*, etc., as well as Burhanpuri's *Gift Addressed to the Prophet*. Besides *The Fineness of Good Fortune*, other Kurani's text which is related to this treatise is a response to some Jawi questions namely *Ijābat al-sā'il ʿan-mā istashkalahu min al-masā'il* "The response to the inquirer on questions that he asked": hereafter: *The Response to the Inquirer*). The latter response was copied by a Meccan scholar, ʿAbd al-Qadir b. ʿAbd al-Rahman al-ʿAqli, on Monday, 19 Rabiʿ al-thani 1173/10 December 1759. Like *The Medinan Responses*, both *The Fineness of Good Fortune* and *The Response to the Inquirer* are the only extant texts to date; however, their contexts offer valuable information on the continuous engagement between Kurani and Fansuri in particular and the Jawis in general. The two texts that was bounded in MS Delhi 277 are further witnesses to the exchange of letters between Arabia and maritime Southeast Asia, which established the Islamic republic of letters in the circle of Ibrahim al-Kurani.

The presence of single documents does not mean in this case that their relevance is minuscule. Their existence significantly adds abundant copies of Kurani's corpus and even represents what is missing in the lacunae of stories, relations, and cultural ties that were decisive in the making of Kurani's scholarship and global authority as well. While *the Fineness of Good Fortune* has the identical emphasis as *The Medinan Responses* and *The Lofty Path*, the accurate information on *The Response to the Inquirer* tends to be minimal. Half of the texts is unfortunately

[457] Kurani, *al-Jawābāt al-gharrāwiyya*, fols. 25a-27b.

[458] MSS Delhi 277, the Kurani collection, of the British Library, 20-22. I render *aqāṣī jazā'ir al-mashriq* as "the far eastern archipelago."

missing, so that precise questions posed to Kurani are difficult to determine. There is however one clear question quoted there. There is only one question cited in relation to rational demonstrations as an investigation to pursue knowledge.[459] Despite the dearth of information on Kurani's complete responses, two treatises by Kurani in MS Delhi 277 illustrate the plurality of ways Kurani and his Jawi fellows established cordial communication and formed a long-distance relationship or network which sustained the global reception of Kurani's ideas. The codex also narrates the textual-material mobility in the Indian Ocean which reshaped the scholarly communication in a manuscript age.

Regarding the problem raised on the heresy of some particular Sufis in maritime Southeast Asia, Kurani's lenient approach is to avoid penal code to the problem of unbelief, if such ecstatic parole[460] of Bustami, *Subḥānī* "Glory to me", is unbelieve. Kurani relies on the legal maxim *idrāʾ al-ḥūdūd ʿan al-muslimīn [bi-l-shubuhāt] mā-staṭaʿtum* 'to avoid penal code to Muslims in all cases of ambiguity'. To examine the problem of such monistic apothegm, as appeared in *The Medinan Responses* and *The Lofty Path*, Kurani highlights rule of allegorical interpretation developed by Ghazali in his *Fayṣal al-tafriqa bayna al-Islām wa-l-zandaqa* 'The decisive criterion for distinguishing Islam from masked infidelity'. Kurani explicitly advocates the understanding of different levels of interpretation within Islamic tradition. Ghazali's philosophical tone within Kurani's responsa provides the leitmotif of tolerance. More than *The Medinan Responses*, the comprehensive discussion in *The Lofty Path* offers more clues to understanding the problem as posed in the third question of the Jawis appeared at the former treatise. Even Kurani tells the story brought by the Jawis on the killing of those who followed the Hallajian Sufi path:

> As we were told confidently by our friends from the area [Jawa], [they said that] some [Jawi] scholars in the region declared a figure who openly pronounced them [ecstatic paroles] as unbelieve, and they raised this issue with the Sultan. Therefore, they commanded him to repent but he denied doing so, and he even chimed, "How can I repent whilst no

[459] MS Delhi 277, fol. 90a. "*fa-mā dhakarahu al-sāʾil fī ākhiri suʾālihi min qawlihi fa-inna mā dhahaba ilayhi al-mutakallimūna min anna al-ṭarīq ilā al-maʿrifa – innamā huwa al-naẓar fī-l-barāhīn al-ʿaqliyya*."

[460] "Parole" here, in Sausurrian linguistics, refers to practical speech of Sufis who declared *ṣaṭaḥāt* as written and spoken language experienced during or after spiritual exercise.

> body in this forum knows this ecstatic utterance?" So, they ordered to kill him by throwing him into the fire. A reliable interlocutor then reported to me, "He had not been burnt."[461]

Such an Abrahamic story most likely took place in northern Java in the early sixteenth century. A Sufi saint Sunan Panggung,[462] allegedly son of well-known Javanese sufi Sunan Kalijaga,[463] one of legendary saints who Islamisied Java in the long fifteenth century,[464] followed the teaching of Shaykh Siti Jenar, an eccentric saint who proposed the Javanese apothegm of pantheism *manunggaling kawula gusti.* If that is what the Jawis told to Kurani, it is assumed that the story took place during the period of the Javanese Sultanate of Demak, not in Aceh which around 1637 books (not a person or people) on pantheistic teachings had been burned due to a political rift. Nur al-Din al-Raniri, the Indian scholar of Hadrami origin who escalated the conflict said in his *Fatḥ al-mubīn fī-l-radd ʿalā al-mulḥidīn* 'The obvious victory over the unbelievers' that some followers of Shams al-Din al-Sumatraʾi was executed because they did not follow the verdict of Sultan Iskandar Thani and the religious council.[465] It is difficult to verify the garbled story without finding textual evidence in Javanese or classical Malay manuscripts.

Despite of the historical unclarity of the story—thus, it could be treated as apocryphal—Kurani's treatment to avoid the accusation of unbelief and death punishment is plausible. Kurani's sound responsa were needed to stop long controversy between the 1500s and the 1670s, at least at the intellectual level, and to dismiss possible penal code due to the same problem in the future. Kurani's argument assisted to clarify ambiguities around the story on saint burnings in late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Java, books burnings and people persecution in northern Sumatra in the seventeenth century, and other possible persecutions because of the extensive spread of

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[461] Kurani, *Al-Maslak al-jalī*, 53; cf. T. Iskandar, "Aceh dalam Lintasan Sejarah: Suatu Tinjauan Kebudayaan," 9. Iskandar, an Acehnese philologist and historian, cited the story, probably based on a copied letter written by ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri to Ibrahim al-Kurani, and mentioned explicitly that a scholar from the land above the wind (which means India) condemned the Sufi. This portrayal is undoubtedly referred to Nur al-Din al-Raniri.

[462] According to *Serat Cebolek*, a very well-known Javanese literature, Sunan Panggung was burned by the order of the Sultanate of Demak. It is allegedly said that he wrote his treatise *Suluk Malang Sumirang* during the burning, but he could not be burned. The treatise is a fierce critique towards the rigid followers of the *sharīʿa*. Based on the case of Syekh Siti Jenar and his student, Sunan Panggung, later followers of pantheistic Sufism was accused badly because the public accusation could not be separated from the influence of the political affairs orchestrated within sixteenth-century Demak's polity in Java, even it continued during seventeenth-century Aceh in Sumatra.

[463] On the important role of Sunan Kalijaga in Indonesian culture, see Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed*; Ricklefs, *The Mystic Synthesis in Java*.

[464] The conversion to Islam in Java has the same story in Central Asia which was beautifully crafted in DeWeese's *Islamization and the Native Religion in the Golden Horde.*

[465] Nur al-Din al-Raniri, *Fatḥ al-mubīn*, fols. 1b-2b.

Jawi pantheism, which was many times conflated with Akbarian 'unity of existence' and Jili's 'perfect man' as well as Burhanpuri's 'seven degrees of existence' (see Figure 5.5). Two distinguished students of Kurani, ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri and Yusuf al-Maqasiri, followed Kurani's intellectual tone, even though earlier studies of both Jawi scholars connected significantly to Nur al-Din al-Raniri whose controversial actions, intellectually and politically, Kurani extremely refuted through a radical engagement with Islamic legal theory and philosophical interpretation. In this context, Kurani's pen was metaphorically victorious over the sword politically created in the early 1500s in Demak, Java, and the late 1630s in Aceh to eliminate different, misconstrued Sufi letters, paroles, and movements.

To locate the problem of heresy, Kurani begins to argue, among other accounts, on the plurality of Islamic schools to emphasise the importance of allegorical interpretation to comprehend Sufi-philosophical discourse. Even Kurani summarizes that its application is necessary. Therefore, he also underlines that the ecstatic Sufi parole is not unbelieve if it is correctly interpreted as allegory.[466] This answer is the solid statement to provide a correct allegorical interpretation (*taʾwīl ṣaḥīḥ*) that was asked by the Jawis. To avoid ambiguity about what the meaning of unbelief is, Kurani logically states that if there is no "the accusation of deceit" (*takdhīb*), then there is no unbelief (*kufr*), since unbelief—following Ghazali's rationale—is being deceitful with the axiomatic articles of faith (*al-takdhīb bi-mā ʿulima min al-dīn ḍarūratan*). When laypeople ignorantly declare these Sufi ecstatic words, prevention and reconciliation are the best method to enforce virtue.[467] This statement underlines Kurani's reflective leniency which proposed religious tolerance for his Jawi friends, students and audience towards various manifestations of Islam, far from unnecessary violence condemning different ideas as heretic and persecuting people to death. The title of the treatise, *The Lofty Path*, corresponds to the notion that the right noble path is undertaking reconciliatory non-violent acts.

As was evident in most of his theological works, the statements of Ibn ʿArabi are ubiquitous in *The Lofty Path* that are helpful to elaborate dialectically the "fixed prototype" that was addressed as the very first question of *The Medinan Responses*. Although the Akbarian philosophy is used in this text, it does not exert a fascination as it helps to alert the reader on the issue. Unusual is the way Kurani relates the response of the utterer, "How I can repent whilst nobody in this

[466] Kurani, *Al-Maslak al-jalī*, 49.
[467] Kurani, *Al-Maslak al-jalī*, 50.

forum knows this utterance," with a reasoning that is meaningful legally and correctly (*maʿnān ṣaḥīḥan sharʿiyyan*). Although, as the author further notes, it is a weak expression to undermine the doubt of the scholar who declared him to be unbelieving. Kurani ultimately refutes what was said by a scholar whose identity is unknown to us, but very likely Nur al-Din al-Raniri, who annulled the arguments of the narrated Sufi as argued in his heresiographical work *al-Tibyān fī maʿrifat al-adyān* 'The clarification on knowing religions' and his refutation to the unbelievers *Ḥujjat al-ṣiddīq li-dafʿ al-zindīq* 'Truthful proofs to repel the heretics'.[468] Finally, as previously written in *The Medinan Responses*, Kurani advocated the significance of allegorical interpretation without referring directly to the rule of *taʾwīl* in Ghazali's *Decisive Criterion*, but using a maxim "*mahmā amkana ḥaml kalām al-ʿāqil ʿalā fāʾida, wa taṣḥīḥuhu ʿan al-fasād, wajaba*" to inevitably bridge the Sufi utterance into benefits, by carrying "the parole of the intellect" and correcting "depravity".[469]

5.2.3. The Authorship of *Itḥāf al-dhakī* and Its Cultural Values

In *The Lofty Path*, Kurani made self-referrence to his wide circulated *Itḥāf al-dhakī* ("The bestowal dedicated to one of discriminating intelligence"; hereafter: *The Bestowal*). Its wide circulation determined its famous text among Muslim scholars and orientalists as well. None of them however were aware of its connection to the Malay world. The British-Australian scholar Anthony Johns in the 1960s initially contextualized a manuscript copy of *The Bestowal* he read at al-Azhar library and made a convincing connection to the realm of the Malay world. He made an unpublished English translation of the text and planned to publish it with a critical edition as *editio princeps*. This plan has never been done, although his investigation inspired a number of scholars to read the history of Islam in the Malay world through the lens of wide interoceanic connection to Arabia. Azyumardi Azra in 1992 and 2004 then published his "networks of scholars" between the Middle East and Southeast Asia, one of which Kurani played an important role in this intellectual connection. Oman Fathurahman finally did research more than 30 manuscripts

[468] See the explanation of these two texts in al-Attas's books. Al-Attas in the 1970s following his postgraduate trainings at McGill and SOAS declared that Raniri was wrong, but later in the 1980s he changed his mind by elaborating the orthodox interpretation of Islamic Malayness by commenting on the two texts penned by Raniri as the 'ideological foundation' of the state of Malaysia basedon on Raniri's treatises. Paul Wormser corroborates this argument in his article "L'expérience paradoxale de Nuruddin ar-Raniri dans l'océan Indien du XVIIe siècle," 176.

[469] Kurani, *Al-Maslak al-jalī*, 60.

of *The Bestowal* and completed a critical edition of the text mainly based on the oldest copy (1665), MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820; he published it in 2012. From Fathurahman's codicological and philological research, there is a firm conclusion that *The Bestowal* in the seventeenth century was read from Maghreb to the Ottoman Empire, from Yemen to India and Indonesia.

Some reading notes were written in many languages, one of which is Persian as can be seen in MS I.O. 1180, The British Library. In the title page, a Persian note states its values as a commentary to an Indian scholar, Mahmud (sic!) b. Fadl Allah (al-Burhanpuri, d. 1620). It follows with another note, *va īn shāriḥ nām īn sharḥ muqarrar kardeh ast Itḥāf al-zakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā al-nabī... dar ʿilm-i dīnī va uṣūl-o-ʿaqāyid*, "and this commentaror decided to name this commentary as *Itḥāf al-zakī*, in religious science and philosophical theology."[470] While the correct and proper name of *The Bestowal* is *Itḥāf al-dhakī*, its reception in the Persian and Ottoman milieus caused it to be written as *Itḥaf al-zakī* following their vernacular pronounciation to Arabic *dhāl* as *ze* in addition to a slightly scribal error. While the text was a request to the Jawi community in Medina, as can be seen below, no earliest copies of this text in the Malay world dated to the seventeenth century. Most available Jawi manuscripts were copied in later centuries. Fansuri, Maqasiri, dan Bantani or other Jawi associates could bring its copies into maritime Southeast Asia, but the hitherto oldest manuscript belongs to the collection of the Köprülü library, MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820. As explained before, it was Kurani's gift or bestowal to one of the members of the Köprülü regime in Istanbul. The title page of this manuscript was penned by Kurani himself and it bears the correct name: *Itḥāf al-dhakī*.

Why did the Jawis asked Kurani to comment on Burhanpuri's *The Gift*? In the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, *The Gift* circulated from Mughal India to Aceh where the text quickly transmitted to many parts of the Malay world. No records, however, reveals the travel of Burhanpuri to Sumatra. His texts traveled with the intensive economic exchanges between Gujarat and the Malay world in the early modern period[471] which connected to the the broader Islamic circuits mainly to Arabia. Burhanpuri is also narrated to study and teach in Mecca and Medina. Burhanpuri's teaching was considerably supported by the Shattari networks in the eastern Indian Ocean, but also the Naqshbandi in which he transmitted this Sufi fraternity to the grandfather of

[470] A copy of this folio can be seen in Fathurahman, *Itḥāf al-Dhakī. Tafsir Wahdatul Wujud bagi Muslim Nusantara*, 36.

[471] See, for instance, Paul Wormser & Claude Guillot, "Gujarat and the Malay world, 15th-17th centuries: trade and influence."

Raniri. Yusuf al-Maqasiri pursued the ijaza of Burhanpuri's chains of transmission through the line of Raniri when Maqasiri traveled to Aceh in the early 1640s during which Raniri was active as a court jurist and intellectual.[472]

The Shattaris and the followers of Akbarian teachings in India would favor this text because it contains an ensuing approach to the understanding of existences. This approach which, for instance, was embraced by the earliest Sufi Malay and poet, the abovementioned Hamzah Fansuri and Shams al-Din al-Sumatra'i, is dominantly preoccupied with problems of the unity of Being, the origin of multiplicity from unity, the Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*), and, in the practical aspect, with the teachings of divine remembrance (*dhikr*). The source of this mytical philosophy refers to the writings of Ibn ʿArabi and ʿAbd al-Karim al-Jili. Hamzah Fansuri, like ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami, perceives five manifestations of being. Different from this, Burhanpuri's *The Gift*, followed by the philosophical system of Sumatra'i, contains the ontology of seven manifestations of being which was soon translated into Malay as *martabat tujuh* and then Javanese as *martabat pitu*. This translation was instrumental in the development of Sufi education in the Malay world for centuries. The brave Javanese prince in the early nineteenth century, Pangeran Diponegoro, read *Kitab Topah* which is a vernacularized version of *The Gift*.[473]

The ontological system of beings (see Figure 5.5) depicts the gradation from absolute unity towards the multiplicity of the world of creations through the following stages:

1. *Aḥadiyya* – absolute, unmanifested, incomprehensible unity;
2. *Waḥda* – synthetic unity of potentialities of Being;
3. *Wāḥidiyya* – analytical unity of potentialities of Being or unity in multiplicity;
4. *ʿAlam al-arwāḥ* – the world of spirits, or *logoi*, of things;
5. *ʿAlam al-mīthāl* – the world of ideas, or *eidoi*, of things;
6. *ʿAlam al-ajsām* – the world of physical bodies;
7. *ʿAlam al-insān* – the world of man, that is the Perfect Man.

[472] Yusuf al-Maqasiri, *al-Salāsil al-mubāraka muttaṣila [bi-]Yūsuf al-Maqāṣīrī*, MS Princeton, Garrett 1166H, fol. 45b. The codex includes three manuscripts of *silsilahs* pursued by Maqasiri and a leading Yemeni Sufi, Muhanna Baʿalwi al-Hadrami, who had the connection to Indian Sufi tradition of the Shattaris reshaped in Medina. Both Maqasiri and Hadrami met a common link through Burhanpuri's chains as Hadrami's manuscript titled *al-Salāsil al-maymūniyya al-mubāraka al-muttaṣila bi-Mawlānā Bāʿalwī al-Ḥaḍramī*.

[473] Peter Carey, *The power of prophecy*, 111-114.

This system is divided into three parts. The first three stages are eternal, uncreated and do not have an outworldly actual Being; they are the Being of the Universe in Divine Consciousness. The following three stages posses outwordly manifested Being, are actual creations and subject to destruction. The last one, the world of the Perfect Man, is the lowest, but at the same time, the highest form of the manifested ones, because it contains all the levels of being from the first degree to the world of the corporealities. He is a microcosm, which is similar to macrocosm (the Universe), both in physicial and spiritual forms.[474] This ontological understanding of the Perfect Man, then, corresponds positively to the older cosmology in the Malay world, especially in the Javanese society, where human beings are perceived as the manifested being mirroring the universe, and at the same time as a spiritual creation returns to the Creator, the Absolute Being. Therefore, the reception of this ontology had no cultural and intellectual barriers.

Figure 5.5. The seven degrees of existence according to Burhanpuri. MS Cod. Or. 7049, fol. 53b.

[474] The concise explanation of this seven degrees extracted from classic secondary literature can be found in Vladimir Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature*, 643-645.

However, *The Gift* was read widely beyond the Sufi scholars and intellectuals. Because the text is relatively short and could be brought easily, non-specialists including children accessed it without hesitance and perceived it as the mandatory reading for their own education. It is due to its title, "the spirit of the Prophet," many people regarded it as an important source to understand the prophetic message albeit its highly philosophical tone. Non-specialist Jawi people considered the text as a Sufi guidance to the existence of cosmos, God, and human being. Kurani told his students, especially ʿAyyashi or Mustafa al-Hamawi, about this popularity. One of Kurani's friends, very likely ʿAbd al-Raʾuf al-Jawi al-Fansuri, read *The Gift* and it is noted that the treatise was very famous and read in libraries and lodges. Even youth read it as an introductory knowledge. Because of its name attributing to the prophetic spirit, people were not reluctant to read it to pursue the Prophet's blessing.[475] The concise nature of the text caused it to be conceived as a common book, not a philosophical text for advanced students. ʿAyyashi was true when he reported that *The Gift* is not a common text that should be disconnected from children access in their learning process. The story was told in the early 1660s, when a need of further commentary upon the text was required to explicate what are the esoteric teachings within the text.

In short, many Jawis in the Malay world were perplexed about the nature of its philosophical contents: whether it is *Islamic* and in accordance to *sharīʿa*. This perplexity took place earlier before the productive encounters between Kurani and the Jawis in Arabia. It occured as a result of contingent conflation of many philosophical texts and ideas, including the problem of Sufi heretics that was asked by the Jawis from Johore in the previous discussion. This circumstance, hence, motivated Burhanpuri to produce his own commentary on *The Gift* namely *Al-Ḥaqīqa al-muwāfiqa li-ahl al-sharīʿa* ("The real truth that is harmonious with the law-abiding people") very probably to prevent misunderstandings among people who read the text.[476] The making of this commentary implies that some debates happened following the circulation of the text in the early seventeenth century. In the commentary, Burhanpuri underlines that his Sufi doctrines accord with the divine law, not a deviant one. Nonetheless, his own commentary was not quickly

[475] ʿAbd Allah al-ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, I, 402. This story was also told by another student of Kurani, the Damascene historian Mustafa al-Hamawi by mentioning explicitly *baʿḍ aṣḥābinā al-jāwiyyīn*. See Azra, "Opposition to Sufism," 667. It seems that ʿAyyashi copied the story and omitted any terms of *jāwiyyūn* or its variations probably because he was not sure about the term.

[476] For the extant commentary see the *legaat* of Snouck Hurgronje, MS Leiden Cod. Or. 7022; the other extant work namely *Qaṭr al-ghumām* is MS Leiden Cod. Or. 7030, a short summary of Sufi creeds. See also Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*, iii vols (Leiden 1067), I, 76-83.

spread, unlike the extensive reception of *The Gift*. Here, the author could not help the public fear of being religiously disarray.

In the early 1660s, frequent requests from the Jawis in Arabia addressed to Kurani to pen his influential commentary, *The Bestowal*. Paralleled with the story recorded by ʿAyyashi, an introductory statement of the commentary confirms the same articulation. It is told that, in the Malay world, there were some books containing esoteric truths and sciences of secrets, which were popularly read without the depth of the basic religious knowledge.[477] *The Bestowal* not only mentions one single book of the science of secrets, namely *The Gift*, but many books. It undoubtedly refers to our previous discussion on the spread of pantheistic Sufism took place especially in the Islamic urban centers in Java and Sumatra and beyond. Another similar story that is originated from the history of Hamzah Fansuri's books narrates:

> After that, in Aceh, Hamzah Fansuri also composed a book, which is entitled *Sharab al-ʿāshiqīn*, and he expressed notions of the *waḥdat al-wujūd* in it. He identified Allah Most High with creatures by means of such similes as cotton and [cotton] fabric, sun and its reflection, wave and sea, jug and clay. And *this doctrine (lit. 'science') entered the breasts of fools and became like a powerful poison [for them], and they did not want to release themselves from it*. But only Allah is All-Knowing.[478]

The presence of *The Gift* hence intensified the popularity of Sufi-philosophical school in the Malay world. The main concern of some legal scholars and their puritan followers was misusing and misunderstanding such doctrine as also happened in the case of *The Gift*, and this circumstance caused the intellectual censor buttressed by political enforcements which made book prohibition and execution of certain Sufi followers as occurred in Aceh from 1637 onwards. The confluence of this tragedy and the continuing perplexity in the whole Malay world stimulated the Jawis to ask Qushashi and Kurani to clarify such issues clearly. Considering this background, Kurani's *Bestowal* played a crucial role as an arbitrator of a highly debated, controversial issue.

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[477] Kurani, *Itḥaf al-dhakī* (ed. Oman Fathurahman), 176. *Faqad ṣaḥḥa ʿindanā min akhbār jamāʿat al-jāwiyyīn anna bilād Jāwah qad fashā fī ahlihā baʿḍ kutub al-ḥaqāʾiq wa-ʿulūm al-asrār fatadāwalathā aydī man yunsabu ilā al-ʿilm minhum bi-l-qirāʾa wa-l-iqrāʾ min ghayr itqān li-ʿilm al-sharīʿa al-muṣṭafā.*

[478] MS Leiden Cod. Or. 7637, fol. 100b. The quotation is also mentioned in Braginsky, "The Name and the Named; On the Extent of Hamzah Fansuri's Renown in the Malay Indonesian World (Notes and Materials)." The *italic* emphasis is mine.

The Gift, however, was not only relates to the history and internal affairs of the Malay world. Kurani's teaching activities reveal another narration. When ʿAyyashi and other students read the text with Kurani, the Moroccan historian was conscious of the wide popularity of the text beyond the Malay-Islamic contexts. Kurani exchanged letters with ʿAyyashi including one text of *The Gift.*[479] *The Gift* transformed into a scholarly norm appeared in Iraq, India, Egypt and the Hijaz. ʿAyyashi writes, "If any scholar penned a [commentary] book related to this and he subtly mastered it, thus the ruler form each [respective] regions made a valuable gift to him officially with scribing his name as an emblem."[480] This information obviously reveals that the commentary tradition of *The Gift* appealed courtly interests across regions, even before Kurani penned his *Bestowal*. It does not explain that rulers from imperial Aceh to Ottoman Cairo were attracted by the contents of the text. However, the data implies that the wide popularity of the text beyond the Malay world stimulated many rulers to endow a precious gift—which certainly renders as *tuḥfa*—to authors who could explicate its obscure meanings with intellectual clarity. Based on this setting, Kurani's *Bestowal* met the criteria. Despite the skeptic question whether Kurani obtained any precious gifts from the sharif of Mecca or even Ottoman viziers, the copies of his *Bestowal* prevailed copies of other commentaries.[481] The gifts received by authors probably generated certain interests among other intellectuals to write their commentaries.

Among earlier commentators of *The Gift* include Ibrahim al-Ashi (d. 1630), whose last name means the Acehnese. He wrote *al-Mawāhib al-mustarsila ʿalā al-tuhfat al-mursala* ("The affable gifts to the gift addressed [to the spirit of the Prophet]").[482] This happened closely to the life of Burhanpuri when the Aceh Empire was ruled by Sultan Iskandar Muda who not only enlarged his imperial lands and welcomed European traders and diplomatic delegations but also strengthened his charisma with patronizing the vibrant study of Sufi philosophical tradition. Ibrahim al-Ashi was among the contemporary of Shams al-Din al-Sumatra'i who was the leading figure of philosophical Sufism and the chief-jurist appointed from 1590 to 1630. During Sumatra'i's era, philosophical Sufism was reaped its fertile development firming the intellectual culture of the

[479] At least two identified copies of *al-Tuḥfa al-mursala* belong to the library of ʿAyyashi's zawiya and the National Library of Morocco.

[480] ʿAyyashi, *al-Riḥla al-ʿayyāshiyya*, vol. 1, 401.

[481] There are more than thirty identified copies of *Itḥāf al-dhakī* worldwide, researched by Oman Fathurrahman (see his edition of *Itḥaf al-dhakī*, 25-26), around ten of them are in Istanbul libraries.

[482] Ismail Yahya, *Ibrāhīm Āshī: A Commentator and Apologist for Waḥdat al-Wujūd in the 17th Century of Malay Indonesian Archipelago*, Yogyakarta: Idea Press, 2015. I however, read the title as *al-Mawāhib al-mustarsila* not *al-Mawāhib al-mustarsala*.

sultanate. Other commentators existed from Ashi's time to the 1660s are yet unknown. If the story retold by ʿAyyashi was true, other commentators should be prevailing in India, Iraq, the Hijaz and Egypt as well. During Ashi's time, the text was not yet popular in the cities of the Ottomans. The Hijaz was the locus where this text became prevalent. The Shattari fraternity dominantly popularized not only Gwaliyori's *The Five Jewels* but also *The Gift.* Qushashi's attachment to the fraternity clearly answers the puzzle. According to an information in a printed copy of an Ottoman commentary to *The Gift*, the predecessors of Qushashi in the late sixteenth century introduced the text in the region. They include Sibghat Allah Baruchi, student of Wajih al-Din al-ʿAlawi al-Ahmadabadi who was the student of Ghawth Gwaliyori.[483] Soon after the authorship of *The Gift* in 999/1590, it was travelled crossing seas, especially towards the eastern Indian Ocean. The Jawis who studied in Qushashi's Sufi academy, hence, knew the text earlier in Aceh or elsewhere in the Malay world, before re-encountering the same text in the Hijaz where they requested frequently to Kurani to write a fine commentary.

The provenance of Kurani's *Bestowal* is somewhat tricky. While Kurani did not leave any date in the colophon of any related manuscripts, MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820 proves the exact dating of the manuscript. The collection, as mentioned earlier, is a 'scholarly gift' to Huseyin Çelebi b. Mustafa, probably Köprülü Mustafa Pasha's (d. 1691) son with Kurani's autograph. The codex contains other Kurani's texts including Kamal al-Din Muhammad Lari's commentary on Jalal al-Din Dawani's *al-Zawrāʾ* and *al-Ḥawrāʾ*, whose colophon dated at least 1081 or 1670.[484] This date is probably the best estimation when Kurani delivered his gift. In addition to *The Bestowal* and Lari's commentary to Dawani, the codex includes Kurani's other work namely *Maslak al-iʿtidāl ilā fahm āyāt khalq al-aʿmāl* ("The equinoctial path to the comprehension of Quranic verses on the creation of actions"). The three works were copied by different scribes. But, Kurani's handwritings in the title pages of all texts with his *ijaza* constitute their similarity. Two Kurani's works and one fine commentary of Dawani, to whom Kurani admired, were the

[483] Hasirizade, *al-Kalimāt al-mujmala fī sharḥ al-Tuḥfa al-mursala*, 5. The editor of the work notes: "*Sayyid Ṣibghat Allāh b. Rūh Allāh b. Jamāl Allāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Hindī al-Barūchī al-Madanī efendimizin rafiki ve tarikat kadirasidir. Bu iki seyh cinab seyh Wajīh al-Dīn b. al-qāḍī Naṣr Allāh al-ʿAlawī al-Hindī al-Aḥmadābādī hazretlerinin tilmizleridir. Ve seyh Wajih al-Din seyh Muhammad b. Khatir al-Din al-Husayni ki Ghawth laqabile meʿrūf wa (al-Jawahir al-khams) ki ṣāhibi ve ṭarīḳat (Ghawthiyya) silsilesinin seyhi hazretlerinin tilmizleridir. Sonra vakif oldumki sahib-i risale-yi seyh Muhammad b. Fadl Allah bin yirmi dokuz senesinde irtihal dar beka etmis (ve tuhfet al-mursala) bi 999 da te'lif etmis*"

[484] MS Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 820, *Sharḥ al-Zawrāʾ wa ḥāshiyātuhā al-Ḥawrāʾ*, fol. 45b.

present to the young elite within the Köprülü family ruling the Ottoman Empire. Stated in the title page of *The Bestowal*, referring to this oldest codex, Kurani notes, "It had been commenced from Sunday, 30 Rabiʿ al-thani to its completion… in early Jumad al-akhir 1076…"[485] From this information, *The Bestowal*, thus, had been penned for more than three months until the end of 1665. Fathurahman has been skeptical of this date as the completion of the work, but it is considered as the copying date.[486] My conclusion is different, because it was written directly by Kurani's handwriting with the opening of his note in red ink, *kāna al-bidāya*, "the beginning (of completing this treatise) was…" Thus, *The Bestowal* was completed in 1665.

Following Kurani's commentary in the mid-1660s, other commentaries had been composed in later decades. The popularity of *The Bestowal*, which followed the fame of Burhanpuri's *Gift*, reached beyond the Shattari networks. Kurani's multiple genealogies, not excluding his Sufi realm, contributed to the circular connection to the variety of people and communities belong to different fraternities. The making of *The Bestowal*, considering Kurani's extensive connection, encouraged other authors to pen commentaries which, according to the information from ʿAyyashi, became a "scholarly norm" appeared in the Ottoman Arab lands and Mughal India as any commentary of the text was praised politically by local rulers, either sultans or other government bodies. At least two further identified commentaries of the *Gift* were composed in Arabic, first by the famous ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d. 1731) titled *Nukhbat al-masʾala sharḥ risālat al-Tuḥfa al-mursala*,[487] second by ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Suwaydi (d. 1786) titled *Kashf al-ḥujub al-musabbala ʿalā farāʾid al-tuḥfa al-mursala*. Another commentary was written in Ottoman Turkish by certain Hasirizade namely *al-Kalimāt al-mujmala fī sharḥ al-tuḥfat al-mursala* in the nineteenth century.

The common feature of *The Bestowal* has been emphasized by scholars of Southeast Asian Islam as bringing the reconciliatory tone. While it is true that the theological-philosophical contents within the commentary correspond to the broader conception of post-classical philosophical theology,[488] the historicity of the text is needed to better understand its values especially among

[485] *Itḥāf al-dhakī*, MS Fazil Ahmed Pasa 820, fol. 46a.

[486] Oman Fathurahman, "*Itḥaf al-dhakī* by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī: A Commentary of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd* for *Jāwī* Audiences", 183; cf. Oman Fathurahman, *Itḥāf al-Dhakī: Tafsir Wahdatul Wujud bagi Muslim Nusantara*, 28-38.

[487] It was also named *al-Qawl al-matīn fī bayāni tawḥīd al-ʿārifīn*.

[488] This approach is revealed by Nasser Dumairieh's dissertation, *Intellectual Life in the Ḥijāz in the 17th Century*, although he neglects in many ways to underscore the value of paratextual presence in manuscripts as historical sources.

the people of the Malay world. Together with other works especially *The Lofty Path*, *The Bestowal* stimulated the religious thinking that is valorizing all aspects of approaches from legal, Sufi, and philosophical-theological perspectives. This gradation is present in the structure and composition of the commentary to guide readers gradually grasped the meaning of the divine Truth from the scriptural evidence to philosophical argumentations. A closer look at the chronology of Kurani's writings which were requested by the Jawis, *The Bestowal* was completed earlier after the *Medinan Responses*, and became a backbone to support much later responses such as *The Lofty Path*, in the sense that the commentary offered (or still offers) a comprehensive response to the problem of religious perplexity. Thus, Kurani for instance declares in the commentary that his own approach is that "merging different thoughts is superior over opting either one of them, in as far as this is possible."[489] This approach is significantly a form of Aristotelian Golden Mean permeated as an ethics in Islamic thought, including what is apparent in Ghazali's intellectual tone. This 'Golden Mean' attempts to adjudicate two extreme approaches and, consequently, follow the straight path or what the Quran says as *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* in the sense that the more ethical value should follow the 'neutral' virtue without succumbing into extreme temptation or lower than that. Kurani's arbitrariness towards two different poles of religious tendency was part of this long tradition that contributed to perceive the Islamic culture of ambiguity more intelligently.

Kurani's weight defense for the compatibility between legal and Sufi approaches, especially to underline boldly on the 'permissibility' of the doctrine unity of being, along with his rejection to the penal code for the allegedly heretic Sufis created the culture of leniency and tolerance. In the premodern Islamic culture, the portrayal of tolerance towards ambiguity has been an important subject for scholars such as Thomas Bauer and Shahab Ahmed.[490] In the micro-landscape of Medinan intellectual culture, it was flourished by the textual evidence in the books of Ibrahim al-Kurani whose reinterpretation to certain controversial issues inspired the reformed Islamic culture that is more lenient and tolerant towards different ideas. With the interlocutors of his students and friends in the Malay world, Kurani to some extent shifted the religious paradigm adopted by them. Their noble and elite status effectively played a major role as cultural conduits

[489] Kurani, *Itḥāf al-dhakī*, *wa-l-jamʿ muqaddam ʿalā al-tarjīḥ mahmā umkin*
[490] Thomas Bauer, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität*; M. Shahab Ahmed, *What is Islam?*

from where Kurani's writings and ideas permeated, first as a methodological approach, and second as an inspiration to discontinue the intellectual censorship and penal code against any tendency to the development of Sufi-philosophical amalgamation. In the second half of the seventeenth century, exchanges of letters and ideas between Kurani and his Jawi interlocutors interrupted the intellectual and political quarrel since, arguably speaking, the late fifteenth century and, convincingly evident, the end of Raniri involvement in determining what is right and what is wrong or heretic. This cultural and intellectual development had continued to be important, because the *Gift* of Burhanpuri had been one of the compulsory books for many seekers of truth in the later periods, such as the era of Pangeran Diponegoro in Java in the early nineteenth century, without repeatedly asking the permissibility of this text as happened before the 1660s. Kurani's responsa partly contributed to endorse a more tolerant version of Islam. His body, unlike Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji, never traveled to Malay world; only the corporeality of his writings and the realm of his ideas traveled to the furthest east. A descendant of Qushashi-Kurani in the eighteenth century named Ibrahim Zayn al-ʻAbidin, however, traveled to maritime Southeast Asia and re-connected to many Jawi communities and told them about the violent attacks of the Wahhabis on venerated tombs, except that of the Prophet himself.[491]

One further note should be added. Kurani's writings which responded the Jawis do not always relate to the problem of intellectual persecution and religious heresy. Kurani also authored, for instance a treatise responding to the cultural peculiarity in Sumatra. In a treatise titled *Kashf al-muntaẓir li-mā yarāhu al-muḥtaḍir*,[492] Kurani was confronted with a unique question on the relatively common ritual to recognize death door practiced in the Malay world, at least in northern tip of Sumatra. It is told that people who have experienced death door, according to this strange ritual, could put their hand above their heads so that they could see Gabriel, devil, Jews, or Muhammad depending on the light colors they see, either green, black, yellow, or white accordingly. Consequently, they should cast of certain remembrance based on the words 'there is no god except God' that also depends on the lights that they grasp. Certain Jawis asked Kurani whether this ritual has been justified by the Quran and hadith. This is the strangest question that

[491] MS 12389, the British Library, fols. 58a-59b. This archive was available online and reported by Annabel Gallop in her blog, "Malay Manuscripts on Bugis History." (blogs.bl.uk)

[492] The National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia (*Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia*), no. 135/A/19/75. Some copies are extant in the libraries in Mecca and Medina, but they are misattributed to Qushashi or the son of Ibrahim al-Kurani, or another name.

Kurani ever expected from the Jawis or other fellows. Kurani certainly could not offer justification for such syncretic mysticism. Based on the cultural setting and knowledge he pursued, Kurani modestly rejoined with a general statement that there is no textual reliance, either from the scripture, the prophetic tradition or the responsa from previous scholars, to justify such 'strange ritual'. Apart from Kurani's response to this peculiarity, information on certain cultural syncretism occurred in the religiosity of certain segments of the Jawi communities. Such syncretism was probably commonly perceived by the lay Jawis as an intermingling process with the defiant ideas and movements such as the monist idea within Sufism. This distorted perception prompted them to ask the right path of being Islamic in the gradual process of massive Islamization in the entire Malay world since the fifteenth century. The Medinan religious and intellectual space, in which Kurani developed a significant career and connection, provided the golden opportunity among these Jawis to ask the way of pursuing 'Sunni orthodoxy' that is not hostile to the Neoplatonist aspects of Sufi intellectual culture.[493] Kurani was not always satisfying them particularly for the problem of a ritual strangeness, but he mostly provided generous answers and personal hospitality through which the Jawis were content.

5.3. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, Kurani's major responses to the Jawi inquiries have been contextualized, not to provincializing his thought to the spatial limit of the Malay world, as critiqued by Duimairieh, but to better understand the global historical connection between texts/manuscripts, ideas, and people in which he played a crucial role in redefining certain issues and determining the tolerant way of being Islamic.[494] The connection between Kurani and the Jawis provides a useful information about the production of Kurani's manuscripts and his Jawi scribes, knowledge transmission or *translatio studiorum*, intellectual exchange, as well as productive engagement between teachers and students in a Medinan context. The Jawis were among the loyal supporters of Kurani's ideas and authority. The mystical kinship tied the Jawis to Kurani in addition to their affiliation to the Shafi'i school of law. Kurani's intellectual imprint had many traces in some regional

[493] In analyzing Neoplatonic influence in Islamic culture, Shahab Ahmed wrote "human and historical Islam is arguably almost as Neo-Platonist as it is Muḥammadan," *What is Islam?*, 174.

[494] Cf. Denys Lombard, "L'horizon insulindien et son importance pour une compréhension globale de l'Islam" ; Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated.*

languages of the Malay world, especially Malay and Javanese. In the nineteenth century, an important poet of Surakarta court in Java, Ronggowarsito, penned Javanese poems namely *Wirid Hidayat Jati* which was influenced by Kurani's *Bestowal*.[495] In the second half of the seventeenth century, Kurani's career and books were entangled with the Jawi religious questions and this entanglement was supported by the cultural and political development reshaped by his Jawi students, especially in the courts of Aceh, Banten and Mataram where numerous Kurani's texts were adopted, translated, and transformed in multifaceted ways.

Furthermore, long distance relationships between Arabia and the Malay world between 1640 and 1700 cannot be separated from the Medinan 'school' of Sufism and hadith. Ahmad al-Qushashi and then Ibrahim al-Kurani were central in this connection, making it the strongest network of the Jawis in the early modern era. The political and intellectual quarrel made many Jawis asked different prominent scholars in Ottoman Egypt and Arabia. In the late 1630s, for instance, Kamal al-Din al-Jawi from Aceh asked on the bitter conflict in Aceh to Ibn Muhammad Manufi (d. 1658), who wrote a legal treatise on the subsidies due to the Imam.[496] Kamal al-Din notes that Raniri rendered the philosophy of *wujūdiyya* as going astray and infidel (*ḍalāl mubīn wa kufr ṣarīḥ*).[497] The extant source also notes about the spread of philosophical Sufism in the Malay world for which Hamzah Fansuri, Shams al-Din Sumatraʾi, and Kamal al-Din al-Jawi were mentioned with other names such as an Azhari shaykh Sayf al-Din as the followers of Ibn ʿArabi and Ibn Farid.[498] Despite of this earlier attempt, Qushashi and Kurani connection to the Malay world proved to be firmer and clearer due to manuscript traces. The religious authority of both was unrivalled and remained important following the seventeenth century. Considering this connection and the making of transregional religious authority, the relation nature of the Jawis and Kurani was interdependent. Kurani's intellectual career in Medina, therefore, could not be globally supported without the curiosity of the Jawis. As we have seen from this chapter, Kurani's endorsement to the mode of leniency and tolerance significantly contributed to the intellectual and, certainly, textual production in the Malay world. Kurani's books, teaching, and the development of post-Timurid intellectual culture brought by him became an inspiration for leading scholars in the region to reshape the crystallization of Islamic knowledge. The intellectual

[495] See Simuh, *Mistik Islam Kejawen Raden Ngabehi Ranggawarsita*; Martin van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and kitab kuning: maintenance and continuation of a tradition of religious learning."
[496] See MS Garrett 1160H, fols. 1a-5a.
[497] See MS Garrett 476L; cf. Michael Laffan, *The Makings of Indonesian Islam*, 44-46.
[498] MS Garrett 476L, fol. 15a.

supporters and transmitters of Kurani seen from the eastern Indian Ocean, as elaborated in this chapter, significantly expanded the global dimension of his personae in the seventeenth-century Islamic world.

Conclusion

This dissertation discussed the history of Ibrahim al-Kurani in the seventeenth century through two spatial-temporal distinction: the intellectual genealogy of Kurani and the transregional formation of the Medinan intellectual tradition. This distinction, which became two separate but interconnected parts, respectively represented different trajectories in which the Kurdish scholar engaged with a series of cultural and intellectual events that happened worldwide through his physical mobility and the transregional circulation of ideas, manuscripts or written artifacts, and people. The first part of this dissertation broadly examined the cultural and intellectual milieus of the places where Kurani lived, visited, and studied over a period of more than two decades from the 1630s to the 1650s. The first part examined the intellectual encounters through his corporeal mobility from Shahrizor to the Ottoman Arab lands. Meanwhile, the second part of this dissertation scrutinized the reconfiguration of the Medinan intellectual culture through the significant role of Kurani and his proponents. This second part addressed how global communication, knowledge production, and its transmission thoroughly affected the formation of Kurani's religious intellectual authority from the 1660s until his death in 1690. During this period, Kurani mostly stayed in Medina and developed his career there, although cultural-intellectual mobility and textual motion occurred through the mediation of the physical mobility of other people who came to the holy city, as well as through material movement of manuscripts carried by these people as transmitters or cultural conduits. By considering closely these two parts, geographical approach enabled me to comprehend the multitude of trajectories that formed an intellectual tradition reshaped by the centrality of Medina as the second sacred city in Islam and one of the most important centers of learning through which people, ideas, and texts from the entire Islamic world traveled and contributed to its multifaceted histories.

Hence, this dissertation has merged Kurani's personal narrative with other entangled, constitutive narratives of transregional intellectual production. I have combined these narratives together to support the construction of my five core arguments. One, Kurani's earlier formative years are marked by his radical shift from a merely theological and philosophical leaning to mystical and prophetic inclination, in which he began to combine both tendencies equally. Second, further extensive experiences in Medina forced him to enter the Sufi world entirely, while at the same time becoming a site of learned perfection, multiplying his intellectual genealogies and commencing projects under the guidance of the most leading theologian and Sufi master in the

Hijaz. Third, Kurani's Sunni authority was shaped by his excellence in hadith discourse and his highest chains of transmission, which gained a special interest and connection among the Köprülü vizierate and other Ottoman nobles from the 1660s to the early eighteenth century. Fourth, behind the authority and production of knowledge in seventeenth-century Medina, where Kurani and his close circle produced polemics and controversies, were religious difference and intellectual contestations across imperial borders. Fifth, the integration of the far eastern region of the Islamic world into Medinan intellectual tradition contributed significantly to Kurani's intellectual persona being recognized worldwide in his own time. The first and the second arguments speak about Kurani's engagement with the books he read along with his teachers and the selection of his intellectual transmission from the post-Timurid and post-Mamluk scholarly tradition. The third, fourth, and fifth arguments explicate the textual production and transmission as well as religious authority from different, comparative contexts.

Throughout this dissertation, the history of Ibrahim al-Kurani cannot be separated from the geographies of the lands, texts, and people that were relevant to his life. Although the centrality of narrative revolves around Kurani's life and writings, other 'marginal' narratives are fully considered because they formed crucial connections and transmissions to his life and scholarly career. This methodological choice aims to present the unity and totality of knowledge production and its transmission that happened from the sacred city of the Prophet, Medina, in the early modern period. Therefore, the capitals of the empires can be considered as margins in the cultural history of Kurani's texts and ideas, but the political importance of these cities supported the circulation and transmission of Kurani's books. The second half of the seventeenth century was marked by the rise of the Köprülü vizierate in Constantinople, the rise of Aurangzeb and millenarianism in the Mugal Empire, the prosperity of female authority in the Aceh Empire and the stability of other sultanates in the Malay world, the progress of the Zaydi-Qasimi politics in Greater Yemen, and the political fracture of the Alawite dinasty in the Maghreb—all of major proponents and opponents of Kurani's ideas were closely linked to these imperial polities. These formal and informal networks of Kurani therefore reshaped his global authority. To answer this paradigmatic preference, I consider not only examining the core texts of Kurani's manuscript corpora, but also incorporating marginalia, notes, and other paratextual components embedded within them into the coherence of Kurani's narrative. This dissertation not only contributes to the transregional framework of a particular intellectual tradition, but also supports the unity between

core texts and paratexts. Following the discourse of post-colonial studies, this dissertation aims to allow marginalia, notes, and other paratextual elements to 'speak' in juxtaposition with the voices of the core texts in Kurani's manuscript corpora.[499] I use paratextuality specifically as a theoretical reflection, as paratexts are important "to depict a more vivid picture of the historical role of manuscripts as real objects in the hands of the real people"[500] and, in relation to the main text, have an effect "to *make it present*, to assure its presence in the world."[501] This dissertation presents this approach to merge the core texts and their paratextual elements, and to merge Kurani with both his proponents and opponents, into a coherent unit of analysis.

Chapter One covers the first four sites of intellectual journey, including Kurani's hometown of Shahrizor, Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo. This chapter contextualizes broader cultural and intellectual terrains from which Kurani learned and began to teach in his early formative years. Shahrizor, as the imperial frontier of the Ottoman Empire, allowed Kurani to grow into an expert in the rational sciences that were transmitted and circulated by the route of Persianate intellectual culture in the post-Timurid era. Further journey to Baghdad attracted him to the realm of the Sufis, which he had never encountered before, and prompted him to travel west to study Sufi texts, hadith, and other knowledge with Damascene scholars and later Cairene ones. Kurani's intellectual journey from Shahrizor to Cairo was thus central to the creation of his first intellectual genealogy and anticipated him to explore the Medinan intellectual tradition. Taken together, this chapter offers a clear window into the background of the post-Timurid curriculum in Kurdistan and Kurani's earlier journey that determined his decision to temporarily shift from his philological doubt to mystical immersion.

Chapter Two offers Kurani's further and final intellectual journey to Medina as an effect of his Damascene period, when he delved himself in Sufi philosophical texts. During the 1650s, Kurani developed his advanced career by teaching and writing some of his major projects in different fields under the guidance of Ahmad al-Qushashi. Kurani's intellectual genealogy was significantly multiplied under Qushashi's authority in the rational sciences, the hadith discourse, and the Sufi tradition. During this period, Kurani pursued credentials that merged the two intellectual traditions: post-Timurid and post-Mamluk learned cultures. The first decade of Kurani's

[499] Cf. G. Spivak, "Can Subaltern Speak?"
[500] Giovanni Ciotti and Hang Lin (eds.), *Tracing Manuscripts in Time and Space through Paratexts*, viii.
[501] Gérard Genette and Marie Maclean, "Introduction to the Paratext," 261. Italic is original.

experience in Medina turned into his crucial episode that made him globally connected through the plethora of cultural-intellectual engagements with people across Islamic empires. The existence of the Sufi Academy of Qushashi and the spatial importance of Medina as a sacred city and an important center of learning in the early modern Ottoman time empowered Kurani to elevate his social position as a respected Sunni scholar with multiple excellencies in different fields of Islamic knowledge.

Chapter Three examines the period in which Kurani attained his broad connection to Ottoman elites. From the 1660s onward, Kurani's rise into prominence was distinguished not only by his merits in the rational sciences, but also by his skills in hadith discourse and chains of transmission that formally endorsed him as a respected Sunni scholar. Kurani's formal and informal network to the Ottoman elites, especially the Köprülü family, was clearly bound by hadith discourse, in which he authored several important hadith oeuvres which were presented to the Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, among others. The rise of the Köprülü administration in Constantinople paralleled Kurani's advanced career in Medina; while the Köprülü viziers enacted political reforms and provided cultural and intellectual patronage to many scholars, Kurani's codices and authority were admired by many members and officials of this ruling family until the early eighteenth century, when the Köprülü family formally lost their power. This chapter reveals that Kurani's hadith authority was best situated not only in the contexts of his horizontal networks among scholars and students, but also in the settings of his vertical connection to political elites in Constantinople.

Chapter Four highlights a trans-imperial approach to the extensive connections and contestations that Kurani and his Medinan circle confronted. This chapter argues that knowledge production in Medina in the second half of the seventeenth century was the result of multifaceted forms of religious difference from the Maghreb to India. Closer to Ottoman Arabia, the ideological and political existence of the Zaydi imamate in southern Arabia, in addition to the Safavid Shiʿism, challenged Qushashi and Kurani to argue over the proper method of Sunnism. Moreover, the current millenarian thought and movements across the imperial boundaries forced Kurani and Muhammad b. Rasul al-Barzanji to counter the false claim of Jewish and Islamic millenarianism orchestrated between the Ottoman lands to the Mughal territory. The third and final case is a series of polemics between Kurani and his Medinan circle with scholars throughout the Islamic Mediterranean milieu. By observing his critical philological impulse to examine the classical texts

closely associated with these forms of religious difference, Kurani aimed not only to reconfigure the pristine version of his Sunni inclination, but also to provide intellectually-ideologically based support for the Ottoman sovereignty.

Chapter Five elaborates one of the most ardent supporters of Medinan intellectualism. Many important religious and political elites in the Malay world were graduates of Qushashi's Sufi academy. This chapter explores in more detail the figures and events in the region related to Kurani's textual production in legal, Sufi, and theological genres. The Malay world is a cultural site where Kurani's texts circulated well, translated, and reproduced in a form of lenient and tolerant religious voices that were able to arbitrate a long problem of religious perplexity and politico-intellectual censorship took place in the archipelago. The connection of the Malay world to Medina, as well as Kurani's writings, underpinned his intellectual and Sufi authority and reinforced the very first long-distance republic of letters in the early modern Islamic world. The mutual symbiosis between Kurani and his friends as well as disciples in the Malay world demonstrates that religious authority and intellectual charisma were created through an intimate relationship between a scholar and his (or her) close, yet distant advocates.

All five chapters therefore represent five different cases or locus of engagement in the life and career of Ibrahim al-Kurani. While the first chapter investigates scholarly transformation happened through physical mobility from the imperial frontier to the Ottoman Arab lands, the second chapter contextualizes one locus, Medina, in the advanced intellection and religious devotion of the Kurdish scholar. The third, fourth and final chapters, on the other hand, aim to understand the intellectual milieus of the sacred city from different loci of ties and contentions. In all these cases, this dissertation aims to give a transregional *Sitz im Leben* to the cultural and intellectual depiction of Kurani. Kurani and his Medinan intellectual milieus were the obvious evidence that the process of textual transmissions and transformations in the early modern period was multidirectional, interactive, and creative, as shown in the previous study.[502] The various connections, transmissions, and transformations Kurani created and enforced throughout his own life need to be more fully elaborated in further studies of this crucial Kurdish scholar to better understand the diverse network that formed an Islamic republic of letters. Further interpretation on the centrality of Medina, where the sepulcher of the Prophet is located, which led scholars to valorize the ciry

[502] Wisnovsky et.al., *Vehicles of Transmissions, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture.*

more than Mecca as a place of learning,[503] is required to better comprehend why leading Medinan scholars such as Ibn Farhun (d. 1397), Sakhawi (d. 1497), Samhudi (d. 1506), as well as Qushashi and Kurani in the seventeenth century gained their wide popularity in their respective temporalities. Kurani's account can also be inserted into recent studies on Islamic cosmopolitanism and fluid mobility in the early modern period, in which people, manuscripts or other materiality, and religious sentiments are more connected than before.[504] In addition, the intertextual analysis of Kurani's writings in rational theology, Sufism, and hadith in one and other modes of creative interpretation should be completed to comprehend what I have called in this dissertation as a scholarly fusion between the post-Mamluk and post-Timurid intellectual traditions. From the eighteenth century to the twentieth century, the reception to Kurani's ideas varied according to locations of transmission. Some remembered Kurani as one of the revivers of Ibn Taymiyya's works. Some others associated Kurani with the teachings of Ibn ʿArabi. Others connected to Kurani as an important hadith scholar. Others condemned Kurani because of his 'liberal' tendency to mix between *Akbariyyāt* and *Taymiyyāt*.[505] Others appreciated him as a Sufi authority. The historical reception is more complicated than these receptions. Apart from this modern treatment, further studies on Kurani will always have to rely on manuscripts, especially those written during this scholar's lifetime and in the early eighteenth century. Unlike the writings of other prominent scholars in the same period, the critical editions of Kurani's writings have been much fewer, probably due to the lack of Kurdish sovereignty in the post-nation state period and the different religious development in Saudi Arabia where Kurani's historicity took place.[506] Some editions in Egypt, Turkey, and Indonesia for instance have contributed to revivify the corpora of Kurani's writings in a transregional fashion, so that a broadly full narrative of Kurani's history is only beginning to be realized. This dissertation hopefully fills a particular lacuna to stimulate further curiosity to discover the whole gestalt of his intellectual legacy.

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[503] Cf. Marco Schöller, "Medina"; Patrick Franke, "Educational and Non-Educational Madrasas in Early Modern Mecca"; Qushashi himself authored the secrets and vitues of Medina, *al-Durra al-thamīna fīmā li-zā'ir al-nabī ilā al-Madīna al-munawwara*.

[504] Cf. Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated*; Nir Shafir, *The Road from Damascus*; Mahmood Kooriadathadi, *Cosmopolis of Law*; Cristopher Bahl, *Histories of Circulation*, and some other studies.

[505] See for instance Saud al-Sarhan (ed.), *Rasā'il al-Imām Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī ilā al-ʿAllāma Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Binnūrī*.

[506] In searching of Qushashi and Kurani's Sufi and other texts in the library of the Prophet Mosque, I asked several available manuscripts and one of its librarians unsurprisingly re-asked me, "What for you look for such texts? These are not good."

Appendix 1

List of reported books read by Ibrahim al-Kurani from Ahmad al-Qushashi excerpted from Kurani's *Al-Amam li-īqāẓ al-himam, Ijāzatnāme*, and Ibn ʿUjaymi's *Khabāyā al-zawāyā*:۞

TRANSMITTED SCIENCES		
1. *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*	37. *Mashyakha* of Ibn al-Bukhari	71. Works of Zakariya al-Ansari
2. *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*	38. *Al-Arbaʿūn al-tisāʿiyya* of Ibn Jamaʿa	72. Works of al-Shaʿrani
3. *Sunan Abī Dāwud*	39. *Al-Arbaʿūn al-makkiya min aḥādīth al-fuqahāʾ al-ḥanafiyya*	73. *Ḥāshiya ʿalā al-jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr*
4. *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*	40. *Maʿālim al-tanzīl* of al-Baghawi	74. *Sharḥ al-minhāj* of Sarbini and all his works
5. *Sunan al-Nasāʾī*	41. *Al-Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* of Tabrizi	75. *Sharḥ al-minhāj* of al-Ramli
6. *Sunan Ibn Mājah*	42. *Al-Mashāriq* of Saghani	76. *Works of* Ahmad b. Qasim al-ʿIbadi
7. *Al-Muwaṭṭaʾ* (with the riwāya of al-Shaybani, d. 805)	43. *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-taʾwīl*	77. *Al-Tanqīḥ wa-l-tawḍīḥ* and all works of ʿUbayd Allah al-Bukhari
8. *Musnad al-imām al-Shāfiʿī*	44. Works of Ahmad al-Khatib al-Baghdadi	78. *Al-Hidāya fī sharḥ bidāyat al-mubtadī* of al-Marghinani
9. *Al-Risāla*	45. *Mukhtaṣar Ibn Yaḥyā al-Muzanī*	79. *Al-Nihāya sharḥ al-hidāya & al-Tasdīd sharḥ al-tamhīd* of Husam al-Dim al-Saghnaqi
10. *Iʿtiqād al-Shāfiʿī* by ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi (d. 1203)	46. Works of ʿAbd al-Wahid al-Ruʾyani	80. *Al-Ghāya sharḥ al-hidāya* of Ahmad al-Suruji al-Misri
11. *Al-Īmān* of Ibn Abi Shayba	47. Works of al-Mawardi	81. *Al-Nihāya ʿalā al-hidāya* of ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Qurshi and all works including *al-ʿInāya fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-hidāya*
12. *Musnad Ibn Ḥanbal*	48. *Al-Tanbīh* of Abu Ishaq al-Shirazi	82. *Takhrīj aḥādīth al-hidāya*
13. *Musnad al-Dārimī* (in 1661)	49. Works of Abu al-Qasim al-Rafiʿi	83. *Al-Kifāya fī mukhtaṣar al-hidāya wa takhrīj aḥādithihā wa-l-khulāṣa*
14. *Musnad Abī Dāwud*	50. *Al-Ḥāwī* of al-Qazwini	84. Works of Jamal al-Din al-Hisri including two commentaries of
15. *Musnad ʿAbd b. Ḥamīd*	51. Works of ʿIzz al-Din ʿAbd al-Salam	
16. *Musnad al-Bazzār/Baḥr al-zakhār*	52. Works of Zaki al-Din al-Mundhari	
17. *Al-Muʿjam al-kabīr* of Tabrani	53. Works of al-Nawawi	
18. *Al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*	54. *Al-Bahja* of Ibn al-Wardi	
19. *Al-Muʿjam al-ṣaghīr*		
20. *Musnad Abī Yaʿlā*		
21. *Musnad Abī Bakr al-Shaybānī*		
22. *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*		
23. *Sunan al-Dāruquṭnī*		
24. Al-Hakim al-Nishapuri's *al-Mustadrak*		

۞ This category is not thoroughly fixed as the information embedded in the word "works of" (*taṣānīf)* implies possibly different subjects from scholars who have been remembered mostly from their primary concerns.

25. *Musnad Abī Ḥanīfa* and all *masānīd*
26. *Musnad al-Qaḍāʿī*
27. *Musnad al-firdaws*
28. *Kitāb al-amwāl* of Ibn Sallam
29. *Kitāb al-sunna* of al-Tabari al-Lalikaʾi
30. *Musnad al-Ḥārith al-Tamīmī*
31. *Al-Sunan* of Saʿid al-Khurasani
32. *Kitāb al-arbaʿīn min akhbār sayyid al-mursalīn*
33. *Al-Arbaʿīn* of Abu Mansur al-Isbahani
34. Part of hadith Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Faraj al-Azraq
35. *Al-Arbaʿīn* of Abu Bakr al-Shaybani
36. *Al-Dhurriyya al-ṭāhira* of al-Dulabi

55. Works of Taqi al-Din al-Subki
56. Works of Taj al-Din al-Subki
57. Works of Jamal al-Din al-Asnawi
58. Works of al-Zarkashi
59. Works of Ibn al-Mulaqqin
60. *Al-Tadrīb* of al-Balqini
61. *Alfiyya* of Zayn al-Din al-ʿIraqi and all his works
62. Works of Ibn al-ʿImad
63. Works of al-Damiri
64. Works of al-Yafiʿi
65. Works of Ibn Daqiq
66. Works of al-Dhahabi
67. Works of Jalal al-Mahalli
68. Works of Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani
69. Works of al-Sakhawi
70. Works of al-Suyuti

al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr namely *al-Taḥrīr* and *Khayr maṭlūb*
85. Works of Qadikhan (Hanafi)
86. Works of ʿAbd Allah al-Nasafi (fiqh and usul)
87. *Kashf al-asrār wa-l-ḥaqāʾiq fī sharḥ kahz al-daqāʾiq* of al-Kirmani
88. Works of Bahaʾ al-Din al-Makki (d. 1450) such as *al-Manbaʿ fī sharḥ al-majmaʿ* and *al-Baḥr al-ʿamīq fī-l-ḥajj ilā bayt al-ʿatīq*
89. Works of Ibn Saʿati al-Baghdadi
90. Legal works of Shams al-Din al-Qunawi

RATIONAL SCIENCES

1. Bukhari's *Khalq Afʿāl al-ʿibād*
2. Bayhaqi's *al-Asmāʾ wa-l-ṣifāt* and his other books
3. *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* of Ibn Khuzayma
4. *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* of Ibn Minda
5. *Mishkāt al-anwār* (*musalsal bi-l-ṣūfiyya*)
6. Theological works of Burhan al-Din al-Nasafi (d. 1288)
7. Works of Ahmad b Muhammad al-Bukhari
8. Works of Najm al-Din al-Nasafi (d. 1142)
9. *Uṣūl fakhr al-Islām* of al-Bazdawi

22. *Al-Bayān wa-l-taḥṣīl* of Abu al-Walid ibn Rushd, grandfather
23. *Mukhtaṣar Ibn al-Hajib al-Farʿī* and all his works
24. *Works of Ahmad al-Qarafi*
25. *Mukhtaṣar Khalīl b Iṣḥāw* and all his works
26. *Masʿalat al-īmān li-l-imām Abī Ḥasan* (from the descendant of Prophet Ismail b Ibrahim)
27. *Taftazani's works*
28. Jurjani's works and its Naqshbandi silsila
29. Dawani's works
30. Jami's works and its Naqshbandi silsila

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Abu Nuʿaim al-Isbahani's *al-Ḥilya al-awliyāʾ*
2. *Kitāb al-tawakkul*
3. *Muḥāsabat al-nafs*
4. *Kitāb al-yaqīn*
5. *Qaṣr al-amal*
6. *Kitāb al-duʿāʾ*
7. *Kitāb al-shukr*
8. *Kitāb al-qanāʿa*
9. *Tārīkh Dimashq* of Ibn ʿAsakir
10. *Al-faraj baʿd al-shidda*
11. *Dhamm al-malāhī*
12. *Kitāb ʿamal al-yawm wa-l-layl* of Ibn Sunni
13. Works of al-Shinnawi

10. Works of Ahmad al-Quduri al-Baghdadi 11. Works of al-Baghdadi al-Mawsili 12. Works of Akmal al-Din al-Babarti al-Rumi 13. *ʿAqīda Ṭahāwiyya* 14. Works of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi 15. Works of Badr al-Din al-ʿAyni 16. Works of Ibn al-Hamam al-Hanafi 17. Works of Zayn and ʿUmar Ibn Najim 18. Al-*Tahdhīb* of al-Baradahi 19. *Al-Risāla* of Ibn Abi Zayd 20. *Al-Talqīn* of ʿAbd al-Wahhab b. ʿAli 21. Works of ʿAli Qushji	31. Isam al-Din Isfarayini's works 32. Fakhr al-Din Razi's works 33. Qazwini's *Talkhīṣ al-miftāḥ wa-l-īḍāḥ* 34. Qutb al-Din Tahtani's works 35. Works of Iji 36. Kirmani's works 37. Imam Juwayni's works 38. Ghazali's works including *al-Maḍnūn* 39. *Manāzil al-sā'irīn* of Abdallah al-Harwi with Sufi silsila 40. Suhrawardi's *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* 41. *Works of Qunawi* 42. Fanari's Misbah al-uns bayn al-masʿqūl wa-l-mashhūd *43.* Works of Ibn ʿArabi and its sufi silsila	

Abstract

This dissertation examines the production and transformation of knowledge in early modern Ottoman Arabia. It proposes a new historical narrative of seventeenth-century Medina by closely perusing the biography and works of Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1690), the most prominent Kurdish theologian, Sufi, and hadith scholar during the eleventh Islamic century, or the seventeenth century, situating this figure within broader cultural, intellectual, and political milieus in the global configuration of Islamic thought in the early modern period. This dissertation investigates particular routes of knowledge transmissions that took place in the post-Timurid and post-Mamluk intellectual spheres, which became the multifaceted settings of the Ottoman scholarly tradition. It argues that Kurani's pursuit of multiple genealogies from both intellectual traditions enabled him to balance between the rational and traditional sciences, which strengthened his authority in Medina where the production, circulation, transmission, and transformation of his writings occurred through trans-imperial and transregional connections.

To examine this phenomenon, this dissertation uses a corpus of manuscripts produced and written in Arabian, Maghrebi, Indian, Ottoman, and Southeast Asian cultural contexts. It reveals the sites of connection and contestation in order to explore how Kurani's scholarly and religious authority was formed, circulated, and contested through the views of his proponents and opponents in different geographical locations. This study demonstrates that Medinan intellectual culture in the seventeenth century was shaped by the confluence among various streams of knowledge that underpinned Ibrahim al-Kurani's intellectual persona among Muslim elites and scholars throughout the Islamic empires. It also emphasizes the importance of textual production and transmission in comparative and transregional settings, explains the inevitability of engaging with unexplored and understudied sources from multiple cultural ecologies, and explicates an ideal case of extensive networks in the Islamicate Republic of Letters in the early modern time.

Zusammenfassung der Dissertation

Diese Dissertation untersucht die Produktion und Transformation von Wissen im frühen modernen osmanischen Arabien. Durch die detaillierte Analyse der Biographie und der Werke von Ibrahim al-Kurani (gest. 1690), dem prominentesten kurdischen Theologen, Sufi und hadith-Gelehrten des 11. islamischen Jahrhunderts, oder 17. Jahrhunderts n. Chr., präsentiert die Dissertation ein neues historisches Narrativ von Medina im 17. Jahrhundert. Dabei wird die hier im Zentrum der Analyse stehende Person innerhalb der breiteren kulturellen, intellektuellen und politischen Millieus der globalen Konfiguration des islamischen Denkens in der Frühen Neuzeit kontextualisiert. Es geht darum, die Wege der Wissensvermittlung in den post-timurischen und post-mamlukischen intellektuellen Sphären, die sich zu facettenreichen Rahmenbedingungen der osmanischen wissenschaftlichen Tradition manifestierten, aufzuspüren und nachzuzeichnen. Die Arbeit argumentiert, dass al-Kurani durch seine Auseinandersetzung mit den multiplen Genealogien beider intellektueller Traditionen dazu befähigt wurde, zwischen rationalen und traditionellen Wissenschaften zu tarieren. Dies führte zu der Stärkung seiner Autorität in Medina, wo die Produktion, Zirkulation, Transmission und Transformation seiner Schriften durch transimperiale und transregionale Verbindungen zustande kam.

Um dieses Phänomen eingehend untersuchen zu können, stützt sich die Dissertation auf Manuskripte, die in arabischen, maghrebinischen, indischen, osmanischen und südostasiatischen kulturellen Kontexten verfasst wurden. Dadurch werden Orte der Verbindung sowie Orte konfrontativer Auseinandersetzungen offengelegt, die davon Zeugnis ablegen, wie al-Kuranis wissenschaftliche und religiöse Autorität durch die Perspektiven seiner Befürworter und Gegner geformt, zirkuliert und angefochten wurde. Die Untersuchung zeigt, dass die medinensische intellektuelle Kultur des 17. Jahrhunderts durch das Zusammenfließen verschiedener Wissensströme geformt wurde, was die Position des Intellektuellen Ibrahim al-Kurani innerhalb der Kreise der muslimischen Elite und Wissenschaftler während der islamischen Imperien stützte. Darüber hinaus betont die Dissertation die Bedeutung von Textproduktion und Texttransmission in vergleichender Perspektive und an transregionalen Schauplätzen, erläutert die Zentralität der Erforschung unbeachteter Quellen, die aus multiplen kulturellen Kontexten stammen, und präsentiert ein Idealbeispiel extensiver Netzwerke der sogenannten „Islamicate Republic of Letters“ in der Frühen Neuzeit.

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musalsala bi-Aḥmad; *Masālik al-abrār ilā aḥādīth al-nabī al-mukhtār wasammaynāhu awwa-lan Itḥāf rafīʿ al-himma bi-waṣl aḥādīth shafīʿ al-umma*)

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