



BRILL

Sufis, Renunciants, and Worshippers in *Tārīkh Baghdād*

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Abstract

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. Baghdad, 463/1071) adhered to the Shāfiʿi school of law and suffered for his adherence to the Ashʿari school of theology. As a littérateur, he collected amusing stories of misers and spongers. However, his principal importance lies in the fields of hadith and biography. As for hadith, he was a major systematizer; in biography, he left what is usually referred to as *Tārīkh Baghdād*, a hugely useful dictionary of over 7,000 persons who lived or at least passed through Baghdad. I propose to review those identified as renunciants (*zuhhād*, *nussāk*), worshippers (*ʿubbād*), and Sufis, or at least are associated with famous renunciants, worshippers, and Sufis. A useful list of them was abstracted by Balsam Baṣrī ʿIzzat (2004) from the new edition of Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf (also 2004), his supervisor, although I would add or subtract some names. It is useful to have them profiled by someone outside the Sufi tradition himself; e.g., so that we read of al-Qushayrī as an Ashʿari, not a Sufi. Al-Khaṭīb also to some extent documents the continuation of the old renunciant tradition into the Sufi period. However, classical Sufism originated in and spread from Baghdad, and al-Khaṭīb's heavy dependence on earlier biographers testifies partly to how thoroughly that tradition took over the literature of otherworldly piety.

Keywords

al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī – Sufism – *awliyāʾ* – *abdāl* – miracles

The caliph al-Qādir (r. 381–422/974–1031) commissioned and promulgated a traditionalist Sunni creed, whose text we have from a report of when it was publicly proclaimed a second time in 433/1041–2.¹ Ibn al-Jawzī recounts the latter episode thus:

There attended the renunciants and scholars. Among those who attended was the shaykh Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Qazwīnī. He signed a declaration (*kataba khiṭṭatan*) at the bottom of it before the jurists. The jurists wrote their declarations on it, that this is the creed of the Muslims and that anyone who disagrees with it is a reprobate and an unbeliever.²

This first signer is not well known to modern scholarship. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī tells us Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Muḥammad, known as Ibn al-Qazwīnī (d. 442/1050), was among the notable renunciants and righteous servants of God (*al-zuhhād al-madhkūrīn wa-‘ibād Allāh al-ṣāliḥīn*). He told al-Khaṭīb he was born on Sunday, 3 Muḥarram 360/6 November 970. He would not leave his house save for the ritual prayer. He spent his time reciting the Qur’an and relating hadith. On his death, he was buried in his house in the Ḥarbiyya district. “I attended the prayer over him,” says al-Khaṭīb. “There were very many gathered, too many to number. I never saw a larger gathering for a funeral. The whole city was closed down that day.”³ A main reason I was drawn to surveying renunciants and Sufis in *Tārīkh Baghdād* was to see what additional light it would shed on the persistence of renunciants such as Ibn al-Qazwīnī, the blessing of whose signature on the Qādiri creed was sought before anyone else had signed.

1 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī

Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Thābit, known as al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071), adhered to the Shāfi‘ī school of law and wrote books on both *furū‘* and *uṣūl*.⁴

- 1 See George Makdisi, *Ibn ‘Aqīl et la résurgence de l’Islam traditionaliste au XI^e siècle (v^e siècle de l’Hégire)* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1963), 303–8.
- 2 Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā and Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā, with Na‘īm Zarzūr, 18 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1412/1992), 15:279.
- 3 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, ed. Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma‘rūf, 17 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1422/2001), 13:498. Henceforth, most references to this book will be in parentheses in the text.
- 4 See *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., s.v. “al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī,” by R. Sellheim; Brockelmann, *GAL* 1²:400–1, S 1:562–4; ‘Umar Riḍā Kaḥḥāla, *Mu‘jam al-mu‘allifīn*, 15 vols (Damascus:

For a time, he suffered exile for his adherence to the Ash'ari school of theology. As a *littérateur*, he collected amusing stories of misers and spongers. However, his principal importance lies in the fields of hadith and biography. As for hadith, he was a major systematizer, two of his synthetic surveys being the most important expositions of hadith science before that of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī (d. 643/1245).⁵ In biography, he left what is usually referred to as *Tārīkh Baghdād*, a hugely useful dictionary of over 7,000 persons who lived or at least passed through Baghdad. Its introduction has been a crucial resource for reconstructing the geography of Baghdad itself, as has its biographical section to historians of the 'Abbāsids, their ministers, objects of their patronage, and others. Its stress is clearly on hadith transmission, but what I wish to do here is to develop what it tells us about renunciants like Ibn al-Qazwīnī.

Al-Khaṭīb's biographies of 246 renunciants and Sufis have been excerpted and arranged alphabetically by Balsam Baṣrī 'Izzat.⁶ I first made my own chronological list in the 1990s, to which I have added a few names from 'Izzat. Unsurprisingly, I would also include some three dozen names that 'Izzat does not; for example, Muḥammad b. Muṣ'ab al-Da'ā' (d. 228/843), said to be among the *'ubbād* ("worshippers"), also *mujāb al-da'wa* ("answered of prayer"), and Muḥammad b. 'Ubayd Allāh al-Ḥajjāj (d. 412/1021–2), a *zāhid* ("renunciant") who told a neighbour that no woman's hand had ever touched his save his mother's (3:583–4, 4:451–3). 'Izzat seems somewhat capricious as to including or not the many included by al-Khaṭīb who related *ḥikāyāt* ("stories") of the famous renunciant Bishr al-Ḥāfi (d. 227/841); e.g., Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Marwazī is included but not Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Za'farānī.⁷

Akrām Ḍiyā' al-'Umārī, in his useful survey of the sources of *Tārīkh Baghdād*, observes that al-Khaṭīb himself made a separate compilation of renunciant sayings, of which an abridgement is extant (also noted by Brockelmann) and

al-Maktaba al-'Arabiyya, 1376–81/1957–61), 2:3–4, 13:364; also al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, ed. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām Tadmuri, 52 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1407–21/1987–2000), 31 (461–470 H.): 85–113, with further references. Major modern studies in Arabic are Yūsuf al-'Ishsh, *al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī* (Damascus: al-Taraqī, 1364/1945), Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umārī, *Mawārid al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī fī Tārīkh Baghdād* (n.p.: Maktabat Muḥammad Ḥāshim al-Kutubī, 1395/1975, repr. Riyadh: Dār Ṭayba, 1405/1985), and Ma'rūf's introduction to his edition, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Madīnat al-Salām* 1:11–290.

5 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *K. al-Kifāya fī 'ilm al-riwāya* (Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1357); idem, *al-Jāmi' fī akhlāq al-rāwī wa-ādāb al-sāmi'*, ed. Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān, 2 vols (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1403/1983); Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī, *An Introduction to the Science of the ḥadīth: Kitāb Ma'rifat anwā' 'ilm al-ḥadīth*, trans. Eerik Dickinson, rev'd Muneer Fareed, Great Books of Islamic Civilisation (Reading: Garnet, 2005).

6 Balsam Baṣrī 'Izzat, *Akhbār al-ṣūfiyya wa-l-zuhād min Tārīkh Baghdād*, sup'd Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2004).

7 Khaṭīb, *Tārīkh* 4:599, 5:403, 'Izzat, *Akhbār*, 58.

now published.⁸ Because it is an abridgement, its emphases can regrettably tell us little about al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's peculiar interests. Of 45 immediate sources in the extant compilation, just five does al-Khaṭīb remark in the *Tārīkh* for their piety, mostly as *ṣāliḥ* ("righteous"). Evidently, traditionists could take a strong interest in renunciants without being remarkable for it themselves, like al-Khaṭīb himself.

Al-'Umarī also enumerates al-Khaṭīb's leading sources in the *Tārīkh* for renunciants and Sufis.⁹ The list is a little confusing because of overlaps; e.g., al-Qushayrī quoting al-Sulamī in turn. The one most cited is the Persian traditionist Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī (d. 430/1038), source of 589 items, mostly also found in his monumental *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*.¹⁰ However, al-Khaṭīb never names the *Ḥilya*. The next most cited is the Khurasani Sufi Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), source of 259 items, whose *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya* has been crucial to modern scholarship on early Sufism.¹¹ A number of other shorter works by al-Sulamī are also extant and have been published, but the one from which al-Khaṭīb continually quotes is his great biographical dictionary *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya*, mostly lost except in quotation.¹² From comparison of quotations in

8 'Umarī, *Mawārid*, 81; *GAL S* 1:564; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Muntakhab min K. al-Zuhd wa-l-raqā'iq*, ed. 'Amir Ḥasan Ṣabrī. *Silsilat al-ajzā' wa-l-kutub al-ḥadīthiyya* 10 (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyya, 1420/2000). Ibn Ḥajar mentions having a *K. al-Zuhd* by al-Khaṭīb by two chains of transmitters: Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Mu'jam al-mufahras*, ed. Muḥammad Shakkūr Maḥmūd al-Ḥajjī Amīr al-Mayādīnī (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1418/1998), 90.

9 'Umarī, *Mawārid*, 184–99.

10 E.g., Khaṭīb, *Tārīkh* 15:111–12, quoting Abū Nu'aym's notice that Maḥmūd (Muḥammad) b. al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī (d. Tarsus, 284/897–8) was among the *abdāl*, for which see likewise Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣbahānī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā' wa-ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyā'*, 10 vols (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sa'āda and Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1352–7/1932–8), 10:401. On Abū Nu'aym, see Christopher Melchert, "Abū Nu'aym's Sources for *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*, Sufi and Traditionist," in *Les maîtres soufis et leurs disciples*, ed. Geneviève Gobillot and Jean-Jacques Thibon, *Études arabes, médiévales et modernes* (PIFD 273) (Beirut: Presses de l'IFPO, 2012), 145–60.

11 On al-Sulamī, see Jean-Jacques Thibon, *L'œuvre d'Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (325/937–412/1021) et la formation du soufisme* (Damascus: Institut Français du Proche Orient, 2009), and S.Z. Chowdhury *A Ṣūfī Apologist of Nishāpūr: The Life and Thought of Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī*, *Monographs in Arabic and Islamic Studies* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2019).

12 'Umarī, *Mawārid*, 186; Johannes Pedersen, introduction to al-Sulamī, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. Pedersen (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960), 50–60. The evident exception is *Dhikr al-niswa al-muta'abbidāt al-ṣūfiyyāt*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1413/1993), also published as *Early Sufi Women: Dhikr an-niswa al-muta'abbidāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyyāt*, ed. and trans. Rkia Elaroui Cornell (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 1999). For an argument that this text, discovered in the early 1990s, is the section on women at the end of *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya*, see Christopher Melchert, "Before *ṣūfiyyāt*: Female Muslim

Tārīkh Baghdād and *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, al-ʿUmarī infers that al-Sulamī wrote the *Tārīkh* first.¹³ Al-Khaṭīb sometimes mentions *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya*.¹⁴ He also mentions one other title by al-Sulamī, *al-Ikhwa wa-l-akhawāt min al-ṣūfiyya* (7:609).

The earliest Sufi biographers were Jaʿfar al-Khuldī (d. 348/959) and Abū Saʿīd b. al-Aʿrābī (d. 340/952?).¹⁵ Jaʿfar al-Khuldī is al-Khaṭīb’s source for 100 items, some through Abū Nuʿaym.¹⁶ Two less well-known names pointed out by al-ʿUmarī are ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan b. Jahḍam (d. 414/1023–4), active in Mecca, author of *Bahjat al-asrār*, source of 74 items, and another Isfahani, Maʿmar b. Aḥmad (d. 418/1027–8), author of a work *Ṭabaqāt al-nussāk*, source of 14 items cited indirectly.¹⁷ The famous Khurasani Sufi al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) is cited 29 times, sometimes relating material from al-Sulamī.¹⁸

Occasionally, *Tārīkh Baghdād* offers fuller information than earlier extant sources. In *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, for example, al-Sulamī states simply that Abū Muḥammad al-Jarīrī died in 311/923–4.¹⁹ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī first mentions a report that he died in 304/916–17, then through al-Sulamī, “Al-Jarīrī died in the year of the Battle of al-Habīr. The camels trampled him at the time of the battle.” Through the same, then, we are told, “The Battle of al-Habīr was in the year 311” (6:119). Actually the battle, when the Qarāmiṭa attacked the returning pilgrims outside Mecca, took place on 18 Muḥarram 312/26 April 924.²⁰ But the detail of his being trampled, evidently from *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya*, is missing

Renunciants in the 8th and 9th Centuries CE,” *Journal of Sufi Studies* 5 (2016): 115–39, at 118. Thibon discusses *Dhikr al-niswa* at *Œuvre*, 330–9, a review well worth reading but taking no position as to whether it is part of *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya* or a separate work.

13 ʿUmarī, *Mawārid*, 187.

14 Khaṭīb, *Tārīkh* 3:247, 280, 482, 604, 4:286, 5:330, 470, 7:13, 112, 137, 6:8, 424, 13:482, 545, 14:339.

15 On them see provisionally Jeremy Farrell, “Early ‘Traditionist Sufis’: A Network Analysis,” in *Modern Hadith Studies*, ed. Belal Abu-Alabbas, Michael Dann, and Christopher Melchert (Edinburgh: University Press, 2020), 70–96, at 73–4.

16 ʿUmarī, *Mawārid*, 193, 196–7.

17 ʿUmarī, *Mawārid*, 187–8.

18 ʿUmarī, *Mawārid*, 195–6.

19 Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 253–9. A number of modern scholars have interpreted Abū Muḥammad’s name as “al-Jurayrī,” but I follow Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Qaysī, *Tawḍīḥ al-Mushtabih*, ed. Muḥammad Nuʿaym al-ʿIrqasūsī, 10 vols (Beirut: Muʿassasat al-Risāla, 1414/1993), 2:281, and Ibn Ḥajar, *Tabṣīr al-muntabih bi-taḥrīr* al-Mushtabih, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī, sup’d Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Najjār, Turāthunā, 4 vols (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyya lil-Taʿlif wa-l-Tarjama, 1964?–7, repr. Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿIlmiyya, n.d.), 1:320.

20 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam* 13:239.

from other early extant Sufi biographies.²¹ Admittedly, it is found in other sources drawing on *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya*.²² Perhaps a more consequential example is al-Junayd's dissociating himself from 'Amr al-Makkī (d. 297/909–10?) on account of his seeking the judgeship of Jedda, refusing to return his salute and to pray at his funeral (or, alternatively, being refused the dignity of leading the prayer at his funeral on account of dissociating himself from him in life).²³

2 Terminology

The most common terms that al-Khaṭīb uses are *zāhid* (pl. *zuhhād*) and *ṣūfī*. The former means “unconcerned”, technically “unconcerned with the world”, meaning “renunciant”.²⁴ *Zuhhād* and Sufis are likely to be equally otherworldly, but communion with God is normally the peculiar object of Sufi activity, whereas *zuhhād* are more likely to be characterized above all by fear of God. Ṣadaqa b. Ibrāhīm al-Maqābirī (*fl.* later 2nd/8th cent.) is the earliest figure al-Khaṭīb associates with *zuhd* (10:452–3). Presumably his *nisba* refers to a habit of frequenting cemeteries, similarly to the later Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb al-Maqābirī (d. 234/848), who would cry out over his sins in the cemetery (16:278).²⁵ Salm

21 E.g., al-Qushayrī, *Qushayrī's Epistle on Sufism = al-Risala al-qushayriyya fi 'ilm al-tasawwuf*, trans. Alexander D. Knysh, rev'd Muhammad Eissa, Great Books of Islamic Civilisation (Reading: Garnet, 2007), 55; al-Sirjānī, *Sufism, Black and White: A Critical Edition of Kitāb al-Bayāḍ wa-l-sawād*, ed. Bilal Orfali and Nada Saab, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 252.

22 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī, who mentions the Qarāmiṭa and the years 312 and 314: *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Sarvar Mavlā'ī, 2 vols. (n.p.: Tūs, 1342), 2:354. Al-Dhahabī mentions the trampling and remarks that the Battle of al-Habir took place early in Muḥarram 212: *Tārīkh al-islām* 23 (301–320 H.): 404, and *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūt, et al., 25 vols (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1401–9/1981–8), 14:467.

23 Khaṭīb *Tārīkh* 14:138–9 (two reports through al-Sulamī, also one of more general censure for worldliness through Ja'far al-Khuldī). Admittedly, although generally giving much less detail, al-Dhahabī adds that al-Junayd would not visit him in his death illness: *Tārīkh* 22:216.

24 See Christopher Melchert, *Before Sufism: Early Islamic Renunciant Piety*, Islam – Thought, Culture, and Society 4 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2020), 10–12.

25 At the end of his entry, al-Ḥusayn b. Fahm is quoted as saying that Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb lived in 'Askar al-Mahdī and advocated the *sunna* against the position of Jahm (i.e., he held that the Qur'an was increate). Comparison with a passage in Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, reveals some textual confusion, for there almost the same information about Yaḥyā is attached to an Abū I-Qāsim, husband to the daughter of Abū Muslim. Someone has either mistakenly run together Yaḥyā and Abū I-Qāsim or mistakenly distinguished between them. Moreover, the report in *Tārīkh Baghdād* either should have been ultimately attributed to Ibn Sa'd or represents an interpolation by Ibn Fahm into Ibn Sa'd's

b. Sālim (d. Mecca, 194/810) was a Murjī' renowned for *'ibāda* ("worship") and *zuhd* who had no bed for 40 years and did not raise his head to heaven for more than 40 years (10:203). Al-Qāsim al-Ḥarbī (*fl.* early 3rd/9th cent.), among the *zuhhād*, slept with a brick under his head and for thirty years never asked his neighbours for anything (14:419).

As for the *ṣūfiyya*, the history we get from the extant Arabic biographical sources is of a predominant renunciant piety carried over from the conquest period into the eighth century and increasing suspicion of austerity as creating unnecessary burdens for the Muslims from late in that century. Even more controversial was the development of a mystical outlook from the mid-ninth century, with the classical Sufism of al-Junayd (d. 298/911?) centred on mystical apprehension of divinity but sufficiently respectful of the legal tradition to avoid persecution.²⁶ Jacqueline Chabbi established some time ago on the basis especially of al-Ḥākim al-Naysabūrī the biographer (d. 405/1014) and al-Maqdisī the geographer (*fl.* 375/985) that Sufism by that name, meaning the Junaydi synthesis, was introduced to Nishapur by Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. after 320/932). Only over time did it merge with the local pious tradition of Malāmatism.²⁷

text. Cf. Khaṭīb, *Tārīkh* 16:279, and Ibn Sa'd, *Biographien*, ed. Eduard Sachau, et al., 9 vols in 15 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1904–40), 7/2:94 = *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 9 vols (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1957–68), 7:357.

26 Recent surveys include Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period*, The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys (Edinburgh: University Press, 2007), Christopher Melchert, "Origins and Early Sufism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Sufism*, ed. Lloyd Ridgeon, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: University Press, 2015), 3–23, and Alexander Knysh, *Sufism: A New History of Islamic Mysticism* (Princeton: University Press, 2017).

27 Jacqueline Chabbi, "Remarques sur le développement historique des mouvements ascétiques et mystiques au Khurasan, 111^e/1x^e siècle-iv^e/x^e siècle," *Studia Islamica* 46 (1977): 5–72, esp. 26–45. Chabbi more fully discusses the tendentiousness of early Sufi historiography (especially al-Kalābādhi, but also al-Sarrāj, al-Sulamī, al-Qushayrī, and Hujviri) in "Réflexions sur le soufisme iranien primitif," *Journal Asiatique* 266 (1978): 37–55. Sara Sviri independently came to similar conclusions in "Ḥākim Tirmidhi and the Malāmatī Movement in Early Sufism," in *Classical Persian Sufism*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 1993), 583–613. For al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, Chabbi depended on the extant Persian abridgement, al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Tārīkh-i Naysābūr*, abr. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Khalifa-yi Nishābūrī, ed. Muḥammad Riḍā Shafī'ī Kadkanī (n.p.: Āgāh, 1375 sh.), for al-Maqdisī naturally *Descriptio imperii moslemici*, ed. M.J. De Goeje, *Bibliotheca geographorum Arabicorum* 3, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1906). De Goeje's edition made popular the form "Muqaddasī," but there is no support for it in Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn, *Tawāṭih* 8:243, or Ibn Ḥajar, *Tabṣīr* 4:1384. See also *GAL S* 1:410n.

Al-Sulamī himself is ambiguous. He is happy to distinguish the Malāmātiyya from the Sufis in some of his works, notably *Risālat al-Malāmātiyya*.²⁸ On the other hand, he apparently said of Abū Ḥafṣ al-Naysābūrī (d. 265/878–9?), “Abū Ḥafṣ was a smith. He was the first to manifest Sufism in Nishapur.”²⁹ On this reading, Sufism has a timeless character – unsurprising as coming from al-Sulamī but al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī significantly accepts it, identifying Abū Ḥafṣ at the start of his biography as *al-ṣūfī* (14:133). By contrast, al-Faṭḥ b. Saʿīd al-Mawṣilī (d. 220/835?), who came to Baghdad to visit Bishr al-Ḥāfī, is described as a shaykh wearing a *jubba* of wool, on his head a *miṣṣar* of wool, and carrying a staff (14:359), also as having *thāʾir* hair (i.e., dishevelled), an ‘*abā*’ (cloak) wrapped around him (14:360). He would not pray that someone clothe his naked daughter but rather that God should see her nakedness and his patience (14:361). He was evidently mentioned by al-Sulamī (14:361), but association with wool was not enough for al-Khaṭīb to call him a Sufi.

It will not contribute much to the history of Sufism, then, to see whom al-Khaṭīb calls a Sufi, whom not. Without a doubt, the term itself first appeared long before it was connected with mysticism.³⁰ Examples in *Tārīkh Baghdād* presumably include ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Affān *al-ṣūfī* (d. 2308/845–55), a disreputable traditionist of whose piety nothing is said (11:547–8), and Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār *al-ṣūfī* (fl. early 3rd/9th cent.), a traditionist of Mopsuestia (6:625). On the other hand, he says of Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb b. al-Farajī *al-ṣūfī* (d. after 270/883–4), “He was disciple of Sufis like Ibn Abī Turāb al-Nakhshabī [*sic*] and Dhū l-Nūn” (4:612). It is very unlikely that either of them was referred to as a Sufi in his lifetime. Al-Khaṭīb may have been quoting Ibn al-Aʿrābī at this point, which is to say that he was content to accept retrospective identifications from within the Sufi tradition. He does report of al-Ḥallāj (d. 309/922) that some affirm while others deny that he should be counted among the Sufis (8:689). Of al-Qushayrī, he interestingly says that he knew *uṣūl* according to the doctrine of al-Ashʿarī, *furūʿ* according to that of al-Shāfiʿī, but says nothing of his Sufism (12:366).

28 Abū l-‘Alā’ ‘Afīfī, *al-Malāmātiyya wa-l-ṣūfīyya wa-ahl al-futuwwa*, Muʿallafāt al-Jamʿiyya al-Falsafiyya al-Miṣriyya 5 (n.p.: ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1364/1945), edition at 80–120.

29 Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* 20 (261–280 H.): 143–4; idem, *Sīyar* 12:511.

30 On its earliest appearance in the mid-eighth century, see Reynold A. Nicholson, “An Historical Enquiry Concerning the Origin and Development of Sufism,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 38 (1906): 303–48, esp. 305, also Louis Massignon, *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism*, trans. Benjamin Clark (Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ. Press, 1997), 104–7. On the significance of wool and the transition from preclassical to classical Sufism, see Christopher Melchert, “Baṣran Origins of Classical Sufism,” *Der Islam* 82 (2005): 221–40.

Tension between Sufis and jurists occasionally comes out in stories such as the one of Abū Ya‘qūb al-Sharīfī *al-ṣūfī* (d. 273/886–7), who barged into the circle of Dāwūd al-Zāhirī (d. 270/884) wearing two *khirqas* (ragged woolen garments), sitting down next to the master without anyone’s making way for him. Dāwūd angrily asked him what he wished to ask. Abū Ya‘qūb asked him rather to ask him about something. He asked about cupping, whereupon Abū Ya‘qūb took to relating sound hadith, middling hadith, and weak hadith on the topic, then what medical people said about it. At last he said, “Cupping first came out in Isfahan” (Dāwūd’s ancestral city). Dāwūd said, “Let me never be contemptuous of anyone after you” (16:588–9). Al-Sulamī is quoted, presumably from the *Tārīkh*, as saying that Abū Ya‘qūb was Basran and a disciple to Abū Turāb al-Nakhshabī (d. 245/859–60), hence not part of al-Junayd’s circle (589).

Al-Khaṭīb mostly follows al-Sulamī in identifying Sufis. However, he does not say *al-ṣūfī* of everyone mentioned by al-Sulamī. Al-Sarī al-Saqāṭī (d. 253/867?) is famous as the master of al-Junayd along with al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857–8). Al-Sulamī includes him in the first generation of Sufis.³¹ Al-Khaṭīb identifies him as “one of the worshippers” but not as a Sufi (10:260). He mentions of these that they were his disciples:

- Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ayyūb al-Musūḥī (*fl.* mid-3rd/9th cent.), “among the great shaykhs of the Sufis” (5:19–20);
- Aḥmad b. Wahb al-Zayyāt (*fl.* mid-3rd/9th cent.), “among the shaykhs of the Sufis” (6:424);
- Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd al-Ḥarbī (*fl.* late 3rd/9th cent.; 3:247);
- Sumnūn b. Ḥamza (d. 298/910–11), *al-ṣūfī* (10:324–7);
- al-Junayd b. Muḥammad, “the shaykh of his time, the one of his age, as to speaking of states and talk according to the lingo of the Sufis” (8:168–77).

Of Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd al-Ḥarbī, al-Khaṭīb directly quotes al-Sulamī, *Tārīkh al-ṣūfīyya*, but does not identify him as *al-ṣūfī*. Al-Sulamī is quoted as saying that Aḥmad b. ‘Amr al-Khaṭṭābī (*fl.* later 3rd/9th cent.) was disciple to Sarī (al-Saqāṭī) till he died, then stuck to al-Junayd (5:548). Al-Khaṭīb does not say *al-ṣūfī*. Even well after al-Junayd, he brings up traditionists otherwise known to him as Sufis; e.g., Aḥmad b. al-‘Abbās *al-ṣūfī* al-Aqlāmī (*fl.* 360/970–1), apparently included on the strength of someone’s saying he had related hadith from him (5:542), and ‘Abd al-Salām b. Muḥammad b. Abī Mūsā l-Mukharramī *al-ṣūfī* (d. Mecca, 364/974–5), said by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā’

31 Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 41–8.

al-Nasawī (d. 396/1005–6) to have been the shaykh of the *ḥaram* (Mecca) in his time, combining the sciences of the *sharīʿa* and *ḥaqīqa* (12:329–30). Fāṭima bt. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (d. 312/924–5), who was born in Baghdad but transferred to Egypt, was called *al-ṣūfiyya* because she wore wool and did not sleep for over sixty years save in her prayer area (*muṣallā*) on the bare ground (16:630–1). ʿAṭiyya b. Saʿīd al-Andalusī (d. 403/1012–13) was a *zāhid* who would not put his side to the ground, rather slept sitting up *muḥtabiyan*, probably meaning with his bent knees secured by a cord (14:275).³² Al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad b. al-Baghdādī (d. 404/1014) was a *zāhid* who would sleep only if overcome. He continually showed up with evident injuries to his head or forehead from falling asleep over an inkwell or a cup before him. He would not enter the bath or wash his clothes with soap, presumably thinking it a luxury, and ate only barley bread (8:527–8).³³

Discipleship is usually referred to as *ṣuḥba*, but al-Khaṭīb often uses the Persian word *ustādh* for a master. The earliest mention is in connection with one Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar al-Barāthī *al-zāhid* (fl. earlier 3rd/9th cent.). He was *ustādh* to Abū Jaʿfar b. al-Kurunbī the Sufi (d. 280s/894–903) and had a *mutaʿabbida* (worshipping) wife named Jawhar (16:581–2).³⁴ In Ibn al-Kurunbī’s biography, he is reciprocally identified as one of Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Barāthī’s *talāmīdh* (16:595). Ibrāhīm b. Saʿīd al-Ḥasanī (d. 251–60/865–74?) was one of the shaykhs of the Sufis, who started in Baghdad, then settled in Syria.³⁵ Al-Sulamī is quoted as saying he was *ustādh* to Abū l-Ḥārith al-Awlāsī, a Syrian of uncertain date (6:608). The last whom al-Khaṭīb describes as an *ustādh* is Abū ʿAlī al-Rūdhābārī (d. 322/933–4?), a prominent Sufi. Al-Khaṭīb quotes al-Sulamī as saying, “He stuck to al-Junayd and became his disciple” (*lazīma al-Junayd wa-ṣaḥībah*; 2:180).³⁶ He also quotes al-Sulamī as relating in turn from al-Rūdhābārī, “My *ustādh* in *taṣawwuf* was al-Junayd, my *ustādh* in hadith and *fiqh* Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī, and my *ustādh* in *naḥw* Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Thaʿlab” (2:181). This looks like a garbled version

32 One of the anonymous reviewers of this article has suggested “basically a pre-modern camping chair; legs held up by cloth around the back.” We agree about the cloth, if “back” here means the sitter’s, but I doubt there was any structure between ʿAṭiyya and the ground. *Iḥtibāʿ* is recommended in hadith, for which see Christopher Melchert, “The Etiquette of Learning in the Early Islamic Study Circle,” in *Law and Education in Medieval Islam: Studies in Memory of Professor George Makdisi*, ed. Joseph E. Lowry, Devin J. Stewart, and Shawkat M. Toorawa (n.p.: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 33–44, at 38.

33 Ibn al-Baghdādī also appears in Ibn Abi Yaʿlā, *Ṭabaqāt* 3:321–3 (no mention of Ḥanbalism in *Tārīkh Baghdād*).

34 Date range from Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* 21 (281–290 H.): 343.

35 Date range from Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* 19 (251–260 H.): 67–8.

36 Cf. Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 362, with *ṣaḥība* only.

of a quotation in al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*: “My *ustādh* in *taṣawwuf* was al-Junayd, my *ustādh* in *fiqh* Abū l-‘Abbās b. Surayj, my *ustādh* in *adab* Tha‘lab, and my *ustādh* in *ḥadīth* Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī.”³⁷

There are plenty of later Sufis in *Tārīkh Baghdād* but, surprisingly, the word *ustādh* does not come up in connection with any of them. For comparison, the last time *ustādh* comes up in the *Ṭabaqāt* of al-Sulamī is in connection with Abū Bakr b. Abī Sa‘dān (*fl.* Baghdad, early 4th/10th cent.), one of the *ustādhs* to Abū l-Qāsim al-Muqri‘ (d. Nishapur, 378/988–9).³⁸ It is conceivable that al-Sulamī preferred *ustādh* to designate a master younger than his disciple, for the previous reference to an *ustādh* in the *Ṭabaqāt* is to Bunān al-Ḥammāl (d. Old Cairo, 316/928), described as having been disciple to (*ṣaḥība*) al-Junayd but *ustādh* to Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī.³⁹

Muslim saints are famously called *awliyā’*.⁴⁰ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī refers to three as being among them. Ibrāhīm b. Sa‘d al-Ḥasanī (d. 251–60/865–74) is the subject of a miracle story: spreading his cloak on water, then praying (6:608). Abū l-Faḍl al-Ḥāshimī (*fl.* mid-3rd/9th cent.) was known for solitariness and withdrawal (*infirād* and *‘uzla*; 16:606). Badr al-Maghāzilī (d. 282/896) was praised by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal: “Who is like Badr? Badr has mastered his tongue” (7:597). Al-Sulamī is cited concerning each of the three but al-Khaṭīb says “Sufi” of none of them.

Al-Khaṭīb identifies eight as *abdāl* (“substitutes”).⁴¹ Abū Naṣr al-Tammār (d. 228/842), worshipper and renunciant, was counted among the *abdāl*, although repudiated by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal for capitulating at the Inquisition (12:170). Al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Ṣudā‘ī (d. 246/860?) was said to be among the *abdāl*, although only a mediocre traditionist (8:616).

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said of Ibrāhīm b. Hānī’ al-Naysābūrī (d. 265/878), “If there is anyone known to be among the *abdāl*, it is Ibrāhīm b. Hānī’” (7:162, 163). ‘Īsā b. Iṣḥāq al-Khaṭmī (d. bef. 280/895), who walked barefoot, was said to

37 Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 369. “Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā” is correct for the Kufan grammarian and Qur’an reciter Tha‘lab (d. 291/904). However, one suspects that the name of the important jurist Ibn Surayj (d. 306/918) was suppressed by *homototeleton*, either in the transmission to al-Khaṭīb of this passage from *Tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya* or in the course of transmitting *Tārīkh Baghdād* itself, since it seems unlikely that al-Khaṭīb would purposely suppress the name of a Shāfi‘i.

38 Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 438.

39 Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 290.

40 See Aiyub Palmer, *Sainthood and Authority in Early Islam: Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī’s Theory of wilāya and the Reenvisioning of the Sunnī Caliphate*, Studies on Sufism 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

41 See Rana Mikati, “On the Identity of the Syrian *abdāl*,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 80 (2017): 21–43, and Melchert, *Before Sufism*, 113–18.

be among the *abdāl* (12:501–2). Maḥmūd b. al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī (d. 284/897–8) was said by Abū Nu‘aym to have been answered of prayer and among the *abdāl* (15:111–12).⁴²

Ja‘far b. Muḥammad al-Ṣandalī (d. 318/930), a righteous man (*ṣāliḥ*), was said by Yūsuf b. ‘Umar al-Qawwās (d. 385/995) to be among the *abdāl* (8:121), likewise Aḥmad b. al-‘Abbās al-Baghawī *al-ṣūfi* (d. 322/934; 5:540). Of ‘Uthmān b. ‘Umar b. Khafif al-Muqri’ (d. 361/972), al-Khaṭīb quotes the hadith critic al-Barqānī (d. 425/1034): “He was a *badal* among the *abdāl*” (13:195). Of Yūsuf b. ‘Umar al-Qawwās himself, al-Khaṭīb quotes both al-Barqānī and al-Azharī (d. 435/1043) as saying he was among the *abdāl* (16:477). Al-Azharī moreover says he was answered of prayer. There follow two stories of his discovering that a fascicle of his on the merits of Mu‘āwiya had been chewed by a mouse. He imprecated the mouse, which fell down from the roof writhing until it died (16:478–9).

One missing term is *qārī*?. Al-Khaṭīb apparently uses only its normal sense of someone who recites the Qur’an, not its extended, technical sense of a renunciant; for example, Hārūn b. Mūsā l-A‘war al-Qārī’ (*fl.* later 2nd/8th cent.), a converted Jew and grammarian who became a chief in Qur’an recitation (4:6). *Muqri*’ is a more common term. However, al-Khaṭīb does quote al-Sulamī as saying that Abū Aḥmad Muṣ‘ab b. Aḥmad b. Muṣ‘ab al-Qalānisi *al-ṣūfi* (d. 270/884) was known for *zuhd* and *taqarrī*. Several stories are told of his austerity, such as never keeping gold or silver overnight, none of his qur’anic recitation (although he doubtless engaged in it as an amateur, since he was also known for sticking to the mosque), so probably the variant *taqarrī* is being used for voluntarily undergoing austerities (15:142).⁴³

Another missing term is *ṣiddīq*, a qur’anic word probably borrowed from Syriac and effectively a synonym of *ṣāliḥ*, meaning “righteous.” There is a notable parallel between Q. 21:105, “We have written in Psalms after the Reminder: “The earth will be inherited by My righteous servants (*al-ṣāliḥūn*)”

42 Also Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilya* 10:401, where his name is given as Muḥammad. According to an earlier Isfahani source, “He was seen by many in their sleep after his death, saying, ‘I was among the *abdāl* without knowing it’”: Abū l-Shaykh, *Ṭabaqāt al-muḥaddithīn bi-Iṣbahān*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ghafūr ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Ḥusayn al-Balūshī, 4 vols (Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risāla, 1987–92), 3:392.

43 On *qārī*’ as a technical term, see Melchert, *Before Sufism*, 166. Al-Sulamī reports what al-Bundār b. al-Ḥusayn (d. Arrajan, 353/964–5) said when asked the difference between the *ṣūfiyya* and the *mutaqarrīya*, confirming that *taqarrī* is about austerity (*ta‘ammul* and *takalluf* are the terms he uses, keeping busy and taking on burdens), not primarily Qur’an recitation: *Ṭabaqāt*, 491.

and Ps. 37:29, “The righteous (*ṣaddīqīm*) shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever” (v. 30 in the Prayer Book version).⁴⁴ It comes up as a designation of saints in the renunciant period; for example, Mālik b. Dīnār (d. ca. 130/747–8) said, “One is not a *ṣiddīq* until one leaves his wife like a widow and resorts with dogs to refuse heaps.”⁴⁵ It survives into the Sufi period as well; for example, al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988) says, “*Wilāya* and *ṣiddīqīyya* are illuminated by the light of prophecy, yet they never reach prophecy, so how can they be preferred to it?”⁴⁶ However, *ṣiddīq* is not prominent in the Sufi period, so that, for example, it does not appear in Massignon’s list of “earlier terms and themes ‘orchestrated’ by Ḥallāj,” nor in the index to Chittick’s encyclopaedic guide to the thought of Ibn ‘Arabī.⁴⁷ *Tārīkh Baghdād* is evidently further documentation of its falling out of use in not referring to any of its subjects as *ṣiddīqīn*.

3 Miracles

Miracles have come up several times already. They are a usual concomitant of mysticism; that is, the piety that primarily stresses communion with God as opposed to obedience to him.⁴⁸ The early Sufi literary tradition is famously ambivalent about miracles, distrusting them as a temptation to self-importance (continuing the renunciant tradition before).⁴⁹ As an Ash‘ari in theology, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī believed in *karāmāt al-awliyā*, the charismata

44 Qur’an translation from Alan Jones, *The Qur’an* (n.p.: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2007).

45 Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilya* 2:359, 6194.

46 Al-Sarrāj, *The Kitāb al-Luma’ fi ‘l-taṣawwuf*, ed. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Series 22 (Leiden: E.J. Brill and London: Luzac & Co., 1914), 424.

47 Massignon, *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism*, 27–32; William C. Chittick, *Ibn al-Arabī’s Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

48 I cite, as usual, Gert H. Mueller, “Asceticism and Mysticism: A Contribution Towards the Sociology of Faith,” in *International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion 8: Sociological Theories of Religion/Religion and Language*, ed. Günter Dux, Thomas Luckmann, and Joachim Matthes (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1973), 68–132, esp. 103–4.

49 See Denis Gril, “Le miracle en Islam, critère de la sainteté ?,” in *Saints orientaux*, ed. Denise Aigle, *Hagiographies médiévales comparées 1* (Paris: De Boccard, n.d.), 69–81, and Éric Geoffroy, “Attitudes contrastées des mystiques musulmans face au miracle,” in *Miracle et karāma*, ed. Denise Aigle, *Hagiographies médiévales comparées 2*, Bibliothèque de l’École des hautes études, sciences religieuses, 104 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 301–16. As for distrust of miracles in the previous renunciant period, consider for example the reported dislike on the face of Ibrāhīm al-Nakha‘ī (d. 96/714) on being asked to pray that some persons be cured (Ibn Sa‘d, *Biographien* 6:193 = *Ṭabaqāt* 6:276) and the Persian

of the friends of God, *contra* the Mu‘tazila who associated miracles only with prophets.⁵⁰ In connection with miracles, al-Khaṭīb uses the terms *karāmāt*, *āyāt* (“signs”), and *mujāb* or *mustajāb al-da‘wa*, the last indicating that whatever someone prayed for would be realized.

Miracles serve various purposes. In the line of correcting saints’ impulses, al-Khaṭīb relates two stories of al-Sarī al-Saqatī’s hearing a voice reproaching him for the careless way he was extending his legs (10:261). From Ja‘far al-Khuldī he relates that Ayyūb al-Ḥammāl (*fl.* mid-3rd/9th cent.) was afflicted by lameness on his walking neglectfully (not recollecting God), then restored on his repenting (7:458). Other miracles vindicated saints. Ibrāhīm al-Ājurri (*fl.* mid-3rd/9th cent.) threw two wraps into the fire. His came out unharmed, a Jew’s came out burnt, on which the Jew converted (7:172).⁵¹ From al-Sulamī he relates how al-Junayd sent Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī (d. 295/907–8) some money and visited him when he was ill. When al-Junayd fell ill, al-Nūrī repaid the visit but laid his hand on his forehead and cured him on the spot (6:333–4).

Reticence is illustrated by a story al-Khaṭīb relates through a Ḥanbali source: Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr al-Ṭūsī (d. 254/868?) ate of a miraculous quince carried by Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī (d. 200/815–16?) in his sleeve that satisfied his hunger and thirst after four whole days of fasting. Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr forbade his disciples to relate the story while he was alive (4:407–8). Abū l-Ḥusayn b. Sam‘ūn (d. 387/997?) brought some dried dates with him from Medina to Jerusalem. He found himself desiring some fresh ones and wondered where he could find any there. When it was time to break the fast, he found fresh in place of the dried he had put away. He resisted eating any, and so the next day they were dry again (2:97). The fresh had answered to a desire of his lower self (*nafs*), which he wisely would not indulge. Stories are also told of his reading minds (2:97–8). Some reported miracles admittedly seem trivial or repulsive. Al-Qawwās’ miracle of destroying a mouse has been mentioned already. Muḥammad b. Muslim (d. 260/874), on seeing a nephew playing with birds (*yal‘abu bi-l-tuyūr*, possibly for the sake of divination, possibly as reprehensible frivolity), asked that

seen by Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir (d. 130/747–8?) in Medina whose prayer for rain was answered but who wanted to remain unknown (Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilya* 3:152).

50 See Richard Gramlich, *Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes*, Freiburger Islamstudien 11 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1987), 98–110, and Jonathan A.C. Brown, “Faithful Dissenters: Sunni Skepticism about the Miracles of Saints,” *Journal of Sufi Studies* 1 (2012): 123–68, at 137–40. At greater length, Brown documents non-Sufi Sunni unease as to reported miracles.

51 From Ja‘far al-Khuldī, also reported by Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilya* 10:223.

God kill him: he then died before evening (4:417). Miracles do not define a Sufi. Of the eight miracle workers named in the previous two paragraphs, only one, al-Nūrī, does al-Khaṭīb call a Sufi.

Comparison between *Tārīkh Baghdād* and later works also shows a waxing association of saints with miracles. An example is Ibn al-Qazwīnī, once again. Two centuries after al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Muḥyī l-Dīn al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277) was likewise a Shāfiʿī hadith expert (although not Ashʿari in theology). He devotes a long section of his *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya* to Ibn al-Qazwīnī.⁵² It begins with reports of his learning; his teachers in hadith and law, how his *uṣūl* (notes from which he dictated) were mostly in his own handwriting, his writing a commentary on grammar. A story of his graciousness toward the prominent Shāfiʿī Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (d. 477/1083) indicates that he was a traditionalist, hostile to Ashʿarism.⁵³ However, it is mostly given over to miracle stories. Half a dozen celebrate his power to read minds. A renunciant and two famous Shāfiʿī jurists, al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058) and Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh, are supernaturally rebuked for doubting Ibn al-Qazwīnī's status as a renunciant on account of his fine clothing.⁵⁴ He hears a sheep praising God and predicts correctly that it will die that day.⁵⁵ He replies to a letter from the Būyad sultan by writing with ink from his sleeve.⁵⁶ A disciple begins the night praying with him in al-Ḥarbiyya, finds himself in a strange place circumambulating with a multitude, then back in al-Ḥarbiyya, to be told that he had been in Mecca.⁵⁷ Either al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī was resistant to collecting contemporary miracle stories or Ibn al-Qazwīnī became the focus of many not long after his death.

To sum up, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī mostly depends on the same Arabic biographical sources on which modern historians of Sufism have depended. For the most part, he therefore only confirms the traditional Sufi view or, alternatively, has to be treated with the same caution, as in his application of the

52 Ibn al-Ṣalāh al-Shahrazūri, *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ al-shāfiʿiyya*, abr., arranged, corr'd al-Nawawī, corr'd al-Mizzī, ed. Muḥyī l-Dīn ʿAlī Najīb, 2 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyya, 1413/1992), 2:620–35 = al-Nawawī, *Mukhtaṣar Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya*, ed. ʿĀdil ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muʿawwaḍ (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr and Muʿassasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 1416/1995), 517–30. Al-Nawawī mentions a collection *Akhbār Abī al-Ḥasan b. al-Qazwīnī* by Abū Naṣr Hibat Allāh b. ʿAlī al-Mujli (or al-Maḥalli; d. 480/1087–8), but the stories that follow have their own *isnāds* mostly by bypassing Abū Naṣr.

53 Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṭabaqāt* 2:631–2 = Nawawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 527.

54 Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṭabaqāt* 2:625–6 = Nawawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 522–3.

55 Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṭabaqāt* 2:623–4 = Nawawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 520–1.

56 Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṭabaqāt* 2:630–1 = Nawawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 526.

57 Ibn al-Ṣalāh, *Ṭabaqāt* 2:628 = Nawawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 524.

very term *ṣūfī*. Still, he was primarily a hadith specialist, and his viewpoint as an outsider is sometimes a useful check on the Sufi sources. This means he occasionally informs us about someone who escaped the Sufis' notice, such as Ibn al-Qazwīnī. At the same time, classical Sufism originated in and spread from Baghdad, so that al-Khaṭīb's heavy dependence on earlier biographers, despite his voluminous independent knowledge of hadith transmission, testifies to how thoroughly the Sufi tradition had already taken over the literature of otherworldly piety.