SUFI STORIES FROM THE CAIRO GENIZAH

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The Cairo Genizah preserved a fragmentary manuscript of what had once been a Sufi anthology composed of texts pertaining to different literary genres.¹ The manuscript, which is in the possession of the Cambridge University Library (T-S Ar. 41.1), has twenty barely legible pages, and unfortunately lacks the beginning and the end. Each page has 22–26 lines. The text is written in Arabic, with Arabic characters mostly accompanied by diacritical signs, but sometimes without it. The surviving text has three major parts:

I. 1a–3b: ecstatic sayings of Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī (d. 261/875) with the commentary of a certain 'Abd ar-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad

II. 3b–7b: a chapter about reliance on God

III. 7b–10b: epistles by an-Ṭūrī (d. 295/908) and al-Ǧunayd (d. 297/910)

It seems probable that the author of this anthology copied these texts from different sources for his personal use. It does not seem likely that the text had been copied from one continuous compilation, for the following reasons: 1) the genre of the different parts varies considerably; 2) the parts are not interlaced by inner references; 3) the different parts show distinct grammatical features (parts I–II display peculiarities of Middle Arabic, while these are absent from part III).

There are no indications in the manuscript pointing towards the person of the author or the copyist. Although there are no Hebrew words or glosses in the text, it was obviously owned (and read) by Jews, since it was preserved in the Cairo Genizah. As it is widely known, the Cairo Genizah is a storehouse of medieval manuscripts dating back mostly to the 10th–13th centuries, and found in the attic of a synagogue in al-Fustāṭ. Jewish religion prohibits throwing away texts that contain, or might contain the name of God. These texts must be “hidden away” in the so-called genizah (meaning “hiding place” in Hebrew). Since virtually

¹ I have dealt with this Sufi anthology, especially with its third part elsewhere. See “Sobriety and intoxication in mystical sayings from the Cairo Genizah.” In: Proceedings of Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants 27. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta. (forthcoming).

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every text can contain the name of God, pious Jews tended to put every unneeded text in the genizah, including Arabic texts, secular books, letters, business accounts, poems, recipes, etc. The importance of the discovery of the Cairo Genizah (in 1896) lies in the fact that it provides an immense material concerning the life of Medieval Egypt.² Owing to this discovery it became manifest that Jews were highly interested in Sufism, they possessed and what is more, imitated Sufi works.³ The Sufi anthology under discussion was compiled from various sources, possibly by a Jew for his own use.⁴

This paper aims to present some Sufi stories contained in the second part of the manuscript.

The full title of the chapter is the following: “Chapter about the Description of Those Who Rely on God, Who Abide by God’s Command, and Who Await Rescue from God.” (Bāb na’ tahl at-tawakkul ‘alā Allāh as-sākinīn ‘inda amr Allāh al-muntazirīn li-farağ Allāh ‘azza wa-ğalla). The chapter comprises two kinds of texts: 1) short sayings of various Sufi sheiks; 2) instructive stories. As indicated by the title, the subject of both the sayings and the stories is reliance on God (tawakkul). A common element of the stories is wandering under harsh circumstances, usually hunger and thirst. The sequence of the stories is sometimes interrupted by short dictions quoted with the chain of the transmitters. Equanimity and perseverance are the major virtues that characterize the protagonists of the stories. The act of possession is refused since it distances man from God, whether man possesses any kind of material goods or merely some basic intentions. The mystics in these stories wander without having destination, and survive without having any means of subsistence. They are sometimes led into temptation and other times rescued miraculously by the intervention of God. However, God does not always interfere in a pleasant way. Nevertheless, facing hardships or experiencing welfare is the same for the Sufi, whose attitude is not influenced by the circumstances. Elements that recur in the stories are crossing the desert without provision; meeting strangers; meeting Ḥiḍr in the desert; being fed by God with bread or roasted fish; thirst and finding water; Magians; pomegranates; temptations. One of the protagonists of the stories is Ibrahîm al-Ḥawwâṣ.⁵ In the Taḏkirat al-

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² See e.g. Reif:2002.
³ See e.g. Fenton:1981, especially the introduction of the book, and the bibliography cited there.
⁴ Naturally it is also possible that the anthology was composed by a Muslim, and was copied or acquired later by a Jew.
⁵ Abû Ishâq Ibrahîm ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥawwâṣ (d. 291/904) of Sāmarrâ’ was a companion of al-Ḡunayd and an-Nūrî. Stories about him similar to those of the Genizah fragment can be found in Abû Nu’aym, Hilya X, 325–331; ‘Aṭṭâr, Taḏkira II, 261–274; Arberry 1966:272–276.
Almost all of these elements (not the stories themselves) appear in the anecdotes about him. According to the Taḏkirat al-awliyā’, he was called the “leader of those who rely on God” (ra’īs al-mutawakkilīna), and he was famous of crossing the desert without provision, relying exclusively on God. In the Genizah fragment there are two stories about him, displaying the same features as the anecdotes of the Taḏkirat al-awliyā’.

Other protagonists of the stories are Abū l-Ḥusayn an-Nūrī, Sahl b. Wahbān al-Anbārī, Abū Ḥamza, ’Alī ar-Rāzī, Sahl b. Wahbān al-Anbārī, Abū Ḥamza, ’Alī ar-Rāzī, Ga’far al-Mubarqa, Abū Ğurayš, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ǧawharī al-Baġdāḏī, Ḥasan al-Qaddār ad-Dīnawārī. Those persons mentioned in the Genizah fragment that I could identify are contemporaries of al-Ğunayd and an-Nūrī, both of whom are repeatedly mentioned in the fragment, which also contains a correspondence by them. This fact indicates that the texts preserved in the fragment are mostly early Sufi texts that originated in the circle of al-Ğunayd.

Anecdotes similar to the stories of the Genizah fragment can be found abundantly in several Sufi biographies and manuals like the Hilyat al-awliyā’ by Abū Nu’aym al-Ĭṣbahānī (d. 1038), the Taḏkirat al-awliyā’ by Farīd ad-Dīn ’Aṭṭār (d. ca. 1220), the Ṭabaqāt as-sūfiyya by as-Sulamī (d. 1021), etc.

The importance of the stories quoted in the anthology from the Cairo Genizah does not lie in their uniqueness: in fact there are plenty of similar stories. The significance of this anthology is that it reveals what kinds of Sufi texts were read by Jews in 13th century Egypt. In order to discuss the influence of Sufism in Judaism one should have a clear knowledge of what Sufi texts were possessed and read by Jews. This information contributes to the estimation of this influence in 13th century Egypt.

The next part of the paper will be devoted to the transliteration and translation of a coherent and continuous part of the text. Although in the manuscript tā’ marbūṭa is never indicated (i.e., it is written with ḫā’) I decided to indicate it in the transliteration of the text. Most characters of the manuscript are accompanied by diacritical signs, but since the paper is stained and damaged in several places, the reading of the characters and the signs is sometimes dubious. Ḥamza is never indicated in the manuscript, therefore it also is absent from the transliteration. For the sake of convenience, the text in the English translation was divided into smaller chapters and chapter headings were also

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6 According to the Hilyat al-awliyā’ he was a contemporary of al-Ğunayd (Abū Nu’aym, Hilya, X, 359). He is not mentioned either by as-Sulamī (Ṭabaqāt) or Ṭabqāt (Taḏkira).

7 A certain ’Alī ar-Rāzī is mentioned as a transmitter in as-Sulamī, Ṭabaqāt 113.

8 Mentioned in Abū Nu’aym, Hilya VIII, 317 without biographical details.
introduced. The Arabic original itself is also divided into parts by circular dividers that were taken into consideration when dividing the English translation into subchapters. The dividers of the Arabic text are indicated in the English translation. The chapter headings do not form part of the Arabic original.

ARABIC TEXT

T-S Arabic 41.1 fol. 4b

الطالقاني عن رجل من بعض اخوانه قال رأيت رجلا في مرح
النبيج وليس معه شيء فندوت منه فعلت عليه فرد على
فقلت برحمك الله أي يتريد قال لا أنا فقدت هلا رأيت أحد
يريد مكانا لا يدري أين ذهب قال أنا واحد فقلت فوقف
لنعم وذلك أنا كم مرة أردت مكة فربدي الي طرسوس
وكم مرة أردت طرسوس فربدي الي عبدان فتبثي ان
اذهب الي مكة ولا أدري أبلغ اليها أم لا فقلت فمن أين

T-S Arabic 41.1 fol. 5a

لمحمرة يطردني الطرد العنيف ولا ينومني إلا عند النوا
وسألت برحمك الله من يفعل بك هذا قال الله قلت
فقر لي كيف هذا قال أنا رجل اسرار نهاري فاتب جنتي
الليل بت فربما اوفى الليل يقرئ إذا نظر إلى اهلها قال
بعضهم لبعض هذا لم يدعونه ياو من الليلة في القرية
فذا صلبت عشة الاخيرة يدخل على رجل المسجد فيقول
يا نايم فاطقول لي بك فيقول لي بالعنف فقلت من ها هنا
ليس لك ها هنا موضوع فأقول نعم وكرامة فأي ابتت
فويل عند التواصيل فأقول نعم وكرامة فأصبحت

Sic], instead of احدا. Disappearance of tanwīn –an is characteristic of Middle Arabic.
13 في رجل منهم قم إلى البيت فنقطع نعم وكراهة وامضي معه إلى منزله، رضي رأسه ويكحله عيني.
14 وابن ينين بالفراش الليان فينومي عليه ولا يدعو شيء من البر الا
15 فعله حتى إذا أصبحت سرت فهذة حاله وحال سيدا.
16 قال فقلت يرحمك الله متى قدر لك أن تدخل الى بغيذان
17 منزله في موضع كذي وكذكي قال فانها ذات يوم قاعد في منزله
18 إذا انسان يدق الباب، فخرجت فإذا أنا يصاححي سلمت عليه.
19 وقتله له، انعم بحكواك فقال أخر ما فعل بيني أن ضربوني
20 ضربا شديدا وقال لي يا ناس واردلني ظهره، فإذا أثر الضرب.
21 فقلت يا ناس أشرب بالمقة مرأني تعمد إلى بعصا.
22 فجعل يضرب ظهري ويقول لي يا ساء ما خرب
23 قال وقال، يسأط بن وهبان انما لم يهموا بالمضمون لأنه لا يكره
24 لم تالم قل لا اله الا الله، قال الله الا الله قال البيس أيه قمر، قل واما حضرت.
25 قلوم حزة الوفاة قلوا له تلاهمت قل لا اله الا الله قل هذا شئ قد
26 كأن رأى الأرض وما على المنحوت على الساحل في غير
27 وقت، الحج، وانجب، فابن ميا فختر بئله سكك مشوي، فإذا سمكة
28 أن جرت من البحر تضايوب، بين يديه فاكلها، فينها، هو

T-S Arabic 41.1 fol. 5b

1 مقتني غيرك [...] [كم أنا ارضديق حتى وقعت عليك، فإذا فقا
10 رس قد أقبل مسرافع لاقين أي. في رأسه وقال: تعمد إلي
11 رجح زاهد تضربه وتقول لثله يا لص فما بين ما كنت
12 عنده صدأ، ألي ان صررت زاهد. إلا كما حدثك، فقال صاحب
13 المقة، للفارس لم أعلم ان هذا هكذا فأخذني يدي فذهب
14 إلى منزله، فما بقي من الكرامه، شيء فافعلني، واستجلني.
15 فخرجت من عنده وفاجئك عندي وقت، وانصرف
16 قال وقال: اس لها، واهنا لم لا يهموا بالمضمون لأن لا يكره
17 نوا للضمن منهم، قال وقيل: لابي الحسين الثني، لما حضرته
18 الوفاة قال، لا اله الا الله قال البيس، أيه قمر، قل، واما حضرت.
19 أبو حزنا الوفاة قلوا له تلاهمت倾 لا اله الا الله، قل هذا شئ قد
20 عرفاه، قال ومر على المنحوت على الساحل في غير
21 وقت الحج، وقال، إننا لميا فختر، بئله سكك مشوي، فإذا سمكة
22 أن جرت من البحر تضايوب، بين يديه، فاكلها، فينها، هو

10 The use of this interrogative is widespread in various Arabic dialects.
11 Ṣic, instead of السوط. The neutralization of ⟨s⟩ and ⟨s⟩ is a peculiarity of Middle Arabic.
12 Ṣic, instead of لصا. Disappearance of tanwi –an is characteristic of Middle Arabic.
13 Ṣic, instead of زاهد.
14 The reading is dubious.
15 Ṣic, instead of وقتًا.
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كذلك إذا برجل قد وقف عليه فقال اتريد نارا فجاه بنار
فشوها فهم في ذلك اد وقف عليه رجل قال أت
يدان خبزا فأخبر خبزا فأكلوا وهم لا يعرف بعضهم
بعضا فسلوا صاحب السمكة من انت قال اننا علي الرازي
قالوا لمصاحب النار من انت قال اننا سهل بن وهبان
الابصراي فاختقوا ثم افترقوا مروى أبو الحسن
ابن محمد الرازي عن ابن الفضل المقراني قال مسعت جعفر
المبرقع يقول عقدت بيني وبين الله جل اسمه عقدا
اكل من يد انسان شبا فخرجت في بعض اسفار لي من
الحجاز الى اليمن فمكنت أربعة ايام وانا مستقل

T-S Arabic 41.1 fol. 6a

فلما كان ليلة الخامس وجدت ضعفا فاصبحت وانا على عين
من ما وله ثم فنزلت الى المجرى لاتطهر فرحت رغفا
فوق الما وافقت فحدثت نسمة بأخذه فنشبت فيه
سقط من يد انسان فتركته وجعلت امشي الى فوق المجر
فأذا الرغيف يجري فوق الما الي أول العين فذهب على
الملك فأخذته فأكلته فانتهت عشرة ايام بعد ذلك لا احتاج
الى طعام قال عبد الله نظر أبو جريش في سياحته الى
رجل شيخ فقال له ايش انت قال انسان مجوسي فقال له ليس انت
الثواب ولا انت من يخاف العقاب قال هذا قال نظرت في
الاشيا فرحت لها ما فتحيت ان أرتج سمسي قال وقال
ابراهيم الخواص بينا انا اسير في بادية تبوك في طريق دمشق
اذنا رجل على خرقيين سلمت عليه ثم وجد في نفسي منه
في فانكرت ذلك فقلت له ايش قال اننا سلمت قال لا قلت
فولك ايش انت قال
انا مجوسي كنت فابش تعمل هاهنا في بادية تبوك قال

16 The expression is elliptical, omits the word (ليلة اليوم الخامس). يوم
17 Sic, instead of -ūna in the Nominative is characteristic of Middle Arabic.
18 Sic, An orthographical characteristic of this text is that verba tertiae infirmae usually add an alif after the third radical wāw. Examples of the same phenomenon occur in this fragment on fol. 2b, line 3, fol. 4a, line 4.
19 Sic, The use of plural suffix –īna instead of -īna in the Nominative is characteristic of Middle Arabic.
16 رآيت إبنا الدنيا متنافسين فيها فالحببت أن أتركها عليهم
17 قال وقال إبراهيم الخواص ونزلت في بعض المواضع فطالنتي نفسي
18 أن أدخل إلى المنزل فابنتي عليها ولما جئني الليل
19 إذا بحجة جأت كأن فتحت الون الخيل في المفتت البيها
20 فلمما اعتيها الحبل قالت قوم من موضعى قلت لا أفعل فجعلت
21 توريتني ودخلت تحتي إذا شعرت أو رجل شعراءًا على
22 إن تلقعني من وضعى فلم تقت الملل ليست لي نفسى قرا شيا
23 من القران فلم قلت من أجل خلاف لا أقرأ ثم غابت
24 عنى سلمة وهي تجيت هوذا قد جيتك
25 بمسمك مشوي حار كأنا خرج من شبكة الصيد

T-S Arabic 41.1 fol. 6b

فلان وجيتك برمان أمليسي دلال من جبل مباح فلا أصبحت
1 رآيت عندي سمل مشوي ورمان أمليسي فلم كل منه شيا
2 وتركته والصرفت قأل أبو الحسن الجوهر البغداذي
3 كنت حاجا فما صرنا بين الخزيمة والأجر عطش
4 الناس عطشنا كثيرا وعطشنا معهم ننزلت من الجمل
5 اطلتي من يسقيتي شربة من ما فلم أحد وجيتي خلف السا
6 قصة من شدة ما بي من العطش فانتيت على بركة فارغة قد
7 جاز الناس عليها فاطلعت فيها فإذا برجل جالس في
8 وسطها عليه فيرفن رثة وهو يومي إلى تشرب الما
9 فلمما رأيته نزلت إلى البركة فلا حس بي قام فخرج منها
10 وجيت إلى المكان الذي كان فيه فإذا بحفرة صغيرة
11 يخرج منها الماء في وسطها فسرفت حتى رويت ولحقت
12 القافلة فإذا بها قد فرست على ميل أو مبلين فاتخذت
13 قريتي من عديني ورتجت فيها فماتلاها وجيتي بها
14 الناس نزول فلما رأى الناس لما على كنفي وقع في الناس
15 صيمة الملل فرع الناس فسوا واسقو جمالهم
16 فبقيت في حيرة من أمري فلما رحل الناس قلت لحديثي اركب

20 Si, instead of قم.
21 The reading is dubious. The text seems to be which is not correct grammatically. The last letter or character in شعراء which might be interpreted as a circular divider, but circular dividers which are used in the text in other places are completely different from these.
22 The reading is dubious.
ورجعت انظرها فاذا على حافتيها جمالين
ومنها ودبلهم ورسمت يد انيا
أرجعت على ما شئ قدر
أرجعت على ما شئ قدر
وكل شي قدير
وكل شي قدير
قال خرجت اريد دير بني ربيعة
فاجتمع جماعة من أصحابي الى فسالوني ان لا اخذ على هذه الطر

ورجعت انظرها فاذا على حافتيها جمالين
ومنها ودبلهم ورسمت يد انيا
أرجعت على ما شئ قدر
أرجعت على ما شئ قدر
وكل شي قدير
وكل شي قدير
قال خرجت اريد دير بني ربيعة
فاجتمع جماعة من أصحابي الى فسالوني ان لا اخذ على هذه الطر

T-S Arabic 41.1 fol. 7a

1 فامضي على طريق البر
2 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
3 فامضي على طريق البر
4 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
5 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
6 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
7 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
8 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
9 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
10 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
11 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
12 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
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16 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
17 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة
18 ان لا يلقاك احد من اهل الذعارة

TRANSLATION

THIEF
[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 4b, line 12 – fol. 5b, line 7]

23 Sic. The use of plural suffix –īna instead of -īna in the Nominative is characteristic of Middle Arabic.
[13] at-Ṭaliqānī related on the authority of one of his brethren, he said: I have seen a man in Marğ
[14] ad-Ḍībāḡ, who did not have anything with him. I approached him and greeted him, and he returned [the greeting].
[16] wanted [to get to] a place, but did not know where he was going?” He said: “I am one [like that].” I said: “Where
[17] do you intend [to go]?” He said: “Mecca.” I said: “You intend [to go] to Mecca, and you don’t know where you are going?” He said:
[18] “Yes indeed! And that is because many a time I wanted [to go to] Mecca, but He turned me to Ṭarsūs,
[19] and many a time I wanted [to go to] Ṭarsūs, but He turned me to Ṭarsūs, but He turned me to ’Abadān. So my intention is
[20] to go to Mecca, but I do not know if I get there or not.” I said: “How do you gain
[21] your living?” He said: “I do not know.” I said: “Tell me, why is it so?” He said: “As He
[22] wishes; sometimes He makes me starve, and sometimes He feeds me abundantly. Sometimes He honors me, but sometimes He [frightens]24 me.
[23] Sometimes He says to me: “Everything on earth I have given to you.” But sometimes He says: “You are
[24] a thief!” Sometimes He chases me away harshly and does not let me sleep except at the
[25] sarcophagi.” I said: “May God have mercy on you! Who treats you like that?” He said: “God.” I said:
[26] “Explain it to me!” He said: “I am a man who walks all day long,
[27] and I sleep where night falls upon me. Sometimes the night betakes me to a village and when its people see me they say
[28] to each other: “This is a thief, so do not invite him to spend the night in the village.”
[29] And when I pray the last evening prayer the man of the mosque comes to me and says:
[30] “Hey you, sleeper!” And I say: “Here I am at your service!” And he says to me harshly: “Get up from here!
[31] There is no place for you here!” And I say: “With the greatest pleasure. But where should I spend the night?”

24 The reading is dubious.
And he says: “At the sarcophagi!” And I say: “With the greatest pleasure.”

In the morning

I move on. Then the night betakes me to another village, and when its people see me they say
to each other: “A great pious ascetic has come to you this night.” And each one of them says: “Let him spend the night at my place!” And when I have finished the last evening prayer, one of them says to me:

“Get up, [come] to the house!” And I say: “With the greatest pleasure.” And I go with him to his place, and he brings me good food, anoints my head, rubs my eyes with antimony (kuḥī), prepares a soft bed for me, and invites me to spend the night there. He shows me every sign of respect until in the morning I move on. So that is my state (ḥāl) and that of my Lord.”

He said: Then I said: “May God have mercy on you! When [God] ordains you to come to Baḡdād, [come to] my house [which is] is at such-and-such a place!”

He said: One day I was sitting in my house, when suddenly a man knocked on the door. I went out, and behold, it was my friend! I greeted him and said to him: “What has your Master done to you?” He said: “The last thing He has done to me was that He beat me badly and said to me: “You, thief!” He showed me his back, and behold, the signs of the beating were there!

I said: “What happened?” He said: “He had been starving me badly and when I arrived at the granaries, I passed by a hut from where some bitter, worm-eaten grains have been thrown out. So I sat down to eat, while the owner of the hut was watching me. But he came to me with a stick, and began to beat my back, saying: “You, thief! It was you who [fol. 5b] [1] robbed my hut! […] How long I have been lying in wait for you until I caught you!” But all of a sudden a horseman was approaching hastily, swinging the whip over his head. [The horseman] said: “You mean to beat up an ascetic and to say to someone like him: “You, thief?!” He said: “And it does not take longer to become an ascetic from a thief than recounting this story to you. The owner
of the hut said to the horseman: “I did not know that he was an ascetic.”
Then he took my hand and led
me to his house, and showed me every sign of respect.
After that I left him and came to you.” He stayed with me some time, and
then he moved on. •
He said: Sahl b. Wahbān said: “They are not committed to what has been
ensured to them, so that they would not be
accused by the Ensurer” [of being concerned with created things instead of
the Creator himself]. 25 •

LAST WORDS
[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 5b, lines 9-12]
He said: Abū l-Husayn an-Nūrī was told when he
was dying: “Say: There is no god other than God!” He said: “And is it not
to him [that I am going]?” And he passed away. 26 • He said: When
Abū Ḥamza was dying, his disciples said to him: “Say: There is no god
other than God!” He said: “This thing
we already know.” •

ROASTED FISH
[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 5b, lines 12-21]
He said: Walking on the shore he passed by a [ritually] slaughtered animal.
It was not at
the time of the Pilgrimage. He has already been starving for days. It made
him think about roasted fish. Suddenly, a fish
came out from the sea and writhed before him. He took it, and while
he was engaged in this, suddenly a man stopped by his side, and said: “Do
you need fire?” And he brought him fire.
So they roasted the fish. While they were [engaged] with this, suddenly a
man stopped by their side, and said:
“Do you need bread?” And he drew forth bread. So they ate [together],
without knowing each
other. Then they asked the one with the fish: “Who are you?” He said: “I
am ʿAlī ar-Rāzī.”

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25 Cf. a parallel in Abū Nuʿaym, Hilya, 10:359. That is the only tradition in the Hilya
quoted in Sahīl b. Wahbān’s name:
لا تكونوا بالمضمون مهتمين فكونوا للضامن مهتمين وبدعله غير واقعين
The word dāmin refers to God. This usage is not unparalleled, see Lane 1968: sub
voce “dāmin”.
26 Cf. a similar tradition about an-Nūrī in Abū Nuʿaym, Hilya II, 91.
[19] They asked the one with the fire: “Who are you?” He said: “I am Sahl b. Wahbān al-Anbārī.”
[20] They asked the one with the bread: “Who are you?” He said: “I am Ṣāliḥ b. Ṭābī‘ī al-Qalīf
[21] al-Baṣrī.” They embraced each other, and then they parted company. •

**BREAD FLOATING ON WATER**

[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 5b, line 21 – fol. 6a, line 7]

[21] Abū l-Ḥasan Ahmad

[22] b. Muḥammad ar-Rāzī related on the authority of Abū l-ḥaṣīl al-Mādarānī: I have heard Ḥa‘far

[23] al-Mubarqa’ say: “I made and agreement with God – may His name be exalted – that I shall not

[24] eat anything [coming] from the hand of a man. I set out to one of my journeys from

[25] al-Ḥiğāz to al-Yaman. I was completely alone during four days.

[fol. 6a] [1] On the fifth night I felt weakness. In the morning I found myself at a spring

[2] of water that had a stream. I descended to the stream in order to perform the ablution, and I saw a loaf of bread

[3] floating on the surface of the water. I said to myself that I would take it, but I was afraid that it might

[4] had fallen from the hand of a man. So I left it, and started to go upward, in the direction of the source of the stream,

[5] and behold, [also] the bread was coming on the water in the direction of the source of the spring. My

[6] doubts were resolved. I took it and ate it, and after that I did not need any food for ten days.” •

**MAGIANS**

[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 6a, lines 7 - 16]

[7] ‘Abdāllāh said: During his journey Abū Ġurayṣ saw

[8] an old man, and he said to him: “Who are you?” He said: “I am a Magian.” So he said to him: “You do not

[9] expect reward nor fear punishment. Why is it so?” He said: “I observed

[10] the things, and I saw that they were not lasting; I wished therefore to comfort my body.” • He said:

[11] Ḫiṯrīm al-Ḥawwāṣ said: “When I was passing through the desert of Tabūk on the road of Damascus,

I ignored it, and I said to him: “Who are you? Are you a Muslim?” He said: “No.” I said: “Then are you a Jew?” He said: “No.” I said: “Then a Christian?” He said: “No.” I said: “Woe to you, who are you?” He said: “I am a Magian.” I said: “And what are you doing here, in the desert of Tabūk?” He said: “I have seen the sons of this world envying one another for having a greater share of it, I wished therefore to leave it [i.e. this world] to them.”

TEMPTED BY THE SOUL OR BY THE SNAKE

[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 6a, line 17 – fol. 6b, line 3]

He said: Ibrahim al-Ḥawwāṣ said: “I arrived to a certain place, and my soul urged me to enter a house. But I refused and did not enter. And when the night befell upon me, suddenly a snake came to me. She took various shapes, but I did not turn to her.

When her tricks run out, she said: “Get up from my place!” I said: “I will not!” So she began to attack me from the rear and she put a hairy hand or a hairy feet beneath me in order to remove me from my place, but she could not. So my soul said to me: “Recite something from the Qur’ān!” But I did not, since I said: “For the sake of a creature I will not recite. Then she left me tenderly and amorously, and afterwards she returned and said: “Here you are, I have brought you a hot roasted fish freshly taken from the net of the fisherman called so and so, and I have brought you a sweet pomegranate having no stones, which is permitted to be eaten (ḥalāl), and which [was grown] on an allowed (mubāḥ) mountain.” When I woke up, I saw a fried fish and a sweet pomegranate having no stones by my side, but I did not taste it at all, but I left it and I went away.”

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27 The interpretation of the story requires to mention that the grammatical gender of both nafs (soul) and ḥayya (snake) is feminine, therefore the feminine third-person singular pronoun recurring in the text can refer to both of them, which makes the text ambiguous, presumably on purpose. In my opinion the snake here symbolizes the soul that urges to evil (an-nafs al-ammāra bi-s-sū’).

28 The reading is dubious.
POOL FILLED WITH WATER
[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 6b, lines 3-20]

[3] Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ḡawharī al-Baġdāḏī said:
[4] “I was making the pilgrimage and when we passed between al-Ḥazīmīya and al-Ȁghar
[5] the people became very thirsty. We also suffered from thirst with them. So I
[6] got off my camel
[7] in order to seek someone who could give me some water, but I did not find
[8] anyone. I remained behind the rear of the company
[9] because I was so afflicted by thirst. Then I passed by an empty pool,
[10] which the company had already left behind. I looked into it and I saw a man
[12] in the middle of the pool, wearing tattered rags. He made a sign with the
[13] head toward me, [as if saying]: “Drink some water!”
[14] When I saw him I descended to the pool. When he sensed me he stood up
[15] and left the pool.
[16] I approached the place where he had been sitting and I saw a small hole
[17] out of which water was flowing into the pool. I drank my fill, and I joined
[18] the caravan, which had already stopped for a rest one or two miles further
[19] on. I took
[20] my water-skin from my companion and I returned to the pool. I filled the
[21] water-skin and brought it
[22] while the people were having a rest. When they saw me bringing water on
[23] my shoulder, the people also
[24] wanted to draw water.29 So they returned [to the pool]. They drank and
[25] watered their camels,
[26] but I remained there confused because of what had happened to me. When
[27] the people were gone I said to my companion: “Mount [your camel]!”
[28] I went back to see the pool, and behold, on its two rims there were camel-
[29] drivers throwing their buckets [into the pool]
[30] and drawing water, and waves were clashing in it! I said: “I believe in God,
[31] God is indeed almighty!” •

29 The reading is dubious. صيمة can be interpreted as a nomen vicis from the stem Occurred, meaning “abstention”. The word ḥ-l-f is probably in Accusative (= adverbial case), but the case ending is not indicated, as it is normal in Middle Arabic. The stem ḥ-l-f can bear the meaning “remaining behind” or can be an equivalent of “ḥilf” = the act of drawing water. See Lane, sub voce “ḥalafa” and “ḥilf”.
MEETING WITH ḤİDR

[T-S Arabic 41.1, fol. 6b, line 21 – fol. 7a, line 18]

[21] 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid related

[21] on the authority of Ḥasan al-Qaddār ad-Dīnawarī that he said: “I set out on my way to the monastery of Banū Rabī'a

[22] but some of my companions gathered around me, and asked me not to take the

[23] road [I wanted]. But I said: “I have no other possibility.” When they saw that I was so resolute, they said:

[fol. 7a] [1] “Then go on the desert road, so that no dangerous person would meet you!” When I departed

[2] and I was alone in the desert, thirst and heat became so insupportable that I decided to

[3] return. But I was too proud to return, so I went on steadily in the intense

[4] heat. Suddenly, there was a man standing in my way and he said to me: “Hey you, beware of the lion!” He was continuously

[5] waving with his hand and I beheld the lion in the direction of his hand. But when he lifted his hand,

[6] I did not see anything. And when he continued doing this for a long time and I was fatigued, I said to him: “Hey you! If you make signs

[7] for me with your hand, I see the lion, but when you lift it [your hand], I don’t see anything!” He said:

[8] “And where do you want [to go], boy?” I said: “I want to go to a certain place” – which I specified to him

[9] then – and he said to me: “Give me your hand!” So I gave him my hand, and all of a sudden I was in that place where

[10] I wanted [to go] to! He said: “I returned from my journey to al-Ḡunayd and I told him

[11] what happened to me.” He said to me: “How did the man look like?” I described him his outfit and the cloth

[12] he was wearing, the cloth of our companions, the faqīrs (aṣḥābunā al-fuqārā'). He said to me: “Yes, he was the one who succour (al-muġīṯ)

[13] the people of Truth (ahl al-ṣidq) at all times.” • 'Abd Allāh ar-Rahmān said:

[14] “Yes, he was the Ḥiḍr,

[15] peace may be with our Prophet and with him, and his name is succour (al-ḡawj) because when God – may he be exalted – wills

[16] to supply the petitioners’ needs, or to deliver a servant from distress, or to ease his grief,

[17] He [God] moves His [Ḥiḍr’s] heart, and He delivers him [the servant] by means of him [the Ḥiḍr], and then his needs will be supplied, since this does not entail whispering
[17] to other than God. He [Ḫiḍr] visits his brethren (iḫwān) from among the righteous of this nation, and he is glad,
[18] pleased and delighted at their obedience to God, may His name be exalted.”

REFERENCES

A. Primary Sources


B. Secondary sources