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# The Chinese Sufi Wiqāyatullāh Ma Mingxin and the Construction of his Sanctity in *Kitāb al-Jahri*

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**Abstract:** By contrast to the majority of the Muslim authors of Chinese origin who composed their literary works in the Chinese language, the authors of the Jahriyya Sufi order, a still active branch of the Naqshbandiyya network rooted mainly in the provinces of Gansu and Ningxia, have produced a small number of texts in the Arabic language and through this means they have recorded the conflict-ridden history of their *menhuan* and left behind a description of their belief-system. The main focus in this article lies on the sanctity (*wilāya*) of Ma Mingxin Wiqāyatullāh (died 1781), founder (*daozu* 道祖) of the Jahriyya order, as remembered and construed by his hagiographers in general and by the author of the *Kitāb al-Jahri*, Mānsūr Ma Xuezhi (end of 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> c.), in particular: in their construction, Mingxin's sanctity manifests itself in miracles, predictions, exorcisms and spiritual states. The text of the *K. al-Jahri* which is the most comprehensive of the hagiographical writings of the Jahriyya as well as the other works of this group (e. g. *Manāqib*; *Rashahāt*) have all been transmitted in manuscript form within the Sufi order, they have been published in facsimile and been partly translated into Chinese. Hence a second focus has been laid on the codicology of the manuscript of the *K. al-Jahri*, the basis of this study. Although the article mainly takes a codicological, philological and phenomenological approach to the subject of Mingxin's sanctity, the historical background to his career as portrayed in the Chinese and Western-language studies has also been taken into consideration.

**Keywords:** Sufism, Chinese islam, sancticity

## 1 Chinese Sufism

Sufism in its organized form entered China relatively late, coming from Central Asia which is the home of the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order of Bahā' al-Dīn

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Naqshband of Bukhārā (d. 791/1389). Bahā' al-Dīn's order has come to predominate mystical Islam in China – the orders of the Jahriyya (Zheherenyeh 哲赫忍耶 or Jehelinyeh 哲赫林耶), Huasi 華寺, Mufuti 穆夫提 etc. may all be considered offshoots of the Naqshbandiyya. Islamic mysticism in China has often been called *daotang* 道堂 or *jiaotang* 教堂 [“Hall of the path”; “Hall of the teaching”], and it has been organized around the domed tomb of the founder (*gongbei* 拱北 [of Persian *gumbād*, “cupola”]).<sup>1</sup> The spiritual pedigree of the Sufi shaykh on which his authority rested is called *menhuan* 門宦, the equivalent of the Arabic term *silsila*. Besides, *Menhuan* also implies the hereditary transmission of the master's *baraka* (charisma), and hence leadership of the order. The Sufi orders in China are usually listed under the four headings Khafiyya, Jahriyya, Qādiriyya, Kubrawiyya and in each group there are again various *Menhuan* which were founded by individual shaykhs.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the Sufism of the *Menhuan*, in China there has also been the phenomenon of a literary mysticism<sup>3</sup> which flourished between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in particular. Authors such as Wang Daiyu 王岱與 (d. 1670)<sup>4</sup> or Liu Zhi 劉智 (d. 1745)<sup>5</sup> – to mention only two of the most famous names – have tried to embed the history of ancient China within the narrative of the Bible and the Koran and they added a moral theology making use of Confucian terminology.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese language literature of Islam, imbued with Sufism and generally subsumed under the heading *Han kitabu* (“Chinese Islamic canon”),<sup>7</sup> however, is not the subject of this article.

I will concentrate instead on the mystical brotherhoods which infiltrated into China through missionaries of Naqshbandī persuasion such as the famous

1 For the term *gongbei* see Aubin 1990: 519.

2 Cf. Trippner 1961: 147–168 (section A.: Die „sechs großen Men-huan“); Aubin 1960–2004, X: 337a–339a; Ma Tong 2000: 271–332; Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 84–96 [Jahriyya], 152–227 [Khafiyya = Hufuyel], 228–243 [Qādiriyya], 333–336 [Kubrawiyya].

3 Cf. Aubin 1990: 493–515.

4 Aubin 1990: 494; Murata 2000: 43–79 (ch. “the works of Wang Tai-yü”); Luo Wanshou 2007: 585; Zhou 2008: 63–66.

5 Luo Wanshou 2007: 321–322; Zhou 2008: 94–97.

6 Aubin 1960–2004, X: 337a. The classical Chinese Muslim authors viewed Confucianism as a degenerated version of Islam (cf. Aubin 1990: 513). Françoise Aubin 1990: 513 in her seminal article “En Islam Chinois: Quels Naqshbandis?” identifies the following six Muslim scholars as her main sources for the Chinese language “literary Sufism”: Wang Daiyu; Liu Zhi; Ma Zhu (馬注; d. ca. 1709; cf. Luo Wanshou 2007b: 355); Lan Xu (藍煦; 19<sup>th</sup> c.; cf. Yu Zhengui 2007: 561); Ma Dexin (馬德新, also called Ma Fuchu 復初; d. 1874; cf. Na et al. 2007: 330); Ma Kaike (馬開科; a disciple of Ma Dexin; cf. Yu Zhengui 2007a: 123).

7 Cf. Lipman 1997: 72–79.

and politically ambitious shaykh of Kashgar, Khwāja Āfāq (Apake Hezhuo 阿帕克和卓) Hidāyatullāh, who died in 1694.<sup>8</sup> Various brotherhoods claimed descent from Khwāja Āfāq, e. g. Ma Laichi 馬來遲 (d. 1766),<sup>9</sup> head of the Huasi Menhuan and main rival of Ma Mingxin 馬明心, Wiqāyatullāh (his *daohao* 道号 or Sufi name), and also the founder of the Qādiriyya, oldest of all Sufi orders in China, Qi Jingyi 祁靜一 (d. 1719),<sup>10</sup> is said to have been influenced by him.<sup>11</sup>

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Ma Mingxin, propagandist of a renewal of Islam which again was carried by the Naqshbandiyya, asked for strict adherence to the Sharia, and in mysticism he taught a vocal *dhikr*, “remembrance of God”, accompanied by specific movements of the head<sup>12</sup> and breathing techniques.<sup>13</sup> The Qing dynasty government and non-members called his school Xinjiao 新教 [New religion], in order to distinguish it from other, older religious currents which developed from the Āfāqiyya, called Laojiao 老教 [Old religion], or Khafiyya (Hufuye 虎伏耶) where *dhikr* was practiced silently.<sup>14</sup> As a result of rivalries, riots erupted between the Menhuans and the imperial government sent punitive expeditions which caused whole areas to become depopulated.<sup>15</sup> By contrast to the Jahriyya, the Khafiyya tended to be on good terms with the Qing government. Their founder, Ma Laichi, whose Huasi Menhuan followed the Khafiyya orientation,<sup>16</sup> like Ma Mingxin, travelled to Yemen and to the Hijāz. He is remembered as one who converted legions of Buddhists in Qinghai<sup>17</sup> and who also proselytized among the Salars whose ancestors were said to have entered China in the Ming period from Samarqand.

## 1.1 Wiqāyatullāh and the Ṭarīqa Jahriyya

Wiqāyatullāh Muḥammad Ja‘far or, by his Chinese name, Ma Mingxin (lived 1719–1781)<sup>18</sup> was the founder of the Ṭarīqa Jahriyya or “Sufi order of those who recite God’s name and the Prophet’s praise (*zansheng* 讚聖) aloud (*gaonianpai* 高念派)”

<sup>8</sup> Chen Guoguang 2007: 31; Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 40–62; Hamut 2011: 68–76.

<sup>9</sup> Trippner 1961: 152–156; Lipman 1997: 64–72; Ma Tong 2007: 337–338.

<sup>10</sup> Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 53–54, 73–74; Ma Tong 2007b: 445–446.

<sup>11</sup> Aubin 1960–2004, X: 338.

<sup>12</sup> Forbes 1960–2004, V: 851a.

<sup>13</sup> On the rites of practicing *dhikr* within the Naqshbandiyya (Mujaddidiyya) order see Babadjanov 2004: 298–299; for the controversy over the silent and vocal *dhikr* see Algar 1976.

<sup>14</sup> Aubin 1960–2004, X: 338.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Lipman 1999: 556–575; Forbes 1960–2004, V: 851a.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Aubin 1990: 517.

<sup>17</sup> Trippner 1961: 163–168.

<sup>18</sup> Ma Tong 2007a: 345; Forbes 1960–2004, V: 850b–852b.

which has spread above all in the provinces of Ningxia, Gansu and Qinghai, i. e. in Northwest China.<sup>19</sup> Mingxin was called by his disciples Daozu Taiye 道祖太爺, i. e. “grand master or pathfounder”, a term perhaps borrowed from Taoism.<sup>20</sup>

## 1.2 Hagiography of the Jahriyya

By contradistinction to other Sufi orders which became implanted in China, the Jahriyya can boast of a number of texts on the history of the Menhuan written in Arabic. Two of these are of a particular interest.<sup>21</sup> Firstly, the oldest work, entitled *Rashahāt* [percolations]<sup>22</sup> and composed by Guanli Ye 閻裏爺 Abū l-Amān 'Abdalqādir of Fuqiang (伏羌) in Gansu,<sup>23</sup> of which unfortunately the Arabic<sup>24</sup> text

<sup>19</sup> The history of the Jahriyya has been studied by Chinese and non-Chinese scholars, and by J. Fletcher (1995: 1–46), in his seminal essay “The Naqshbandiyya in northwest China”, in particular; also cf. Lipman 1997: 85–93. However, the Arabic (and Persian) language hagiographical works of the Jahriyya do not seem to have been available to the above Western researchers. Ye 2009a only makes a limited use of them. In commenting on the Arabic hagiographical traditions I have made use, in particular, of the studies of Ma Tong (books in Chinese), a number of articles in the Chinese Encyclopedia of Islam, and in a last revision of this paper I have also incorporated Aubin’s article.

<sup>20</sup> The master was addressed as “Ye” [father], as were the local mandarins, and after his death he became the *Taiye*, i. e. great father (Aubin 1990: 557; Papas 2007: 322, fn., holds that “Taiye” is equivalent of Persian *pīr*). The master’s wife was called “Nainai”, and the sons “Baba” (Aubin 1990: 558); on the provincial and district level the head of the order was called *ra’is* (Aubin 1990: 559); the title “Laorenjia” designated the masters more abstractly (Aubin 1990: 557). On the resonance between Taoist and Sufi ideas cf. Lipman 1997: 60, fn. 7.

<sup>21</sup> Besides these two works there is also an Arabic language hagiography entitled *Manāqib* composed by one Zhan Ye in 1931. The text which has been published as a facsimilated manuscript (for internal use only) contains biographies of five masters the last of whom is Ma Hualong, the Shisan Taiye.

<sup>22</sup> The title echoes the *Rashahāt-i 'ayn al-hayāt* on the lives of the great masters of the Naqshbandiyya composed by 'Alī b. Ḥusayn al-Kāshīfī Ṣafī (d. 939/1532; Tosun 2008: XXXV: 8–9). A copy of the *Rashahāt* of Kāshīfī was seen by me in the Jāhrī convent Bangqiao daotang 板橋道堂 near Wuzhong, in about 2010. The expression *rashha* [sg. of *rashahāt*] has been used as a device of structuring Kāshīfī’s work in which it introduces the textual units.

<sup>23</sup> Very little is known about him. Zhang Chengzhi writes that he lived in the first half of the nineteenth century (Guanli 1993: 7 [introd.]).

<sup>24</sup> According to Bakhtyar 1994, I: 112, the language in which the text has been written is a mixture of Arabic and Persian. Yang Wanbao, the translator of the *Rashahāt*, notes that the text has been composed in the Persian language from what corresponds to p. 74 in the translation until the end (Guanli Ye 1993: 74, n.). The *Rashahāt* is declared sacred by the members of the Jeherenyeh Menhuan near Wuzhong, and they do not allow non-initiates to inspect the text (as I have been told by Yang Wanbao in 2014).

is not accessible. However, the text can be read as a Chinese translation made by the Ahong Yang Wanbao of Ningxia, and edited under the title *Reshiha'er* 热什哈爾 by the novelist and author of *Xinlingshi* 心靈史, Zhang Chengzhi, in 1993. As the manuscripts of the *Rashahāt* seem to be lost or inaccessible, I have concentrated for this study on the second of this small group of texts, entitled *Kitāb al-Jahri* and composed by the *Ra'is* (reyisi 热伊斯) of the Shagou 沙溝 branch of the Jahriyya, Ma Xuezhi 馬學智 (Lao Erye 老二爺),<sup>25</sup> who in the preface of the Arabic text calls himself Muḥammad Maṇṣūr Allāh Burhānaddin (d. 1923).<sup>26</sup> His work is an elaboration of the *Rashahāt* from which it differs mainly – as far as can be judged on the basis of the Chinese translation – by adding the *vitas* of some further successors of Wiqāyatullāh. It contains stories or parts thereof excerpted from the *Rashahāt* (*kalām jaddinā al-thānī 'Abd al-Qādir*), e. g. on the authority of Wiqāyatullāh's son, Muḥammad 'Abdallāh, "our Talang Laozu" or *jaddunā al-kabīr*,<sup>27</sup> of Talang which nowadays is the Mojiang district of Yunnan. The first four biographies of the *K. al-Jahri*, including the introduction (p. 1–10), have been translated into Chinese by a group of scholars from Xiji 西吉, Ningxia, and published with the approval by the order<sup>28</sup> ca. 1997 as *Daotong shizhuan* 道統史傳.

### 1.3 The *K. al-Jahri*

#### 1.3.1 Language, sources, content

The text of the *K. al-Jahri* is written in the Arabic language<sup>29</sup> and it shows a few deviations from standard Arabic with regard to grammar and spelling.

<sup>25</sup> I. e. representative of the master of the Jahriyya in the eighth generation, called Ma Zhenwu (d. 1960) who began to lead the order in 1920 (cf. Aubin 1990: 518, fn.; Yang 2009: 165).

<sup>26</sup> Lived from 1850–1923 (Ma Zhongjie 2007: 738). The scribe of the main portion of the Ms. of the *K. al-Jahri*, Ibrāhīm, servant of al-Shaykh Maṇṣūr, gives the author's biography which he calls *manāqib*, on pp. 423–428. He explains, i.a., that the author, *al-jadd al-thānī*, was the representative (*wazīr Mawlānā*) of Shaykh Ṣadīqullāh (Riyāḍ al-Dīn Ma Yuanzhang [died in 1920]). At first, however, he was a disciple of Shaykh Ṭab'atullāh (Ma Hualong; d. 1871), and thereafter of Shaykh Hilāl al-Dīn (Ma Jincheng). He owned a large library, he observed the Islamic law strictly and he also was a talented calligrapher. He had an excellent understanding of the *Sharḥ Manlā Jāmī* (i. e. Jāmī's commentary on the *Kāfiya* of Ibn al-Ḥājib on grammar) and he was an expert in Chinese studies at the same time. His voice which he raised in the performance of dhikr would move the listeners to tears. He died at an age of seventy or so and his tomb is situated near that of Ḥaqīqullāh (Ma Yide), son of the Chuanchang Taiye, at Honglefū, Qingtongxia.

<sup>27</sup> Maṇṣūr 1933: 23, l. 3–4; Maṇṣūr/Ma 1997: 7–9.

<sup>28</sup> Oral communication by Yang Wanbao, in 2014.

<sup>29</sup> However, it also shows a few para-text insertions in the Persian language (e. g. in the third chapter).

The author did not observe the rules, for instance, governing the use of the imperative. In the negative command the jussive is ignored, i. e. the ending *-ūna* is not elided as it should be.<sup>30</sup> Elsewhere the jussive is observed but the particle of negation *lā* is replaced, incorrectly, by *lam*.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, in the positive imperative, incorrectly, the imperfect is used.<sup>32</sup> There are *orthographical mistakes* for which of course the copyist of the manuscript text may have to be blamed and not the author. *Tā' marbūṭa* is written as *tā' mamdūda*, e. g. in the expression *Ḩadrat Mawlānā* which is obviously due to the influence of the Persian language. However, there are some inconsistencies in this respect: In the construct state, e. g. in the name *Wiqāyatullāh*, *tā' marbūṭa* is written according to the rules of standard Arabic. Besides, in words like *dalā'il*, hamza is replaced by *yā'*, an orthographic aberration which of course is found not only in Arabic manuscripts of the periphery but also in those that originated in the central lands.

The text also includes a few Chinese language passages written in the Arabic script, i. e. *xiaoerjing* 小兒經.<sup>33</sup> Four lines of Chinese poetry which *Wiqāyatullāh* recited extemporaneously in answer to the request of some “insincere dignitaries” in Xi'an are transcribed in the Arabic script.<sup>34</sup>

Sources quoted by the author in the chapter on *Wiqāyatullāh*'s vita include,<sup>35</sup> besides the *Rashahāt*, the famous renewer of Naqshbandī mysticism, the Indian Sufi *Aḥmad Sirhindī* (d. 1624),<sup>36</sup> generally known as *Imām-i Rabbānī* or *Mujaddid-i alf-i thānī*,<sup>37</sup> and a third, literary source mentioned in the text of

30 Instead of *lā tufarriṭū wa-lā tuqṣirū fī ṭalab al-masā'il* (“do not be neglectful while looking for proofs”) we read: *lā tufarriṭūna wa-lā tuqṣirūn* (Manṣūr 1933: 61, l. 4–5).

31 E. g. *lam taṭma'ū fī l-'ulūww*, “do not crave after high positions” (Manṣūr 1933: 60, u.).

32 E. g. *wa-tusri'ūna sur'at al-naml*, instead of *wa-'sra'ū* etc. (“be quick like the ants”; Manṣūr 1933: 61).

33 The name of the script (there are variants) has been related to children because it was used, i. a. in teaching children Islamic texts before they studied the Arabic language (cf. Bakhtyar 1994: 77; Feng Zenglie 2007: 618).

34 Manṣūr 1933: 28; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 14.

35 The introduction contains references to other writings in Arabic and Persian as well (e. g. *Manāqib Aḥmadiyya wa-l-maqāmāt al-Sa'idiyya* on the life of *Aḥmad Sa'īd al-Fāruqī al-Naqshbandī*, written by the latter's son, *Muhammad Maṣhar al-Aḥmadī al-Madanī* [Manṣūr 1933: 10, l. 3]; *Rūḥ al-bayān* [Manṣūr 1933: 11, l. 10]).

36 Wu/Tan 2007: 609–610; Papas 2007: 327.

37 In a discourse on sanctity, *Wiqāyatullāh* refers to Sirhindī according to whom the *walī* at times may well stand above the Prophet, for “often the wave is higher than the ocean's surface” (Manṣūr 1933: 31; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 18). Accordingly, the veneration of the master within the *Jahriyya* was even placed above that of the Prophet and the visit to the saint's tomb replaced the pilgrimage to Mekka and Madina (cf. Aubin 1990: 556). This of course contradicts the Sunnī dogma which stipulates that the saint can never reach the state of a prophet (cf. *al-Ūshī*, *Bad' al-amālī*, v. 33 [*wa-lam yafḍul waliyyun qatū dahrān/nabiyyān aw rasūlān* etc.]; SBB Hs. or.

the vita is the commentary titled *Ashi* “at-i *Lama* ‘āt by the equally famous Naqshbandī author Nūr al-Dīn Jāmī (d. 898/1492). Also the sacred text of the Zheherenye, the amplification of al-Būṣīrī’s (d. 694/1296)<sup>38</sup> *Burda* called *Mukhammas* (*Muhanmaisi* 穆罕麦斯),<sup>39</sup> is quoted,<sup>40</sup> viz. three verses in support of a saying attributed to Wiqāyatullāh.<sup>41</sup>

I have used the Arabic manuscript in the facsimile edition of 1933 as the source text as well as the partial Chinese translation of 1997 where the

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4496). Sirhindī is quoted with a very short saying (in Arabic) which is commented approvingly by Wiqāyatullāh (also in *Rashahāt* = Guanli 1993: 19). The quotation may have been taken from his collection of Persian language letters known as *Maktūbāt-i rabbānī* which are studied by the Jahriyya as well as by other Chinese Sufis, i.a., those of the Qādirī Guo Gongbei of Linxia. Nowadays, in Honglefū, the central Jāhrī convent of Ningxia, in the Jinjibao region, as also in the Xijitan 西吉灘 Gongbei near Xiji, the *Maktūbāt* are mainly read in the Arabic version printed in Mecca in 1316 (personal observation). The letters, indicative of their wide influence in Chinese Sufism (cf. Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 18) have been translated into Chinese repeatedly, the most recent transl. having been made by Ma Shengzhi of Guanghe near Lanzhou (Hongkong: Tianma Chubangongsi, 2001).

**38** Brockelmann 1937–1949: I, 308–314. The amplification has been attributed to Muḥammad Tabādkānī [ibn Ṣāfi] Ṭūsī (cf. Tabādkānī 2012: 2 [introd. by the translator Song Lin]) who is mentioned by Ḥājjī Khalīfa (1835–1858), IV: 527 stating that the poet (his name has been severely corrupted in Flügel’s edition) died in the year 900 (1494–1495).

**39** The members of the Jahriyya believe that their sacred writings, the *Mukhammas* and *Madā’ih*, both in praise of the prophet, were brought to China from Yemen by Ma Mingxin (cf. Ma Tong 2000: 274). In the *Mukhammas*, recited in their rituals, they discovered the names of the masters of their *silsila*: the name of Muḥammad b. Zayn, last of the “seven Yemenite masters” and immediate predecessor of Mingxin, for instance, they recognized in the expression *haqq al-hudā* [truth of the guidance] in verse 72 of the *Mukhammas* (cf. Ye 2009b: 167, referring to Ma Xuezhi Manṣūr). In the *Madā’ih*, on the other hand, they found phrases believed to refer to their masters; e. g., they understood the expression *badat* (*la-nā fi rabī’in tal’atu l-qamar* [there appeared to us a rising moon in a spring-time]), occurring in the seventh *juz’* of the ode on the prophet, to be a clear reference to the above Ibn Zayn (cf. Nuṣratullāh 2009: 87), the disciple of ‘Abd al-Khāliq (cf. Ma/Wang 2005: 87). As the chapters of the *Madā’ih* refer to eight masters only, some have judged that the line of transmission within the Jahriyya has ended with the seventh successor of Mingxin, hence the saying “liqi waiba” 里七 外八 (seven masters inside [Arabia], eight masters outside [in China]); in Nuṣratullāh 2009: 6, however, the phrase runs “lijiu waijiu” (nine inside, nine outside; the chain starts with Uways al-Qarānī and ends with Zayn, ‘Abd al-Khāliq, Ibn Zayn in the last three generations before Mingxin, first generation of the “waijiu”). The last Yemenite master is believed to have asked that the eighth successor of Mingxin must come to Yemen again in order to renew the *baraka* of the line of transmission (cf. Aubin 1990: 555).

**40** Manṣūr 1933: 64, l. 1–2.

**41** Manṣūr 1933: 63, pu-u.

Arabic text is too obscure to reveal the intended meanings either because of extreme succinctness or because of grammatical mistakes or illegibility of the manuscript. Sometimes the translation adds topographical names not given in the Arabic text or in translation only or it makes the names more easily intelligible than does the Arabic transcription.<sup>42</sup> The translation may also be read as a well-informed commentary made by adherents of the school for the school.

The vita of Wiqāyatullāh, the basis of this study, begins on p.15 of the facsimile as the first of 9 chapters and is preceded by a lengthy introduction. The division of text into nine chapters has been chosen because the number corresponds to the nine heavens and to the nine signs revealed to Moses (cf. Sura 17/109).<sup>43</sup> The introduction also includes remarks by the author about his motivation for writing the text.<sup>44</sup> Mansūr gives a classification of the saints (*inna al-awliyā' mukhtalifūna*) whom he divides into various types such as gnostics ('ārif), mystics attaching importance to conduct (*ahl al-mu'āmala*), lovers, confessors of God's unity (*ahl al-tawhīd*) etc. He deplores the exoteric scholars' tendency to vilify the saints and gives as reason that they only look at outward actions while disregarding their inner states. Therefore he considers it appropriate to compare the relationship of the scholars (*fuqahā'*) and the saints with that of the pagan Pharaohs and Moses the prophet.<sup>45</sup> There follows a presentation of the *ijāza mu'an'ana*, i. e. authorization to initiate novices into Sufism which Wiqāyatullāh had obtained from his Yemenite shaykh and which he transmitted to his successors,<sup>46</sup> firstly to Muḥammad Rabbānī al-Pinlianfuwī (p. 70), then to Muḥammad Jālal al-Linzhōuwī (of Lingzhou; p. 105), down to the seventh successor called 'Abd al-Jāmi'<sup>47</sup> Ma Zhenwu whose vita is given in the eighth

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<sup>42</sup> E. g. the place name 煙平嘴山; the *Daotong shizhuan* has Yanpingzui mountain (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 8) for *al-jabal al-YNPNDHWY* in *K. al-Jahri* (Manṣūr 1933: 21, l. 9); the toponym *Gaoshan* 高山 [High hill] (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 33) is given in Arabic translation, viz. *al-jabal al-āli* (Manṣūr 1933: 45).

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Manṣūr 1933: 14, l. 13.

<sup>44</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 3, l. 4) says that he wrote the *K. al-Jahri* by order of his Shaykh Muḥammad Riyād al-Dīn: "Write down with your pen (*qalam*) what you remember of the ancestors so that it will not become lost for the later generations".

<sup>45</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 5.

<sup>46</sup> For the successors see Yang 2009: 163–165.

<sup>47</sup> Not: 'Abd al-Jāmil, as erroneously transcribed by Aubin 1990: 527. Also the Arabic name of the martyr Ma Hualong whose heart was pulled out of his breast while alive – the severed organ was to be sacrificed to the spirit of Liusong mountain 劉松山之靈 (Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 85) – has to be corrected in Tab'atullāh (cf. Manṣūr 1933: 170), for faulty Ta'bīratullāh (Aubin 1990: 525).

chapter of this book (pp. 239 ff.).<sup>48</sup> There follows an explanation of the ritual practices (*bayān al-qurubāt al-mulaqqanāt*) which were followed by the *Jahris* and passed down in the *Menhuan*. The *qurubāt*, works that can help one draw closer to God, include such things as reciting the Koran according to the traditional precepts, for instance, to complete the recitation (*khatm*) at Sunday night (*laylat al-ithnayn*); to read the *Suwar Khwājagān*,<sup>49</sup> i. e. Koranic chapters or

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**48** There have been multiple lines of initiatic transmission from Ma Mingxin which were both hereditary and non-hereditary. The main line from Mingxin was non-hereditary although it turned hereditary after the second successor, the Chuanchang Taiye (Aubin 1990: 532), in 1817, as a result of the Chinese influence (Aubin 1990: 542). Mingxin himself, by contrast to the Huasi *Menhuan*, had rejected the hereditary transmission of the charismatic power (Aubin 1990: 521).

According to Manṣūr 1933: 70, the Pingliang Taiye, Muḥammad Rabbānī was appointed by Mingxin as his first successor. Thereafter the Chuanchang Taiye, Ma Datian, Quṭballāh Muḥammad Jalāl, the son of another disciple of Mingxin called Qi Baba (Manṣūr 1933: 106; Aubin 1990: 529), was appointed successor by the Pingliang Taiye (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 103). Quṭballāh had still studied with Mingxin and by his command he engendered his oldest son, Ḥaqīqallah, who became known as Siyueba (“8<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month”) Baba (for the masters of the chain through Pingliang Taiye, see Aubin 1990: 524).

The physical descendants of Mingxin, firstly his son Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh, through his wife, of Caoyagou, are designated the “saints of the line of transmission” in *K. al-Jahri* (*yatawallas minhā M. ‘AA. wal-awliyā’ al-mutasalsilūn*). Fittingly, there were attempts by some of Mingxin’s children to obtain the leadership, even during their father’s lifetime, but according to Guanli Ye 1993: 101, Mingxin rejected the request. He pointed out to his son, “the older brother of his daughter Baishui Gugu” (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 74), that the leadership lay in the hands of Quṭballāh. In Manṣūr 1933: 128, the second son of Mingxin (*jaddunā al-thānī* [our second master]), perhaps identical with the above older brother, appears in connection with Quṭballāh whom he met during the latter’s deportation to the North, viz. to Chuanchang 船廠, i. e. the dockyard of Jilin 吉林, hence his name. At some resting place en route, Quṭballāh copied out the *silsila* in the presence of the son. The founder of the Shagou branch situated between Xiji and Guyuan in Ningxia, Ma Yuanzhang (Aubin 1990: 538) is said to have been the fourth generation descendant of Mingxin, through his oldest son, Ma Shunqing (d. 1851; Aubin 1990: 523, fn.), who was banned to Talang in Yunnan after the execution of his father (Ma Tong 2007c: 490; Aubin 1990: 522–523). Mingxin’s grandson Shams “Yunnan San Taiye”, Ma Shilin, was the father of this “Shagou Taiye”. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c., two competing lines of transmission within the *Jahriyya* established themselves in Gansu, one led by Ma Yuanzhang and the other by Ma Jinxi, the younger grandson of Ma Hualong (Aubin 1990: 556). Rescued from the punishment of castration through the bravery of Ma Yuanzhang, Jinxi was installed in Zhangjiachuan, south of Pingliang, whereas Yuanzhang settled in Shagou. In the 20<sup>th</sup> c. the *Jahriyya* was revived within the Banqiao *Menhuan* of Jinjibao, thanks to the efforts of the tenth son of Jinxi called Ma Teng’ai (Aubin 1990: 543). From the generation of Yuanzhang and Jinxi on, the leaders of various branches (*ra’is*) have created their autonomous *Menhuans*, or family fiefs (Aubin 1990: 559).

**49** According to the servant of Manṣūr, the author of *K. al-Jahri*, the latter would read the *Suwar Khwājagān*, “in the manner of Bahā’ al-Dīn-i Naqshband”, during the ‘*amal* ceremony on Thursdays (cf. Manṣūr 1933: 427).

passages, believed to be associated with the proto-history of the Naqshbandiyya, the Khwājagān, whose names are given from Ghujduwānī down to Bahā' al-Dīn, namely to recite the opening Sura seven times, to read the prayer on the Prophet (*Ṣalāt 'alā l-nabī*) etc. Another practice highlighted in this section is God's remembrance performed vocally on one's knees in the ritual circle (*dā'ira*) – Manṣūr explains that vocal *dhikr* has a stronger effect than silent remembrance in dispelling stray thoughts (*khawāṭir*) from the heart.<sup>50</sup> An important practice performed by the Jahrīs, finally, is the recitation of the *Mukhammas al-Qaṣīda*, i. e. the amplification of the “mantle-poem”, *al-Burda*, which was composed in praise of the Prophet by the Egyptian Sufi al-Būṣīrī (*supra*).<sup>51</sup>

### 1.3.2 The manuscript of *Kitāb al-Jahrī* and its codicology

The manuscript in the facsimile publication consists of 429 numbered pages of 15 lines on each page of yellow paper and it has been written by the hands of at least two different scribes. The style of writing are variations of the so-called *khaṭṭ-i ḫīnī*. The *ḥīnī* style of Arabic script, according to some researchers, shows an influence of Chinese characters, its letters, generally speaking, are “rounded and flowing [...] with slender anklets and fat feet”.<sup>52</sup> Also the Arabic in the vita of Wiqāyatullāh has been written in a distinctively Chinese style, mostly with full diacritical points and a few vocalizations. Letters *rā'* and *zay* often are drawn downwards as a straight line (without curvature), and also *waw* occasionally ends with a straight tapered line.<sup>53</sup> Sometimes however *rā'* is bent and its end drawn upwards to touch the adjacent letter thereby forming unfamiliar ligatures.<sup>54</sup> The line of *nūn* in the final position is drawn upwards touching its dot in words like *min* or *'an*. Final *lām* ends with a loop and irregularly does not reach the sublinear area, i. e. the space beneath the base line<sup>55</sup> and a similar loop may be found with final *kāf*. Letter *hā'* in the final position is written extremely small and it almost lacks the head.<sup>56</sup> On the whole it may be said that the *khaṭṭ-i ḫīnī* in this part of the manuscript seems somewhat compressed and the sublinear area is not fully exploited.

50 Manṣūr 1933: 12.

51 Manṣūr 1933: 427 used to recite the *Mukhammas al-Qaṣīda al-Burdiyya* after the night prayer, together with *Sūrat al-mulk*.

52 Cf. Sobieroj 2014: 103–104.

53 Manṣūr 1933: 45, 1.

54 E. g. Manṣūr 1933: 45, pu (*bi-amrihi*).

55 E. g. Manṣūr 1933: 45, 4–5.

56 E. g. Manṣūr 1933: 45, 5–6 ('ānaqa sāqahū *l-mubārak*).

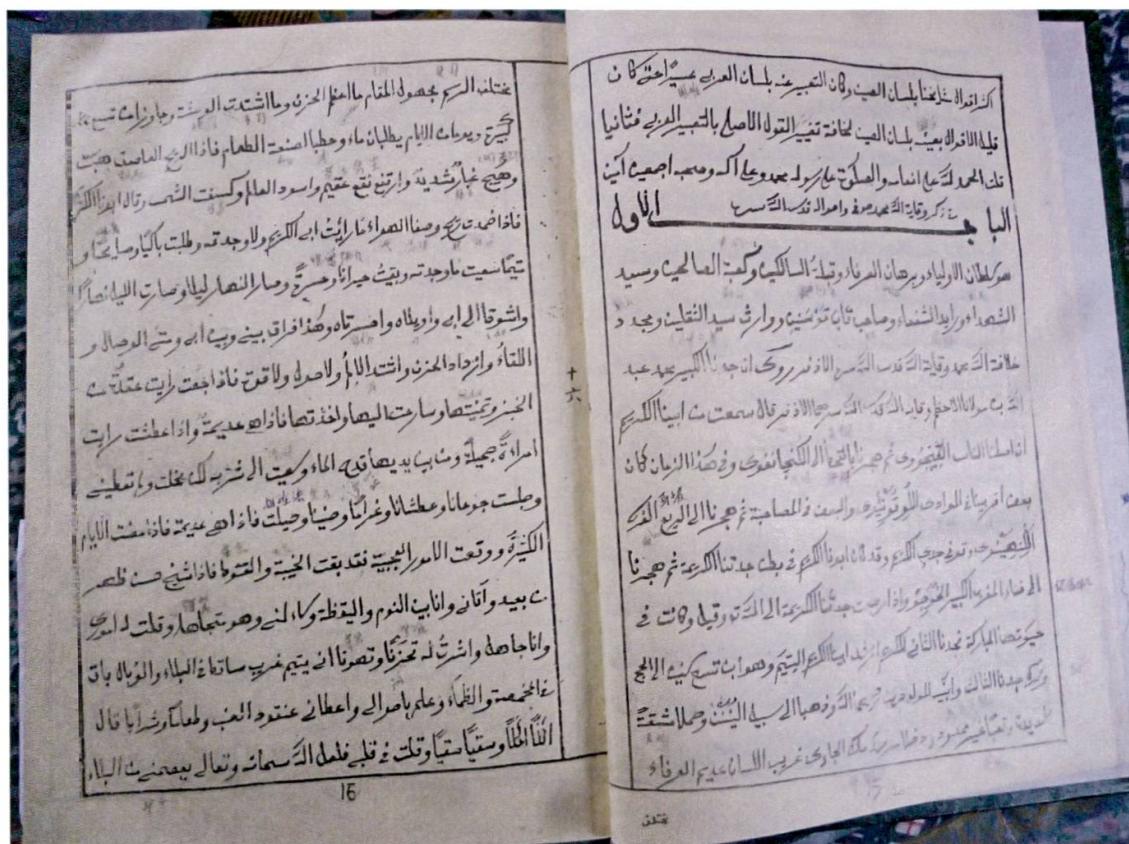


Illustration 1: Beginning of Wiqāyatullāh's biography. Mānṣūr, K. al-Jahrī, *al-bāb al-awwal*. Khatṭ-i ḫīnī script with Hanzi glosses by a user, mainly between the lines. Facsimile ed., pp. 15–16.

Catchwords have been entered in the left corner of the lower margin of the verso-page of each leaf. As they have been repeated as the first word of each following recto-page they served as a device for keeping the leaves of the manuscript in the right order. *Page numbers* have been entered additionally in the centre of the lower margin, presumably by a younger hand. In the inner margins the page numbers have also been entered in Chinese characters written vertically. The face of the text has been framed with a thick single line drawn with the help of a ruler. The first biographical chapter beginning p. 15 is preceded by the heading *al-bāb al-awwal* and it ends on p. 70. The final letter *bā'* of *bāb* is written with a broad extension, *mashq*, and encases the words, written in a miniature script, *fī dhikr Wiqāyatullāh Muḥammad Ṣūfī wa-ahwālih qaddasa llāhu sirrah*, i. e. “on the life and states of W., God may sanctify his secret” – a eulogy conventionally added to the name of a saint in Sufism. [ILL.] The vita is made up of about 65 unnumbered narrative units which are consistently introduced by the expression *ruwiya*, highlighted by overlining, i. e. a short line drawn above the Arabic word which means “it has

been transmitted etc.”; in the Chinese translation of the *Daotong shizhuan* the units are mostly introduced by the expression *xiangchuan* 相傳, “tradition” (rarely by *juchuan* 據傳 or *jushuo* 據說 [it has been said]). Apart from chapter headings and *ruwiya* (as well as the clusters of dots at the end of the four *Xiao'erjing*-verses)<sup>57</sup> no other devices seem to have been used for structuring the text. The Arabic script used for transcribing the Chinese poetry has been provided with full vowel signs, and the endings of the verses have been marked by clusters of three dots. A system of punctuation indicating the end of sentences has of course not been at work in the manuscript. Both the eighth<sup>58</sup> and ninth chapters end with a colophon the second of which (p. 429) includes the date 1352/1933 or “23rd year of the Republic” (*min al-sana al-minguowiyya*).<sup>59</sup>

## 2 The construction of the sanctity of Wiqāyatullāh

### 2.1 Islamic ideal of sanctity

In imitation of Muḥammad’s holy custom, *sunna*, Wiqāyatullāh was married and he had children. He lived in polygamy with two pious women who are designated *zawjatayn ṣāliḥatayn*<sup>60</sup> in the Arabic text of *K. al-Jahrī*. He entered the second marriage when he realized that his first wife, a woman from the Salar people, hence al-Jadda al-Sālāriyya, was infertile. However she was an ascetic who wove clothes for the *Mawlā* which he wore in the ritual assemblies called ‘*amal*’ and she prepared his meals with a grain mill which she carried in

57 Manṣūr 1933: 28.

58 Manṣūr 1933: 290.

59 The scribe of the main part of the text mentions his name on pp. 428–429 as Ibrāhīm, servant of al-Shaykh Manṣūr Allāh Burhān al-Dīn, al-Mullā... al-Kātib al-Khaichen al-Ṣīnī (i. e. of a place called Haicheng?). He says that he taught as a *mudarris* [professor] at the madrasas of a place called al-Jisrī al-Farāsī [“Horsebridge”] and that he settled in the Jinji district (Jinjixian). He adds some valuable information on the history of the copying of the work which the author self-deprecatingly called *Risāla aqṣariyya*. He was ordered by his master, the author, to make a copy of the work of which he gave him a manuscript. After the death of Manṣūr, his successor ‘Abd al-Khallāq [Ma Zhenwu], *ra’is al-umarā’*, ordered the scribe to come to Lingzhou where he resided at that time and to bring him his copy.

60 Manṣūr 1933: 61, l. 13. For a discussion of gender-specific forms of sanctity, based on the works of Sulamī (*Dhikr al-niswa*), Abū Nu‘aym (*Hilyat al-awliyā’*) and Ibn al-Jawzī (*Ṣifat al-ṣafwa*), see Senoglu 2012.

front of her breast.<sup>61</sup> The second wife, originating from Caoyagou, and therefore called al-Jadda aş-Şawyā‘quwiyya, by contrast, gave birth to three boys who transmitted the *silsila* or holy chain. After Wiqāyatullāh’s execution, his wife and three daughters were deported to Xinjiang.<sup>62</sup> The Mawlā characterized his relationship with his two wives in the words, “the Sālār woman lived (lit.: was) for herself, the Caoyagou woman lived for me because [...] the saints of the lineage were born from her”.<sup>63</sup>

The Islamic character of Wiqāyatullāh’s sanctity also shows itself in the description of his dwelling place: For some time he lived in a small cave with his Sālārī wife near a place called Mapo馬坡 which is compared with the cave of Ḥirā‘ near Mekka in which Muḥammad is said to have stayed with Abū Bakr,<sup>64</sup> the first “rightly-guided” caliph. Just as the Prophet of Islam received revelations in his seclusions mediated through the archangel, the Mawlā in his cave became annihilated in God (*fanā’ fī llāh*) when “the wind of union wafted” (*intasamat nīh wiṣāl Allāh*).<sup>65</sup>

## 2.2 Spiritual Training and ascription of Sanctity

Wiqāyatullāh had made the pilgrimage to Mekka in his early youth, at an age of nine years,<sup>66</sup> starting in Xiguan which was part of Hezhou, in 1728,<sup>67</sup> in the company of his uncle from whom he became separated in a sand-storm. He himself was rescued and after his arrival in the Yemen he was trained by a Sufi shaykh called Muḥammad b. Zayn<sup>68</sup> who initiated the young Muslim of

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61 Manṣūr 1933: 62; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 49.

62 Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 49; only one of the daughters survived the deportation to Ili in Xinjiang; the widow killed herself after having slain the drunken mandarin to whom she was given as a slave (cf. Aubin 1990: 522).

63 Manṣūr 1933: 49.

64 Manṣūr 1933: 59, l. 1–2.

65 Manṣūr 1933: 59; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 46.

66 Guanli Ye 1993: 5.

67 Ma Tong 2000a: 73.

68 The name of Muḥammad b. Zayn is mentioned both in the *ijāza* of the introduction to the *K. al-Jahri* (Manṣūr 1933: 7) and in the *Manāqib* of Zhan Ye (no date): 3. Also according to the Nisbat of the Ningxia Jahriyya edited by Yang 2009: 157–158, Mingxin has been the disciple of M. b. Zayn. If the date of death Fletcher has given for Ibn al-Zayn (1725) is correct, Ye 2009b: 176 argues, he could not have been Mingxin’s Yemenite master whom he left, after 1744 (Ye 2009b: 176), while the shaykh was still alive. Ye claims that Mingxin followed a brother of ‘Abd al-Khāliq (d. 1740; Yang 2009: 163), instead. According to Aubin 1990: 518, following

Guanchuan 閩川, Gansu, into both the Naqshbandiyya and Shādhiliyya Sufi orders. However, according to Ma Tong,<sup>69</sup> he may already have become affiliated with the Naqshbandiyya during a stay in Bukhārā<sup>70</sup> with the tribal

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Fletcher, 'Abd al-Khāliq was the son of al-Zayn b. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Bāqī al-Mizjājī (d. 1663; Yang 2009: 163) – which concurs with the name given by İsmail Paşa, *Hadiyya* I: 510 (infra) – and if Mingxin followed a brother of 'Abd al-Khāliq, the traditional report that he followed Ibn Zayn is correct.

As to 'Abd al-Khāliq b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Mizjājī al-Zabidī al-Yamanī an-Naqshbandī, he ("'Abd al-Khāliq b. 'Alī al-Mizjājī") is known to have written a gloss (*Hāshiya*) on some sayings attributed to Ibn al-'Arabī (cf. Sobieroj 2010: 250), as also a number of writings on tradition and *qirā'āt* (Koranic readings). According to the bibliographer Bağdatlı İsmail Paşa (d. 1920), *İdāh al-maknūn* (1945–1947), II: 649, 'Abd al-Khāliq b. 'Alī b. al-Zayn b. M. Bāqī etc. died toward 1177/1763–1764 and according to the same author's *Hadiyyat al-'ārifīn* (1951–1955), I: 510, 'Abd al-Khāliq Ibn al-Zayn 'Alī b. M. ['Abd al-]Bāqī was still alive in 1195/1780–1781 when he completed the composition of his *Nafḥat al-azhār wal-anwār* on Prophetic traditions. This allows Mingxin to have met and studied under both, 'Abd al-Khāliq and a brother of his (the existence of a brother called Muḥammad has already been stated by Fletcher; cf. Ye 2009b: 176).

The names of the "shaykhs of the Yemen" can be found in a spiritual pedigree (*nisbat*) as transmitted within the Ningxia Jahriyya. The Nisbat is presented in Arabic, accompanied by a Chinese translation and a discussion by Yang 2009. The pedigree begins with the name of Muhyī al-Dīn who is tentatively identified as Ibn al-'Arabī. Mingxin's immediate precursor is Muḥammad b. Zayn who is preceded by 'Abd al-Khāliq who in turn is preceded by Zayn. Relying on Yang Huaizhong, Ye 2009b: 169 identifies Ibn Zayn as the son of "Zayn", fifth master of the *silsila*. The chain given by Yang Wanbao includes the names of Wiqāyatullah and of his successors in seven generations, starting with Kullurisāla (Pingliang Taiye) and ending with 'Abd al-Khallāq Muḥammad ibn Jāmī' Ma Zhenwu 馬震武 who is said to have lived from 1896 until 1960.

In the era of persecutions, the Jahris used to write the Nisbat, by their masters' hands, on their shroud (*pīrāhan, kafan*) which they wore on the way into battle (Aubin 1990: 565). The Nisbat, Yang 2009: 165 explains, is still read today in Ningxia, and especially in the graduation ceremonies of the Manlas [students of theology] who become Ahongs. At the occasion, the manlas are clothed in a festive dress, in a ritual called "chuanyi" 穿衣 [donning the dress; Aubin 1990: 562; a photo is included in Zhou 2008: 53]. A pedigree (*nasab-nāma*) of a group of Khojilar that claims to prove their descent from the prophet of Islam is discussed by Bahargül Hamut in Rähimi 2014: 133–136.

**69** Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 90; also Aubin 1990: 520; Dillon 1999: 122.

**70** For the thesis of a stay in Bukhārā see Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 86, fn. 2 (refers to "many written records and oral traditions" generally, and to "Zhongguo Huijiaoshi yanjiu" 中國回教史研究 [Research on the history of Chinese Islam] of the contemporary scholar Jin Jitang 金吉堂, in particular; also to Wei Yuan 魏源, "Shengwu ji" 聖武記 [Records of holy fighting] who says that Mingxin studied in Kashgar and Yarkent). Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 73–74 believes that the desert where young Mingxin was separated from his uncle was the Karakum or some other Central Asian desert and that he stayed for a number of years in Bukhārā before proceeding to Arabia in the company of a leader of the Ishāqiyya sect who took him all the way to Zabid in Yemen. Ma Tong argues, perhaps not wholly convincingly: There, among the Uzbeks, Mingxin could have learnt a Turkic language which enabled him to successfully proselytize among the Turkish

confederation of the Qarataqlıqlar / Heishanpai 黑山派 [Black mountain folk] which also practiced the vocal dhikr.<sup>71</sup> Be that as it may, the *K. al-Jahri* tells us that the young Sufi was trained by his master through, i.a., gradual diminutions (and increases!) of food (dumplings, *mantou*), through periods of seclusion (*i'tikāf*) that could last up to seven years and other austerities.

Eventually, Wiqāyatullāh was *declared blessed* by his master, the -Shaykh al-Yamanī. He explained that on account of suffering hunger and thirst for nine days, on his return from the Hajj, he has become purified and he has atoned for all the sins which he had hitherto committed in China in nine years. That the nine days of hardship were ended through an old man's invitation who served him food on nine dishes, on the other hand, is said to indicate that he *passed the nine stages of the mystical path* (*ishāra ilā marātibik al-tis'a*) and reached the highest of spiritual stations, "the seal" (*nihāyat maqāmika al-khātam*).<sup>72</sup> Besides, through suffering hardships, Wiqāyatullāh not only atoned for his own sins but also for those of his ancestors. Hunger and thirst to which he was exposed while travelling overland to the Arabian peninsula<sup>73</sup> were interpreted by the shaykh as a retribution meted out to him for wrongdoings committed by his grandfather. Wiqāyatullāh's father Sayyid Īshān,<sup>74</sup> by contrast, was designated by an 80-year-old Ahong, in answer to Mingxin's question, "How many *awliyā'* did you meet?", as one of the three saints whom he had met in his lifetime.<sup>75</sup>

Having interpreted a symbolic dream which Wiqāyatullāh narrated to him,<sup>76</sup> the Yemenite master praises him as being the only protector [of Islam] in China

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Salars. The Heishan which prevailed in Central Asia and southern Xinjiang until 1755 when the Qing emperor put an end to the rule of Dabači (cf. Hamut 2011: 91), unlike other branches of the Naqshbandiyya, practiced a vocal dhikr as would Mingxin's Jahriyya order after his return to China.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Lipman 1997: 88, fn. 69. The question whether he travelled to Mekka by sea or along the Central Asian trade routes cannot be answered with certainty but Ma Tong (1999 [1985]: 87, 90) judged that he travelled over land as the sea journey was the privilege of the rich Muslims. Also, while in the vita of the *K. al-Jahri* there is no mention of a sea journey undertaken by Mingxin, Zhan Ye (no date): 3 explicitly says that he passed through Syria (*mulk al-Shām*).

<sup>72</sup> Manşūr 1933: 19; Manşūr/Ma 1997: 4–5; for methods of reaching mystical perfection by passing through stages (*pin* 品) equated with the *maqāmāt*, according to the theories of Chinese literary Sufism, see Aubin 1990: 505–510.

<sup>73</sup> Manşūr 1933: 21–22; Manşūr/Ma 1997: 7–9.

<sup>74</sup> Manşūr 1933: 37.

<sup>75</sup> The second saint he met was Abū l-Futūḥ whose ascetic practices we are told had not shown any effect with the Ahong in fifty years. The third *wāli*, unidentifiable, was called Amīr Kalan (Manşūr 1933: 37; Manşūr/Ma 1997: 23–24).

<sup>76</sup> In his dream Mingxin saw an olive tree (*zaytūn*) populated by small birds and a parrot and which had brought forth a fruit called *zidun* 梓榦 (a phonetic translation of *zaytūn*). The

whose “light and secret had now appeared on the Guarded Tablets” (*al-lawh al-mahfūz*; *xianbei* 仙碑 [celestial tablet]). He also states that his noble character has met with God’s pleasure and that his “blessed life” is capable of making the earth wither and become alive again – perhaps an allusion to the ecstatic word of his included in the Nisbat (*infra*). Finally, he predicted that Wiqāyatullāh’s death will serve as a model for martyrs<sup>77</sup> and he explained that his order (*yisilande jiaomen*) will be known as *Jahriyya*,<sup>78</sup> and that he, Wiqāyatullāh, will act as its supervisor (*ūlū l-amr*).<sup>79</sup>

In relation to the personal name by which the Yemenite teacher addressed his disciple, viz., “Chinese Ibrāhīm”, and to the function attributed to him of spreading monotheism in the Middle Kingdom, he also exhorted Wiqāyatullāh to realize that his ancestor is Abraham whereas the remaining prophets were the ancestors (*xianzu*) of the other saints.

Eventually Wiqāyatullāh was chosen by Ibn Zayn as one of his ten major disciples, he was taught by him special prayer formulas and was ordered to go back to Hezhou, Gansu,<sup>80</sup> where he founded a school of mysticism (*daotang*) and acted as his missionary,<sup>81</sup> mainly among the Salar Turks.<sup>82</sup> After his arrival in

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Yemenite interpreted that the fruit symbolized God’s saint and the parrot the shaykh, whereas the other birds represented the ordinary disciples. He further explained that the tree which he denoted by titles such as “treasure of the saints”, “shadow of the seal of the Prophet”, grows from roots which he explained as symbolizing the Sufi order (*daotong, menhuan*; Manṣūr 1933: 56; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 43).

<sup>77</sup> Eventually, however, Ma Yuanzhang abolished the obligation for the members of the *Jahriyya* Menhuan to sacrifice their lives as martyrs (cf. Aubin 1990: 553).

<sup>78</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 56–57.

<sup>79</sup> *zhizhangzhe* 執掌者 (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 44–45).

<sup>80</sup> He only returned to China after his master had ordered him three times to depart. In Zhan Ye’s *Manāqib* this tradition of a repeated disobedience by Mingxin (he was ordered to go when he was 13, a second time when 15, and only when he reached an age of 17 years did he obey and go) serves as a rationalization for the scission that was to occur later on in the *Jahriyya*. As a result of his refusal to obey immediately, the Sufi order was implanted in two places, “possibly” in Pingliang [i. e. Guanchuan] and Lingzhou (*fa-min taqṣīr al-idhn intaqal islāmuḥū al-sharīf... ilā l-makānayn... la‘allahu al-Pinliān wal-Linzhū* [Zhan Ye (no date): 13–14 = Ma Siren 2012: 8 (Chin. trans.)].

<sup>81</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 19; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 5–6.

<sup>82</sup> Besides Ibn Zayn, Ma Mingxin studied under another teacher on the Arabian pen-insula whose name is mentioned in his hagiography: In Manṣūr 1933: 44, ‘Aqila al-Yamanī is invoked whose death, which occurred in Mekka, was reported to Mingxin while he was back in Gansu (or, more likely: while still in Arabia). He commemorated ‘Aqila’s death together with Abū l-Futūḥ Ma Laichi, his one-time fellow student with the deceased shaykh. In all likelihood, ‘Aqila is identical with ‘Aqila al-Ḥanafī al-Makkī al-Ζāhir al-Yamanī (d. 1150/1737 [!]; Brockelmann 1937–1949: II, 506, S II, 522), compiler of a collection of Prophetic traditions, entitled *Fawā’id al-*

Hezhou, Wiqāyatullāh's sanctity was recognized by an Arab from Yemen, a "madman" (*majnūn*), "God's beloved and friend" (*habībul-lāh wa-walīyuh*), begging at the door, with whom he identified: "a madman is searching for a madman".<sup>83</sup>

In China, the advent of Wiqāyatullāh was announced by a foreign saint called Haykal of Hamadān<sup>84</sup> who judged that after he recognized Wiqāyatullāh as "God's messenger, intelligent guide, wise physician and shaykh of humans and spirits", there was no need for him to remain. Asked about the motives for his untimely return he explained that he had come from fear that the Chinese Muslims may deviate from the right path but soon he recognized Wiqāyatullāh's sanctity, hence the prolongation of his stay in Gansu seemed unnecessary to him. Haykal also predicted, referring to Wiqāyatullāh, that a divine light, *nūr al-tajallī*, will shine for them, and that a messenger will purify and teach them God's signs (*yatlū 'alaikum āyātih wa-yuzakkikum* = Sura 2/151).<sup>85</sup>

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*jalila fī musalsalat M. b. Aḥmad 'Aqīla fī l-ahādīth al-musalsala*, and extant as a Ms. of Princeton Univ. Library (Cat. Mach no. 774; also BSB Munich, Cod.arab. 1832). Ma Laichi is said to have received, from 'Aqīla, the text of a *Mawlid* in 130 chapters (their names are mentioned on p. 127 of vol. 2: *min kitāb al-Mawlid alladī qad ukhlifa Shaykh Abū l-Futūḥ al-Šīnī min Shaykh Aḥmad 'Aqīla al-Makkī* etc. [from the *K. al-M.* which Abū l-F. was given by A. 'Aq. etc.]) which has been published as a two-volume facsimilated *khatṭ-i šīnī* Ms. in 1962 and that could be purchased in Gansu as a reprint of 1999 (personal observation made in 2010).

<sup>83</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 23–24; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 9–10.

<sup>84</sup> As Haykal came from Hamadān he may have been of Iranian origin. He arrived in Gaolan 阜蘭 (a place north of Lanzhou, capital of Gansu), in the year 45 of the Qianlong era (cf. Manṣūr 1933: 67–69; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 55–57) which began in October 1735. After a stay of two months only he declared that he had decided to depart again, for the Yemen. In *K. al-Jahrī*, 327, "al-Shaykh al-Hamadāni 'Alawī al-Haykal", is mentioned once again as predicting a massacre perpetrated on the Muslims of Gaolan in the year 46 of the same era. Departing from Gaolan he was observed stopping at the carcass of a dog on the street whose stench made the people shy away while hiding "their noses in their sleeves". Having recited a long prayer of supplication, Haykal explained to the people dismissing him that in the following year many *awliyā'* will die at this very place just like the dog. The author adds that 500 women including Salma Salāriyya, "women's model of almsgiving and beneficence" (*uswat al-nisā'* [...] *bi-l-ṣadāqa wa-l-iḥsān*) and daughter of Wiqāyatullāh (probably to be identified with the adopted daughter called Salīma who was executed in Lanzhou and who is venerated at the Jincheng 金城 Gongbei erected at the place of her execution; cf. Aubin 1990: 558), were martyred in 46 by the disbelievers, while "fighting until their death, like men". Manṣūr (1933: 328) claims that the miracles, *karāmāt*, of these women were numerous and well known. As the most astonishing he highlights that, one night, as they were sleeping from exhaustion in the mosque, they were warned of the soldiers sneaking up to kill them, by a sheep that hit a drum, thanks to which they awoke from sleep and succeeded in defeating the *kuffār*.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Manṣūr 1933: 40; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 27–28.

## 2.3 Awareness of his own sanctity

In the *K. al-Jahri*, Wiqāyatullāh has been attributed sayings in which he expresses the belief in and awareness of his own sanctity. In the Islamic discourse on *wilāya* there has not always been unanimity in this respect and some theologians held that the saint may be unaware of his sanctity.<sup>86</sup> Wiqāyatullāh, however, was not only convinced of his own *wilāya* but he also believed that he was the supreme saint in his time who overshadowed all other Muslim saints by far.<sup>87</sup> This is especially apparent in relation to his colleague Abū l-Futūh Ma Laichi, whom he ridiculed by calling him an ant in comparison to himself, Wiqāyatullāh, the elephant.<sup>88</sup> The same sense of superiority is implied in the comparison he drew with Liu Jielian, i. e. the mystical philosopher of Nanjing, Liu Zhi (*supra*), whom at least he considered a predecessor (“after Liu Jielian I am God’s saint”) who prepared his way, “Jielian is the saint who has made the flower (or: rose, *warda*) blossom whereas I am the saint who has made the fruit ripen”. Wiqāyatullāh also claimed superiority to one Tursun Baba<sup>89</sup> – who as indicated by his name belonged to an ethnic group speaking a Turkic language – whose works he praises as outstanding and to whom he also ascribes excellence as a trainer of novices (*murshid*) and as a

<sup>86</sup> This issue has been discussed by Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) in the 34<sup>th</sup> *mas’ala* of *K. ‘Uyūn al-ajwiba* (Qushayrī 2012: 18–19), and in his *Risāla* (Qushayrī 1940: 174). In the latter work, Ibn Fūrak, in opposition to Abū ‘Alī al-Daqqāq (and to Qushayrī), represents the minority view that the saint is unaware of his sanctity for he would otherwise lose his fear (also Kalābādhī 1980: 74) and delude himself into thinking that he is safe of God’s “cunning”.

<sup>87</sup> In the chapter on the Chuanchang Taiye, oldest son of Qi Baba of Lingzhou (= modern Wuzhong), Mingxin claims that his *superiority over the other shaykhs* was due to the fact that he had trained two saints which he designates as “poles” (*qutb*). Of these, one had already made his appearance during Mingxin’s life-time, namely his first successor, the Pingliang Taiye, whereas his second successor, Chuanchang Taiye, being a child, was still waiting for a favourable occasion to step forward and become universally renowned (Manṣūr 1933: 106; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 96).

<sup>88</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 44. On the relationship between Ma Mingxin and Ma Laichi cf. Lipman 1997: 90–91.

<sup>89</sup> In Manṣūr 1933: 328–329 the saint is mentioned as al-Tursun al-Bābā al-Kāshgharī, hence an Uyghur, who in the *riwāya* conducts funeral prayers in the desert over martyrs (on the title *bābā*=*ye* 爺 = *pīr* see Aubin 1990: 528, fn. 47). Many more figures, mainly disciples, are mentioned by name in the vita of Wiqāyatullāh in *K. al-Jahri*. Mention may be made, e. g. of “Qalandar” who was instrumental in recruiting the successor, the Shaykh of Pingliang (Manṣūr 1933: 64). The Jin 金 Manla (al-Mullā al-Dhahabī), on the other hand, came from a place called Didao 犁道 (today: Lintao) and before joining the Jahriyya he was a follower of the Mufuti Menhuan (*dīn al-Muftī*), i. e. of Ma Shouzhen. The latter was an ardent disciple of Khwāja Āfāq and founder of the Mufuti order who eventually settled down at Kangle, south of Lanzhou (Manṣūr 1933: 44–45; Ma Tong 1999 [1985]: 40–41). Nowadays a majestic, albeit impenetrable *gongbei* of the Mufuti is situated at the limits of Kangle town.

physician. However, in Wiqāyatullāh's estimation, the Baba owned one medicine only while he himself possessed various remedies such as one for curing headaches and another for treating ailments of the eye.<sup>90</sup>

Wiqāyatullāh's self-awareness also shows itself in his identifying himself with both the "Islamic prophet" Moses and with his occult teacher al-Khaḍir, mentioned anonymously in the Koran (Sura 18/60-82). He thereby implies that like Mūsā he brought God's law to his people and like al-Khaḍir he offered a mystical interpretation thereof. This claim of uniting within himself the spirituality of both Moses and Khaḍir, however, he puts in the mouth of his Yemenite teacher whom he mentions in an autobiographical note: "Formerly it was my intention to live as a recluse in the mountains and to sever the ties with the world. However, my teacher did not agree and he ordered me to return home, for in China there is neither a Moses nor a Khaḍir".<sup>91</sup>

Thus, Wiqāyatullāh explicitly exhorted his disciples to think of him not only as their master who taught them the mystical "Islam of the saints" (*shengren de yisilan* 聖人的伊斯蘭)<sup>92</sup> or the religion of God and his messenger (*ulaqqinukum dīn Allāh wa-dīn rasūlih*),<sup>93</sup> but to also appreciate that to receive this transmission (*al-mulāqāt wa-l-muṣāḥabāt; chuanshou* 傳授) is their greatest fortune: "The past generations longed for such teaching but their time is past. The future generations will long for it but their time has not yet begun. Therefore, to waste this rare chance is very bad luck".<sup>94</sup>

## 2.4 Wiqāyatullāh's definition of sanctity

Wiqāyatullāh himself has given a definition of sanctity using the imagery of a mysticism of letters and illumination. The definition is encased in an enigmatic question he directed to the baffled instructor of a teaching institution frequented by the Sufis (*madrasat al-ahibbā'*) which he himself answered. Although characterized as possessed with "true belief and real certainty" (*mu'allim [...] dhū i'tiqād ṣidq wa-yaqīn ḥaqq*), the teacher could only remain silent. Wiqāyatullāh's question ran: "When/if the letter of origin is reflected what is it?" (*inna ḥarf al-aṣl idhā'n'akas fa-mā huwa*), and the answer to the riddle transmitted in the Arabic text: "It is God's saints. They change their clothes, the clothes for the heat and the clothes for the cold" (*inqalabū lubsan libās al-ḥarr wa-l-bard*). The

<sup>90</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 40–41.

<sup>91</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 40.

<sup>92</sup> Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 27.

<sup>93</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 39.

<sup>94</sup> *duoma bofu* 多嘛薄福 (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 26–27); Manṣūr 1933: 39–40; Guanli Ye 1993: 67.

narrative unit in *K. al-Jahri*<sup>95</sup> ends with a third phrase attributed to Wiqāyatullāh, viz.: “God has strewn the seeds of this group of saints (*tā’ifa min awliyā’ Allāh*) over China”, and in a variant quoted in the subsequent story he says: “I (!) scattered the seeds of felicity (*ḥabbat al-sa’āda*) in the Chinese kingdom, the outgoing has gone out and what is inside waits for its time [to ripen]” (*wa-l-khārij qad kharaj wa-l-bāṭin qad intāzar ilā l-zamān*).<sup>96</sup>

Whereas Wiqāyatullāh, in the vita, does not elaborate on his definition of *wilāya*, the author of the *K. al-Jahri* tries to elucidate the saying while conceding that his grasp of the subject is limited. However, he explains that the *ḥarf al-aṣl* is the *alif* or first letter of the (Arabic) alphabet from which all other letters originate. Mansūr quotes the interpretations of the exegetes (*mufassirūn*) (“the whole Koran is encapsulated in the *alif* of *alif lām mīm* etc.” [Sura 2/1-2]) and of the Sufis (“The *alif* symbolizes the essence of divine existence and of essential oneness” [*dhāt al-wujūd wa-l-ahādiyya al-dhātiyya*]) as support of this.<sup>97</sup> The expression “reflection” (*in’ikās*) he explains as implying that the wayfarer (*al-‘abd al-sālik*) at first draws near to God under the instruction and training of a perfect shaykh, until he experiences God’s love and reaches a state of unification as is confirmed by the famous *ḥadīth qudsī* quoted thereafter, viz.: “Man continues to draw close to me through supererogatory acts until I love him etc.”<sup>98</sup> There, through the practice of a transmitted form of remembrance (*al-dhikr al-mu’ān’ān*), he polishes the mirror of the heart and he experiences the “reflections of the lights of the manifestation”<sup>99</sup> of divine essence which is denoted ‘letter of origin’, i. e. the unified *alif*.<sup>100</sup> Further on<sup>101</sup> the author sums up his explanations: “The servant who experiences the reflection, this is God’s saints” (*al-‘abd al-mun’akas – bi-fath al-kāf – huwa awliyā’ Allāh*), and he comes back to the enigmatic phrase about the saints’ change of dress which he relates to their activity of training novices. In his understanding it means that the *awliyā’* train the novices and turn away the worlds [from them in order not to be distracted from God] (*rabbaw al-murīdīn wa-ṣarafū al-‘ālamīn*). The Chinese translation, by contrast, relates the phrase to the saints’ miracle-working: “By God’s order in summer they can wear winter clothes and in winter they

95 Mansūr 1933: 52; Mansūr/Ma 1997: 40.

96 Mansūr 1933: 52.

97 For Sufi interpretations of the isolated letters (*ḥurūf muqatṭa’ā*) see Nguyen 2012: 183–193.

98 *Mā zāl al-‘abd yataqarrab ilayya bi-l-nawāfil ḥattā uḥibbah fa-idhā aḥbabtuh kuntu lah sam’ān wa-baṣarān ilkh.*

99 For the concept of *tajallī* or divine self-manifestation cf. Kalābādhī 1980: 121–123 (ch. *qawluhum fi l-tajallī wa-l-istitār*).

100 *In’akasat anwār al-tajalliyāt min dhāt al-wujūd al-mukannā bi-ḥarf al-aṣl ya’nī al-alif al-muwahḥad ‘alā dhālik al-‘abd.*

101 Mansūr 1933: 53.

wear summer clothes.<sup>102</sup> Only then are they able to lead people on the path of God and they are capacitated to turn them away from the glimmer of the world which they hanker after".<sup>103</sup> Whereas this interpretation of the phrase seems reasonable, the rendering of the beginning of Wiqāyatullāh's question, *harf al-aşl idhā'n'akas ilkh.*, as: "What can one do if the letter of origin has been turned upside down?" (*diandaole* 順倒了)<sup>104</sup> and as: "If one wants to turn around (*ruguo yao dao zhile* 倒置了)<sup>105</sup> the letter *aşl* (*aisulide zi*; origin) how can one do it?" seems to be a misinterpretation.

## 2.5 Aspects of Wiqāyatullāh's sanctity

### 2.5.1 Miracle-working

The *walī* may perform miracles (*karāmāt*) by becoming the place of manifestation for a divine *kharq al-āda*.<sup>106</sup> This means that by producing a miracle God breaks his habit of acting in his usual way<sup>107</sup> and he thereby proves the saint's truthfulness.<sup>108</sup>

**102** As an example of God's "kindnesses in what he imposes on his saints" (*laṭā'ifuh bi-him fī mā yuḥammiluhum*), Kalābādhī (1980: 157) adduces a relevant story about Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣ (d. 291/904) who exposed himself to the snowfall of winter while his body was sweating. The second verse of a poem of two Wāfir-lines he recited in front of a companion who pitied him runs: *fa-in warada l-shitā'u fa-fika ṣayfun/wa-in warada l-maṣīfu fa-fika ẓillū*.

**103** *Yuanli tanlian jinsheng de xurong* 遠離貪戀今生的虛榮 (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 41).

**104** Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 39.

**105** Variant version in Guanli Ye 1993: 16.

**106** Qushayrī (1940: 174) uses the expression: *fi'l nāqiq li-l-āda*; the Chinese Naqshbandī author of *Taḥrīr al-masā'il al-khilāfiyya* (facsimile of a Ms. of the Beida Mosque of Xiji), *faṣl al-khāmis fi bayān al-karāma*, defines the saint's miracle, while referring to Qushayrī as his source, as *amr khāriq li-l-āda yaẓhar 'alā yad al-mu'min al-muttaqī ilkh.* [an order that breaks the habit (of God) and manifests through the pious servant]; Kalābādhī (1980: 79) has *ẓuhūr mā kharaj min al-āda*; Gramlich 1987: 16–18.

**107** The Pingliang Taiye points out – while performing a miracle before the eyes of some disciples with whom he travelled to Baishui (al-Mā' al-abyād) – that for God it is an easy matter to produce a miracle and no reason for people to feel astonished. In support of this allegation he made a small cloud soar, through the opening of his sleeve, to the sky which turned into a raincloud that caused the companions to become soaking wet. This mishap may be seen as a punishment for the amazement they felt while talking about the miracles attributed to one Huguang Si Baba 湖廣四巴巴 and one Hutaishi (خوئیش) Baba 胡太思巴巴 (*yataḥādathūn 'an karāmāt al-Bābā*; Manṣūr 1933: 86; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 73–74).

**108** Unless God intends, through a "cunning", to deceive him by producing the miracle through him (Kalābādhī 1980: 73).

Some of the *karāmāt* ascribed to Wiqāyatullāh were connected with the memory of his teacher from Yemen, *al-shaykh al-kabīr al-Yamanī*:

Parting from his shaykh, Wiqāyatullāh was given a twofold bequest (*waṣīyya*): firstly, a prophecy, namely, “you will return to your noble home (*baytuka al-sharīf; al-wilāya al-sharīfa*), at the age of 63, together with some of your family”,<sup>109</sup> which his son Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh interpreted as a prediction of his father’s death at that age. The second *waṣīyya* was the order to the disciple to remember and call on him in times of distress (*udhkurnī wad’uni*). Following this advice Wiqāyatullāh called upon his shaykh’s name on three occasions and each time succour came: First, when the Salars practiced witchcraft involving a cock’s back (*sihr dīkpusht Sālārī*), second, when an inundation occurred that threatened the villagers, and thirdly, when disaster came over the martyrs’ tombs of Gaolanfu (*idhā unzila al-balā’*).<sup>110</sup> Witnessing the supernatural assistance that aided Wiqāyatullāh, the people’s faith was strengthened as regards his person and Islam. Faith also increased because, since Wiqāyatullāh’s arrival in Gansu, there had been no hailstorms or any other natural disasters so that the people would say, according to a statement transmitted by Muḥammad ‘Abdallāh, “Without him we would have perished”.<sup>111</sup>

### 2.5.2 Prediction of future events

Not only the Yemenite shaykh possessed the gift of prophesying but also Wiqāyatullāh did: He predicted events which should prove to take place: He prognosticated the exact years in which his Menhuan would be persecuted by the authorities of the Qing dynasty.<sup>112</sup>

Also, in front of his beloved disciple from Yunnan province, called Gucheng Sanye 古城三爺 (*jaddunā al-thālith* [third master]),<sup>113</sup> Wiqāyatullāh made predictions concerning the end of his own life, as well as that of his family and of his followers. He predicted that his [eldest] son would be conscripted into the Qing army and be banished to Yunnan. The prediction included the command to the Gucheng Sanye that he should look after his two younger “brothers” and

<sup>109</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 20.

<sup>110</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 21.

<sup>111</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 22; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 7–9.

<sup>112</sup> Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 24. The Arabic text does not include the prediction which however can be found in the Chinese version.

<sup>113</sup> For the Chinese names including a number that may indicate the order among brothers or the age of a grandfather at the time of birth, see Aubin 1990: 522, fn. 45.

bring them up after returning to his home province.<sup>114</sup> After foreseeing the deportation of his family and followers to Yunnan, Wiqāyatullāh moved intellectually to the distant southerly province to reconnoitre the situation without however travelling in his body.<sup>115</sup> He was also able to make arrangements at that occasion (*wa-tadabbar fih wa-taṣarraf*), for instance, as regards the Gucheng Sanye whom he saw in Yunnan by virtue of his clairvoyance (*abṣar bi-baṣratih*).

At the end of his life, imprisoned in the dungeon of Lanzhou, Wiqāyatullāh found himself in a state of depression (*taḥazzunan wa-taṣayyuqā*) as he was facing the extermination of his Menhuan and his own execution. However he withdrew into himself for meditation, *dakhal fi l-ḥuḍūr wa-l-murāqaba*, and to his consolation, Koran 2/39, *wa-lā hum yaḥzunūn* [neither shall they grieve] sprang to his mind and he emerged from the spiritual contraction by uttering a prediction: In 30 years the Jahriyya will rise again like the morning-sun and spread in all directions, and lo, exactly 30 years thereafter, his grandson (Shams al-Dīn Yunnan San Taiye) confirmed that under the leadership of the Siyueba Taiye<sup>116</sup> the order flourished again to reach the culmination point in the era of the Shagou Taiye.<sup>117,118</sup>

### 2.5.3 Fighting against sorcery and exorcism

The battle for the souls of the pagans or people only superficially Islamicized included fighting against sorcery (*siḥr*) which seems to have been widespread among the Sālār ethnic group. By virtue of his sanctity Wiqāyatullāh was able to exorcize devils and defeat witchcraft thereby securing the conversion of would-be followers to his Menhuan.

A vivid description of how exorcism was practised by Wiqāyatullāh has been integrated in a long literary unit near the beginning of the *vita*.<sup>119</sup> The *riwāya*

<sup>114</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 65–66.

<sup>115</sup> *fa-tahassas...* *taḥassusan ma’nawiyyan bi-ghayr dhahāb al-jasad*; an alternative reading would be: *tajassas tajassusā*, i. e. he went there as a spy.

<sup>116</sup> Also known as Ḥaqiqullāh Muḥammad Ma Yide (cf. Aubin 1990: 525), oldest son of the Chuanchang Taiye (cf. Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 119–148 [= final chapter of *Daotong shizhuan*]).

<sup>117</sup> Ṣadīqullāh Muḥammad Riyāḍ al-Dīn Yuanzhang, 7<sup>th</sup> gen. successor of Wiqāyatullāh (*Daotong shi zhuan*, introd. 4).

<sup>118</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 69–70. The biography of Wiqāyatullāh in the *K. al-Jahrī* ends with this account of the fulfilment of a prediction. Another example of prognostication is Ma Mingxin’s prediction of imminent rainfall in a period of drought (Manṣūr 1933: 50–51; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 38).

<sup>119</sup> Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 18–22.

contains not only an account of Wiqāyatullāh's driving off a devil, in a village near Lianhua 蓮花town,<sup>120</sup> but also an account of an analogous expulsion accomplished by 'Atā Bir (written 'Azābir), the master of Abū l-Futūḥ Ma Laichi (who is also the transmitter of the second account).

The villagers in the first story were said to have been Muslims originally but turned to worship a devil (*ya'budūn al-shayāṭīn*) called Salāniyya in the Arabic text (a phonetic transcription)<sup>121</sup> or Sanlang 三狼, “three wolves”, in the translation. The Muslims had picked up a bundle of wood at the river-bank from among the flotsam washed ashore after an inundation. From this bundle a female voice resounded ordering the people to worship it or else the villagers and their cattle would perish. From fear of their lives they began with their devil-worship.<sup>122</sup> Wiqāyatullāh, who happened to be in the area, made the villagers lead him to the accursed devil's (*shayṭān mal'ūn*)<sup>123</sup> hiding place (*makānih al-maktūm*). In reaction to Wiqāyatullāh's forceful handling (*fa-akhadħah 'alā l-qahr al-shadid*)<sup>124</sup> there appeared two square pieces of cloth with a painting of a benevolent figure (*ṣūrat al-bārr*) on one and of a malicious figure (*ṣūrat al-shārīr*)<sup>125</sup> on the other. Spreading the cloths on the ground Wiqāyatullāh made the villagers vanquish their fear by spitting<sup>126</sup> and treading on it thereby demonstrating the devil's impotency. Thereafter he had them renew their allegiance to Islam by making them pronounce the twofold formula of the Islamic creed. To complete the exorcism Wiqāyatullāh burned one cloth and used the other one as a sweat-cloth beneath the saddle of his riding-horse.<sup>127</sup>

The second account of an exorcism is given on the authority of Abū l-Futūḥ who claimed that he once had an experience similar to the one just evoked. The place haunted was a madrasa at some place in Quwandun, i. e. Guangdong province in Southern China, and the devil who destroyed whoever ventured to enter the college is called a *ghūl*, i. e. a ghost from old Arabian folklore. In the following the occult being is described as manifesting itself as a white ball (*al-'uqda al-bayḍā'*) with no shape or weight and yet resembling cotton. It was removed by the shaykh al-A'zam with the help of his rod (*bi-'aṣāh*), by shouting forcefully (*ṣiyāḥ al-qahr*) and trampling on the floor and he put an end to its existence by throwing it into the

120 For this place see Aubin 1990: 529.

121 On Chinese phonetic transcriptions of Arabic/Persian terms see Aubin 1990: 497–498.

122 Manṣūr 1933: 34–35.

123 Manṣūr 1933: 33, u.

124 Manṣūr 1933: 34, l. 1; *Daotong shizhuan*: “he shouted”.

125 Manṣūr 1933: 34, l. 2.

126 Literally: “ejecting their saliva on them” (*an yuqaiyi'ūhumā bi-bazāqihim*).

127 Manṣūr 1933: 34, l. 8.

canal before the madrasa. He freed the people from their fears by ordering them to clean the mosque and perform the ritual prayers at this place.<sup>128</sup>

## 2.5.4 Spiritual states and stations

As a friend of God, Wiqāyatullāh was also a perfect mystic who experienced the spiritual states (*ḥāl*) and stations (*maqām*) ascribed to the Sufis of the classical era.

### 2.5.4.1 Annihilation

After his return to China from Yemen, Wiqāyatullāh is reported to have often become submerged in the “Ocean of annihilation”, phases which could last up to 50 days so that, in one instance, dust had gathered on his “blessed face”. Awaking to his ordinary state of mind he contextualized the experience denoted as annihilation in the Arabic text and “union with God” in the Chinese version, by quoting Sura 26/79 where Ibrāhīm exclaims that it is God “who feeds me and who waters me”.<sup>129</sup>

In the story immediately preceding,<sup>130</sup> Wiqāyatullāh is again said to have entered a state of annihilation, and to have come back to his ordinary mind after three or – according to a different source – seven days. The author of *K. al-Jahrī* tries to give an explanation of the mystical process by saying that Wiqāyatullāh would enter annihilation whenever the breeze of union (*wiṣāl*) with God seized him. Upon submerging in the ocean of *fanā’ fi Allāh*, i. e. journeying in [the realm of] God. In one instance the villagers assumed that he was dead and prepared for his funeral. To his rescue a young, knowledgeable Ahong (*‘ālim dhū dīn* [you jiao-men de 有教門的])<sup>131</sup> realized, after examining Wiqāyatullāh more closely, that he was only sleeping, as it were, in a mystical state. He suggested to his

<sup>128</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 35. Wiqāyatullāh also fought against the sorcery of one *Sālār* chief by means of an invocation of the Prophet’s name Muṣṭafā. This happened one Thursday night after the performance of the ‘*amal* ritual which started after *ṣalāt al-‘ishā’* and included a banquet, instruction (W. taught each disciple a Koranic passage) and prayers (after *ṣalāt al-fajr* he recited litanies called *Awrād al-sharīfa*). In between the ceremony, toward midnight, the Beiguo Ahong 背鍋阿訇 (*al-‘ālim al-ahdab al-Sālārī*, i. e. hunchbacked Salari scholar) made his appearance both visually and audibly, through the sound of horses’ hooves which approached the assembly and by a lightning-flash which entered through the cracks of the door – the phenomena were explained by Wiqāyatullāh as attempts of the Ahong to cause harm to the people by way of sorcery which however he was able to frustrate (Manṣūr 1933: 26–27; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 13).

<sup>129</sup> Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 47; Manṣūr 1933: 59.

<sup>130</sup> Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 46–47; Manṣūr 1933: 59.

<sup>131</sup> For the term Ahong see Aubin 1990: 519.

disciples to guard the master and wait, and after three or seven days he awoke, praising God's majesty exclaiming *Allāhu akbar*. He also divulged secrets (*qāl al-asrār*) which he learned while communicating with the Godhead in the state of absence.<sup>132</sup>

Other Sufis belonging to the Menhuan who immersed themselves in the "ocean of annihilation" were likewise believed to have died but they were, according to *K. al-Jahri*, buried alive. This was the case with the "Third Ahong of Gongchang" (*al-Ālim al-thālith al-Kunchanfuwī*) whose body was prepared for the funeral despite the fact that some disciples (*duositani*)<sup>133</sup> noticed that while they were dressing him in a shroud (*albasū lah akfānan*) for the grave that sweat transpired from the scholar's forehead. Wiqāyatullāh judged that the Sufi had not died but entered annihilation in God.<sup>134</sup>

#### 2.5.4.2 Drunkenness and ecstatic utterances

Another mystical state which Wiqāyatullāh experienced was drunkenness (*sukr*),<sup>135</sup> a state he would enter while practising dhikr. In the *ḥāl al-sukr*, deprived of their discrimination ability, the Sufis are reported to have made ecstatic utterances, *shaṭḥ* / *shaṭhiyyāt*, in which not their human self but the deity overwhelming the mystic would speak through their mouths. The compilers of Sufi manuals, e. g. al-Sarrāj al-Ṭūsī (4./10th c.), dedicated chapters to the psychological phenomenon of *shaṭḥ* by quoting examples of inspired words which appeared "ugly" outwardly while encasing a spiritual truth inwardly (Sarrāj 1914: 375–409). Likewise, the author of *K. al-Jahri*,<sup>136</sup> ascribes words to Wiqāyatullāh, spoken by him "without volition, through the tongue of the mystical state" (*bi-lā'khtiyār bi-lisān al-ḥāl*). The words quoted include the bold statement that "the community of saints are my followers, the scholars my 'callers' (*huhuanzhe* 呼唤者; *mukhāṭibī*) etc." The bold utterance can also be found integrated in the Arabic text of the Nisbat of the Ningxia Jahriyya which has been edited by Yang Wanbao.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>132</sup> The young Ahong thereafter joined Mingxin's Sufi order and obtained permission, *ijāza*, to train his disciples.

<sup>133</sup> Transliteration of Persian *dūstān*, literally: friends.

<sup>134</sup> Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 11–12; Manṣūr 1933: 25.

<sup>135</sup> *Taozui* 陶醉; the Arabic text has: "drunkenness overwhelmed him" (*waqa' 'alayh al-sukr*).

<sup>136</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 60; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 47.

<sup>137</sup> *Isma' qawlī, fī l-samā' maqāmī wa-fī l-ard mulkī wa-rakbatī wa-maktabī, wa-l-'ālam kānat naḍarat min naẓarī wa-jamī' al-awliyā' mukhāṭibī, wa-laysa fī qawlī kidhb* [“Hear my speech: My station is in heaven. My kingdom, my caravan and my school are on the earth. The world shines through my glance. All the saints are my partners in conversation and there is no lie in my speech”] (Yang 2009: 157–158).

Already in the beginning of his career Wiqāyatullāh is reported to have made ecstatic utterances expressive of his state of mystical union which frightened his listeners.<sup>138</sup> When he came out from a long retreat (*i'tikāf*) commanded by his shaykh in Yemen as part of his mystical training, he faced the servant assigned for his needs and addressed him with the shocking words “touch the ground with your forehead for I am God and I am a Prophet” (*usjudnī (!) fa-innī anā Allāh wa-anā nabi*). Refusing to obey, the servant rushed to his teacher complaining that the Chinese recluse (*al-mu'takif al-ṣīnī*) had said so-and-so. The teacher however scolded the servant explaining that if he prostrated before him he would have benefitted and that he will suffer harm if he has not, thereby acknowledging the state of mystical union which Wiqāyatullāh had experienced.<sup>139</sup>

This grandiose self-esteem which paradoxically is a simultaneous loss of self through annihilation in the Godhead is the motive of another episode that happened years later after another seclusion.<sup>140</sup> The author of *K. al-Jahri* relates that, when Wiqāyatullāh, making the pilgrimage to Mekka, arrived in front of the Ka'ba which the Muslims circumambulate, the “black stone” left its original place in the building in order to greet him<sup>141</sup> – meant as an inversion of the pilgrims' custom of kissing the eastern cornerstone.<sup>142</sup> – The saint substitutes the Ka'ba as the centre of the universe.<sup>143</sup>

The author of the *K. al-Jahri* explicitly classifies the above utterance of Wiqāyatullāh (“the saints are my followers”) as one of the *shāfiyyāt* and he adds a list of utterances ascribed to the well-known Sufis al-Hallāj (“I am the truth!”), al-Shiblī (“In both worlds there is no-one above me!”), Abū l-Hasan [al-Kharaqānī] (“I am two years younger than God!”), Muhyī al-Dīn [Ibn al-‘Arabī] (“I set my foot on the neck of the saints!”) etc., thereby intending to explain the shaykh's words (while contextualizing them) and to rebut the scorn of the scoffers. Manṣūr adds that, when hearing these words, the ordinary people falsely believe that they constitute proofs of disobedience towards

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<sup>138</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 17; Guanli Ye 1993: 7. For theories of mystical union in Chinese literary Sufism see Aubin 1990: 501–502.

<sup>139</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 17; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 3.

<sup>140</sup> The *K. al-Jahri* says (Manṣūr 1933: 17–18; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 4) that this happened when he was an adolescent of 24 years; this of course contradicts the tradition of the *Manāqib* that Wiqāyatullāh returned to China when he was 17 (*supra*).

<sup>141</sup> Literally: “his face” (*kharaj al-ḥajar al-aswad min makānih ḥattā'ltaṣaq bi-wajhīh*).

<sup>142</sup> The version of Guanli Ye (1993: 8) specifies that the stone kissed his cheek (*qinwen mianjia* 亲吻面颊).

<sup>143</sup> The informed reader is reminded of the story of Abū Yazīd who in a mystical vision saw the Ka'ba circumambulating him (cf. Gramlich 1976: 122).

Islam and that as a result these mystics were declared *kāfir* and some were executed. He admonishes the reader to recognize that Wiqāyatullāh's path is orthodox and identical with that of the Sunni caliphs.<sup>144</sup>

### 2.5.4.3 Divine attraction (*jadhba*)

Thus, the saint would travel along an ascending path of spiritual stations. As a master training novices (*murīd* / *mulede* 穆勒德, *mentu* 門徒),<sup>145</sup> he would also pull along his disciples through his efforts. Such was the case with the so-called Second scholar ('ālim al-thānī or Er Ahong 二阿訇), who, in the town Fuqiang 伏羌,<sup>146</sup> was the first to join Wiqāyatullāh's school, through repentance (*auwal ahl al-ināba*). He was "promoted" (*tiba* 提拔) to high stations, thanks to the pulling upward by the shaykh (*jadhbatuh bi-quwwatī wa-ṭāqati*). The term *jadhba* [pulling, attraction] may thus be applied to the shaykh's effort, mostly however, in Sufi literature, it refers to the gravitation, exerted by the Godhead which attracts chosen individuals<sup>147</sup> to enter the realm of its proximity.<sup>148</sup>

Elsewhere Wiqāyatullāh confirms that the novices' ascension is only possible through the training and pulling of the perfect shaykh,<sup>149</sup> except for a few individuals who have become the object of God's own *jadhba*, for "any of the attractions of God outweigh by far the work of the two worlds".<sup>150</sup> The metaphorical expressions used by Wiqāyatullāh to describe the attitude expected of the true novice (*al-murīd al-ṣādiq*) as a precondition of the ascension are classical, e. g. the disciple's attitude toward the master must be identical to that of the corpse under the hands of the corpse-washer.

Besides, the author of *K. al-Jahri* tells us that *jadhba* could also be experienced through the reading of mystical literature.<sup>151</sup> The son of a Sufi of Fuqiang

<sup>144</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 61; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 31.

<sup>145</sup> On the role of the spiritual master or *murshid*, with a special reference to the Chinese translation of the *Miṣād al-‘ibād* of Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (whom she strangely calls Asadī Rāzī), cf. Aubin 1990: 512–513.

<sup>146</sup> Modern Gangu in Southeast Gansu (cf. Aubin 1990: 534).

<sup>147</sup> These individuals are distinguished from others who make the ascension through their own efforts.

<sup>148</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 38–39; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 25–26.

<sup>149</sup> *lā yaḥṣul ‘urūjuh bi-ghayr tarbiyat al-shaykh al-kāmil wa-jadhbatih.*

<sup>150</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 64; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 51–52. A promotion through divine election taking place undeservedly, in the after-life, is referred to in a story which includes a dialogue between the *Mawlā* and his disciples: Here Ma Mingxin explains that God may raise to sanctity (*yuḥsharū fī ṣufūf al-awliyā’*), at resurrection, individuals who led unexceptional lives as ordinary believers ('āmma) and who die as such because "he grants his favour to whom he wills" (Sura 57/21 [recited by a "caller" from the unseen]; Manṣūr 1933: 38; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 25).

<sup>151</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 39; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 26.

narrates that his deceased father had become the object of divine attraction, a *majdhūb*, through the study of the Persian Sufi text entitled *Ashi“at-i Lama‘āt*, “Rays of flashlights”,<sup>152</sup> and that as a result he was considered by many to have become insane. People speculated about the causes of his apparent insanity: Some held he turned mad (*majnūn*) because of greed for money and this-worldly possessions, others surmised that he was struck by devils and jinns, and others again claimed he turned mad because of passionate love (whether for God or for women Manṣūr does not specify).<sup>153</sup> The author tries to clarify saying that he became *majdhūb*, not *majnūn*, i. e. possessed by a jinn, and that he died for that reason.

The story<sup>154</sup> may also be read as a warning that the border-line between mystical experience and mental illness was very thin and easily crossed, hence the importance of the guiding master, the saint.

#### 2.5.4.4 Clairvoyance and training of novices

As a trainer of novices, Wiqāyatullāh, gifted with clairvoyance (*baṣīra*),<sup>155</sup> recognized the psychological conditions harassing his disciples and he healed them through their belief in his sanctity. An old man of youthful appearance once came to Wiqāyatullāh who greeted him as one who has “defeated the crocodile and subdued the leopard” (*qāhir al-timsāḥ wa-bāṭish al-namir*).<sup>156</sup> The handsome shaykh introduces himself as an erstwhile follower of Abū l-Futūḥ and explains that in the practice of *dhikr*, he faced great danger while repeating the *tawhīd*-

<sup>152</sup> The literary work which triggered *jadhba* is a commentary by Jāmī which he wrote in explanation of the *Lama‘āt*, “Flash-lights”, of the mystic Fakhr al-Dīn al-‘Iraqī (d. 686/1287 or later). ‘Iraqī in turn is said to have written his text under the influence of a lecture given by Șadr al-Dīn Qunawī (d. 673/1264), Ibn al-‘Arabī’s disciple. Jāmī’s *Ashi“at-i Lama‘āt* is mentioned by Ma Tong (1999 [1985]: 31) as one of thirteen teaching books of the Madrasa curriculum of Northwest China. It also belongs to the small group of Persian Sufi texts which were translated into Chinese already in the pre-modern period (cf. Luo Wanshou 2007a: 441, 500). No indication is given in the *K. al-Jahrī* for us to know if the Sufi read Jāmī’s text in the Persian original or in the Chinese translation.

<sup>153</sup> The Chinese version (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 26) says it was caused by his desire to see God.

<sup>154</sup> Wiqāyatullāh enters the stage as a visitor to the deceased Sufi’s son. The latter, probably the transmitter of the story, asks him, “by his father’s affection for the shaykh”, to be admitted to his school, a request which Mingxin granted.

<sup>155</sup> On clairvoyance (*baṣīra* or *fīrāsa*) cf. Sarrāj 1914: 226 (*mas’ala fī l-fīrāsa*); Qushayrī 2012: 40–41.

<sup>156</sup> The Chinese translation identifies the two animals as dragon and tiger. Amīr Khusrav Dihlawī (d. 725/1325), in a poetical verse on the credo, *zi daryā-i shahādat čun nahang-i lā bar ārad sar* [when the crocodile (whale, shark) of negation raises its head from the ocean of witnessing], calls the sea-monster *nahang*. The familiarity with this imagery, on the part of the *Jahrīs*, may be due to the fact that Jāmī wrote a commentary on Khusrav’s verse (a copy of the *Risāla dar sharh-i bayt* etc. is BSB Munich, Cod.arab. 2783, fo. 23r–24v).

formula of stating God's unity. Having pronounced the first part, *lā ilāha*, i. e. negation of the deity, of the twofold formula "there is no god but God", and before moving on to the second part, i. e. affirmation of the deity, *illā llāh*,<sup>157</sup> he would confront in his soul a crocodile and a leopard from which he could not escape.<sup>158</sup> Entreating Wiqāyatullāh by titles implying sanctity as well as his pedagogical and therapeutic faculties ("you are the beloved of God and his true saint, the perfect and perfecting one, and you are the clever physician etc."),<sup>159</sup> he asked him to cure his illness. As a result of the saint's intervention, he henceforth found himself in a state of overpowering love and ecstasy (*fi ghalbat al-hubb wa-l-wajd*), "in most of his moments". Underlying the pedagogical story there is also a polemic against Wiqāyatullāh's rival, Abū l-Futūh, who appears incapable of rescuing his disciples from dangers which they confronted in the performance of their mystical practices.<sup>160</sup>

As trainer of novices, the master expected from the disciple unconditional obedience<sup>161</sup> which included the readiness to sacrifice his life trusting in the preceptor's wisdom. Such was the case with the disciple known as Gucheng Sanye who was trained and eventually adopted by Wiqāyatullāh as a spiritual son and given the name 'Abd al-Karīm. Unwilling to take up his father's

<sup>157</sup> On remembrance, by use of the tawhīd-formula, in Chinese literary Sufism, see Aubin 1990: 510–512.

<sup>158</sup> *Ra'aitu fi l-nafy wa-l-ithbāt timsāḥan wa-namiran wa-mā wajadtu fi l-mujāhada al-shadīda... min shifā' wa-lā min firār.*

<sup>159</sup> *Innaka ḥabibullāh wa-walīyyuhu al-ḥaqq al-kāmil al-mukammil wa-anta ṭabīb ḥādhīq ilkh.* Another story focussing on Mingxin's curing his disciples is *K. al-Jahri*, 44 (Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 31–32). Here the shaykh applies a "mystical medicine" (*dawā' bāṭinī*) to stabilize the mind of a peasant of Hezhou who had wanted to see God ("Why is it that I can hear [the words] *subḥāna dhī l-mulk wa-l-malakūt*, but cannot see God?") and who risked turning mad as his desire was frustrated.

<sup>160</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 24–25; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 11.

<sup>161</sup> In a tribunal staged by the communist regime in 1958, certain disciples of the Jahriyya of Manchuria complained about the obligation they owed to their master, Ma Zhenwu, to obey him unconditionally. His alleged despotism was also criticized in the context of the gifts which the followers had to present to him at many occasions, mainly at the ermaili festivals (Aubin incorrectly explains the term as being derived from Arabic *mawlid*) which are said to have taken place in Zhenwu's Menhuan as often as 65 times per year (Aubin 1990: 563–564). Aubin 1990: 566 defends the masters of the Jahriyya against the charges of the communist historians – which are also reflected in Ma Tong's description of the Menhuan – pointing out that their richness was not exclusively owed to the believers' gifts but also to their agricultural and economical activities. The presents, she explains, were embedded in a ritualised exchange of gifts and return gifts, the latter often having been inversely proportional to the wealth of the donor: A disciple who presented e. g. a pack of melon-seeds may have been given a sheep in return, by the master.

profession as a gold-miner in the hills of Yunnan he had felt a passion for the study of the religion and he saw in a dream a grey-bearded man with bright eyes (*shaykh jamil dhū liḥya abyad*) who asked him to come to Gansu to study Islam. He followed the supernatural call, and snatching the best horse from his father's stable, he ended up in Guanchuan in Wiqāyatullāh's house. Training started with the master giving away the novice's belongings as charity. He thereafter answered the teacher's question if he was satisfied by saying that he would even be contented if he should give away the student's life in charity. This assertion was put to the test when the disciple had reached perfection, and secrets and wonders emerged from him (*zahar minhu al-asrār wa-l-‘ajā’ib*). Wiqāyatullāh took ‘Abd al-Karīm to a high mountain in the Yanpingzui canyon and sitting down over a precipice (*‘alā shafā jurfin ‘ālī*) he explained to him: If the disciple is truly sincere (*idhā kān al-murīd ṣādiqan haqqan*) and the master orders him to jump down the slope he will immediately obey. Taking this as a wink (*ishāra*) to jump, ‘Abd al-Karīm got himself ready to cast himself down but was hindered by the master's hands from wasting his life.<sup>162</sup>

The story about a disciple who had been a Taoist monk earlier in his life may be apt to illustrate how Wiqāyatullāh's clairvoyance was put at the service of a pedagogical use. While participating in the collective 'amal-ritual, Wiqāyatullāh uttered the question: "What is the meaning of *Innamā Allāh ilāhun wāḥid?*" which one Ahong present answered as, "God is the only deity". When thereafter Wiqāyatullāh asked as a second question: "Why then are there still people who believe in the divinity of the Laojun?" (*man i’taqad al-Laojun ilāhan*),<sup>163</sup> a man left the circle (*dā’ira*) and the ritual was ended. Being asked about the reason for quitting the circle, the disciple explained that he had been a Taoist monk before and that during the performance of the ceremony the Laojun had crossed his mind. A sentence written in a partly illegible, apparently faulty Arabic<sup>164</sup> and probably for that reason not included in the Chinese translation further clarifies the motive of the ex-monk's leave. Wiqāyatullāh had sensed the presence of "disbelief" in the ceremony and felt physical discomfort and he therefore asked the ex-monk to quit: "Go out! The smell of disbelief hurts the brain of the revealer".<sup>165</sup> In the suppressed phrase Wiqāyatullāh designated

<sup>162</sup> "And they both wept while embracing each other" (*wa-bakayā mu‘āniqayni*; Manṣūr 1933: 65–66; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 52–55).

<sup>163</sup> Literally: "Lord Lao", i. e. the deified Laozi (identical with Taishang Laojun Li Er 太上老君李耳 whose statue is set up in Taishang lou temple on Mt. Kongtong 崆峒山 near Pingliang, Gansu).

<sup>164</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 47, l. 6–7.

<sup>165</sup> *Al-ikhrāj* [or: *a-lā kharāj* = *ukhruj*] *wa-rā’iḥat al-kufr ālamat* [or: *awṭa’at?*] *dimāgh al-kāshif*.



Illustration 2: Statue of the Laojun in Taishang lou temple on Kongtong shan.

himself “revealer” as he could read the thoughts of the ex-Taoist and exposed the “disbelief” which continued to influence the proselyte.<sup>166</sup>

A disciple dispatched by the Shaykh to guard the Gongbei of the town of Weilin 渭臨 had observed two clouds of fragrant musk (*fawhat al-misk*) emanating through the door of the holy complex which then united to form a single cloud and he asked the Shaykh for an explanation. The latter interpreted the phenomenon as the post-mortem residue of two ascetics who had devoted themselves to spiritual exercises without however reaching complete sanctity. He clarifies that during their lifetime there had remained some imperfection with them and as a result they now meet every evening and ask one another for blessings. However, despite this imperfection the people were able to derive blessings at this place and they built a mausoleum above it. Underlying the Shaykh’s judgment there is the claim that by contrast to the two ascetics *Wiqāyatullāh* attained perfect sanctity.<sup>167</sup>

166 Manşür 1933: 47; Manşür/Ma 1997: 34–35.

167 Manşür 1933: 54; Manşür/Ma 1997: 42–43.

### 2.5.4.5 Awe of the charismatic teacher

The perfect saint is a charismatic and awe-inspiring person who owns a quality designated *hayba* in the Arabic text.<sup>168</sup>

Confronted with Wiqāyatullāh's awful appearance, the criminals (*mufsidūn*) of the town of Fuqiang gave up their evil designs and asked him to accept their repentance. Having placed a student of his in the mosque as authority to refer to in legal matters (*innaka min al-yawm muftī la-nā fī l-sharā'i wa-l-ahkām*) Wiqāyatullāh departed with a companion who led his horse and they crossed the torrential river behind the northern gate the view of which made the spectators shiver with fear. They declared it part of his charisma that their intrigues had disappeared like a [black] cloud and that "they found repentance, without intention, while they were neglectful".<sup>169</sup>

The kings, "rulers of the seven continents" (*salātīn al-aqālīm al-sab'a*), it is said, took refuge with him when they felt his majestic presence.<sup>170</sup> The officials who had taken Wiqāyatullāh captive were seized by fear when they beheld his awful presence, and anticipating the danger of Wiqāyatullāh re-uniting with his armed and highly devoted disciples<sup>171</sup> they saw no alternative to killing him. But even after his execution, Wiqāyatullāh continued to inspire fear. Due to mysterious deaths that occurred among men and horses in the stable where the Shaykh was buried hurriedly, his remains were unearthed and buried outside the Western gate. For the soothsayers (*al-kahana*) predicted that the plague (*al-wabā'*) would spread from the place unless the "noble person killed unjustly" is buried elsewhere properly. The men guarding the saint's corpse<sup>172</sup> testified

<sup>168</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 68, u.; for the technical term *hayba* cf. Qushayrī 1940: 36 (complementary with *uns*, "intimacy"); Qushayrī 2012: 59–60 (in correlation with *khashya*, "fear").

<sup>169</sup> *Qad dhābat tashāwurātūnā ka-l-sīhāb bi-lā fī'lā 'abathan wa-wajadnā al-tawba bi-lā niyya ghafalan* (Manṣūr 1933: 36–37; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 23).

<sup>170</sup> "When I sat down assuming my self-centred posture" (*idhā jalastu 'alā maqāmī al-nafṣī*; Manṣūr 1933: 68).

<sup>171</sup> In Mingxin's vita incorporated in the *Manāqib* of Zhan Ye: 44 (= Ma Siren 2012: 20 [Chin. trans.]), the disciples [from among the Salar people], after their repulse, withdrew to Hualin (華林) mountain and declared their innocence by hoisting a white flag. On the flag, thereafter stolen by a thief on the order of the "tyrannical official" (xingkui de guanyuan 行虧的官員), there was a writing in the Arabic script which was sent to the emperor and interpreted for him by a Turkish scholar ('ālim al-turk). The inscription said that their uproar was due to the injustice of the tyrannical officer and that they hoped that the just emperor will find out [the circumstances of] their troubles of being [loyal] subjects to him (*inna l-waghā' [zaofan 造反 = the revolt] li-ajl jabr al-amīr al-jabbār wa-rajā'ahum mushāhadat al-sulṭān al-'ādil an yakhburū shuqqat kawnihim ra'iyyat al-sulṭān*).

<sup>172</sup> The remains of the corpses of the masters played an important role in the legitimization of the pretenders to power within the Jahriyya order (cf. Aubin 1990: 556–557).

that they saw a “great light above his blessed head” and that detachments of light-bearers (*ṭā’ifa nūrāniyya*)<sup>173</sup> descended on him from heaven one after another to visit him and derive blessings, until the morning (*yatabarrakūn bi-ra’sih al-mubārak ilā ṭulū’ al-ṣubḥ*). In the same way the visitors flocking to his tomb in the Dongchuan Dagongbei 東川大拱北 of Lanzhou, the author maintains, obtain blessings from visiting his mausoleum (*qubbatuh al-mubāraka al-jamīla*),<sup>174</sup> implicitly asking the reader to travel to Wiqāyatullāh’s final resting place.<sup>175</sup>

### 3 Conclusion

The Arabic text, as difficult as it may be to decipher and read it, allows us to catch a glimpse of how Wiqāyatullāh’s sanctity has been constructed in the *K. al-Jahri*: His *wilāya* is acknowledged by various spiritual personalities foremost of which is the Yemenite master who also acts as the guarantor of a valid transmission of Sufism from Arabia to China. In the stories of his vita, Wiqāyatullāh is presented as possessing full awareness of his own supreme sanctity which manifests in miracles, predictions of future events, mainly relating to his own grandiose downfall, in exorcisms and spiritual states he experienced. He has travelled along the mystical path until its very end and therefore he has become qualified to train and “heal” the novices traumatized in the battles they had to fight to survive. Deeply impressed by his awe and motivated by the belief in his *wilāya* his disciples were prepared to give up everything and even sacrifice their lives for the sake of the master and their communities.

The *K. al-Jahri* is not only an excellent source for eight generations of the history of an important Chinese Sufi order which to this day is taught in the madrasas and gongbeis of the Jahriyya in Ningxia and Gansu,<sup>176</sup> but it is also a treasure trove for the study of the phenomenology of religion in general and of Islamic mysticism in particular. It deserves to be edited on the basis of all extant manuscripts including the parallel textual tradition of the

<sup>173</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 69, l. 3.

<sup>174</sup> The *gongbei* was built over Mingxin’s tomb thanks to the initiative of Ma Yuanzhang (Aubin 1990: 557).

<sup>175</sup> Manṣūr 1933: 69; Manṣūr/Ma 1997: 55–57.

<sup>176</sup> Oral information obtained in Tianshui (formerly: Qinzhou 秦州), Gansu, and Xiji, Ningxia, 2014.

*Rashahāt* of Guanli Ye and the other hagiographical works and I also consider it a desideratum that a translation of it is made into a Western language.

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