

## The Way of *Shāhidīn*: The Construction of a Qur’anic Theology of Sufism in Tafseer-e-Fāzli\*

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### Abstract

Hazrat Fazal Shah (Allah’s mercy be upon him), known as Ba Ba Ji Noor Walay, is initiator of Fāzli Qādirī branch in already existing Qādirīyya Order in Muslim gnosticism. He was born at Jallendhar, East Punjab, India. After the partition of Indo-Pak subcontinent in 1947 the saint migrated to Pakistan ultimately settling at Lahore. He passed away in 1978. Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Fāzli (1940– ) at present his successor and first mentor of Fāzli Qādirī Order is also settled at Lahore. It was the way of Hazrat Fazal Shah that he would give a narration (biyān) of one rakū’ (a small section) of the holy Qur’ān daily at pre-dawn. Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Fāzli, his most obedient disciple and would-be successor was assigned the duty of taking notes and presenting the import in his own writing, before the mentor any time in the day to get his verification. The narration of the Qur’an completed in the life time of Hazrat Fazal Shah and was verified by him in his ‘will’ before his demise. This ultimately published by the name of Tafseer-e-Fāzli (TF). The commentary is not based on any traditions etc. Authority for whatever has been said in it is given from the Quran. The obligation on the reader has been written under the caption of ‘Paroration’ after every verse. The work is original with respect to its diction and approach. It consists of seven volumes and is originally in Urdu, published from 1982 to 1998. First three volumes have been translated into English and published while work on the 4<sup>th</sup> volume is in progress. **The study examines how the TF constructs of a Qur’anic theology of mysticism focusing on the interpretation of the Qur’anic term Shāhid.** According to the TF the epithet used by the Qur’ān for what is commonly called ‘sufi mentor’ is ‘shāhid’ (witness) and ‘The Tariqat-i-Shāhidīn (The Way of Shāhidīn) is the right epithet to be used for ‘taṣawaf/sufism’. Shāhid recites the Word of God and presents his auspicious life as model. He is the teacher of the Book and Wisdom. He grants purification (tazkia) to the follower/s and verifies it as shāhid. Therefore, **Tariqat-e-Shāhidīn (commonly called sufism) is the discipline for granting purification (tazkia) and then its verification (tasdīq).** The article is an attempt to locate the origin of Islamic Spirituality in the Quran. The Qurān is the fundamental religious document and basic source of Islamic faith. Sufism is a phenomenon which organized itself into a discipline in the early centuries of Islam. A great majority of Muslims have always believed it quite coherent with the spirit of their faith. But the question is: “Where does lie its origin in the Qurān!” Muslim scholars have been searching for the answer of this question since centuries. They have tried to explain it in terms of words like ‘ṣaf’, ‘ṣuf’, ‘ṣuffa’, ‘wujūd’, ‘iḥsān’, ‘ḥubb’, ‘tazkia’ but could not explain its origin and its development into a discipline on Quranic grounds. First time in the history of Muslim culture Tafseer-e-Fāzli traces the origin of this discipline in the Qurānic term ‘Shāhid’ (the certified witness) and explains its development into a discipline. The most important thing about this article is that it explains everything without reference to anything other than the Qurān.

According to Tafseer-e-Fāzli (TF), the Qur’ān is *qawl*<sup>1</sup> (قول teaching, guidance, precept) and has the status of *the standard of truth* in this respect.<sup>2</sup> To talk with reference to the Qur’an is to talk on the basis of *authority*. The writer must admit that there could never flourish in Muslim culture in general, and in *Sufism* in particular a strong tradition to talk on the basis of *authority*. When anyone talks on some matter without reference to *authority*, it is no better than mere conjecture. Conjecture can add to anyone’s knowledge or contribute to his betterment to the least. One’s conjecture is in no way better than the other’s.

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Conjecture does not spare anyone from ‘*the truth*’.<sup>3</sup> As being ‘*the truth*’ (*al haqq*) only the Word of Allah has the status of ‘authority’.<sup>4</sup> The Qur’an is *precept (qawl)*.<sup>5</sup> So far as the word, the concept, the idea, the principle, teaching or the precept, interpretation of an unveiling (*kashf*) or vision (*shuhūd*), is concerned, whatever ‘*the truth*’ certifies is truth, whatever conforms to ‘*the truth*’ is truth.<sup>6</sup> Then there comes the stage of action (‘*amal*’). ‘*Amal*’ is complementary to *qawl*.<sup>7</sup> The knowledge that Allah has given to the believers to talk on a matter is to say only that which they themselves act upon, if otherwise, Allah hates it most.<sup>8</sup> If one expresses his knowledge on some matter, in accordance with Allah’s injunction, he will share the benefit, with others, he has got from acting on it. These are the conditions to be fulfilled if one talks with reference to *authority*. If one believes that the Qur’ān, being *al-haqq*, is the standard of truth, controversies in religion arise when he talks without its reference, for knowledge is the capacity to distinguish truth from untruth.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the purpose before a knowledgeable person while writing or giving judgment on anything, should be to enlighten truth on that very matter.<sup>10</sup> The study examines how the *TF* constructs of a Qur’anic theology of mysticism focusing on the interpretation of the Qur’anic term *Shāhid*.<sup>11</sup>

The *TF* sees the origin and organization of Islamic Spirituality in the concept of *shāhid*. According to *TF*, the holy Qur’ān calls the prophet (pbuh) as *shāhid* (the witness, the devout).<sup>12</sup> All the prophets (pbuh) were *shāhid*.<sup>13</sup> The followers of the prophets (pbut) are *mash-hūd* (the witnessed). Allah Himself sent the prophets (pbut) as *shāhidīn*. There can be *shāhidīn* who are not prophets. The *shāhidīn* other than the prophets are raised from within the believers (*the mash-hūdīn*). Allah loves both. He vows the honor of both *shāhid* and *mash-hūd*.<sup>14</sup> Allah has taught the believers to pray for togetherness with the *shāhidīn*.<sup>15</sup> In Islam, the chain of holy people (*the mash-hūdīn* turned *shāhidīn*) has its origin in those immediate followers of the prophet (pbuh) whom he (pbuh) purified and then verified, and will continue to the dooms day. It is these holy men who are mistakenly called *sufies*. The way of gnosis in Islam is actually the way of *shāhidīn* (the verified witnesses).

It is the glory of the prophet (pbuh) as *shāhid* that he is giver of glad-tidings as well as a warner.<sup>16</sup> He gives glad-tidings to those who believe in him (pbuh) that for them is blessing and warns the disbelievers of bad end. All the messengers (pbut) were *shāhid*<sup>17</sup> i.e., giver of glad-tidings as well as warners.<sup>18</sup> *Shāhid* recites the Word of God and presents his auspicious life as model. Allah has sent His prophet (pbuh) as the teacher of the Book and Wisdom. To grant purification to the followers is also the proud privilege of *shāhid*. Allah Almighty says: *Allah verily has shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who reciteth unto them His revelations, and causeth unto them to grow [purifies them],<sup>19</sup> and teacheth unto them the scripture and wisdom; although before (he came to them) they were in flagrant error.* (al-Qur’an, 3:164)<sup>20</sup> According to the *TF* this privilege was granted by the prophet (pbuh) to ‘the chosen ones’, the devout, from among his followers and this will last till the day of resurrection. For example, Allah chose Tālūt (Saul-a.s.) above others and granted him abundance in knowledge and physical endurance;<sup>21</sup> Allah chose Maryam (a.s.), purified her, and exalted her above the women of the whole world making a model for them;<sup>22</sup> Allah also chose Ādam and Nūh and Āl-e-Ibrāhīm and Āl-Imrān (pbut) above all people. (Āl are the people whose condition is similar to that of their leader.)<sup>23</sup> In every age, Allah Almighty chose some men to bring people from darkness to light. “Allah Almighty chooses certain men/women so that through them people find the way to attain His Pleasure.

It is comforting to accept him who is chosen by Allah Almighty. When one believes in Allah Almighty through the one chosen by Him, one is granted guidance.”<sup>24</sup> The Qur’ān classifies the early Muslims into three categories: those on the right hand (*aṣḥāb-ul-yamīn*); those on the left hand (*aṣḥāb-ush-shimāl*); the foremost in the race (*as-sābiqoon-al-awwaloon*—السابقون الأولون). The Qur’an says that Allah is Well-Pleased with ‘the first and foremost of the fugitives from Makkah (*the muhājirīn*) and those who welcomed and helped them in Madīnah (*the anṣār*) and they are well-pleased with Him. The Qur’an also states that the same is true for those who followed them in sincerity.<sup>25</sup> *Al-Ashra-tul-Mubashira* were the ten chosen ones among these whom the prophet certified as the dwellers of paradise while they were alive.<sup>26</sup> The *TF* holds that the greatest of all the favors of Allah Almighty to mankind is that He presented His chosen servants as model for them. The purpose being that people should believe in Him through the chosen servants and follow them so that they are relieved of fear and grief.<sup>27</sup> Hence, according to the *TF*, *tariqat-e-shāhidīn* (commonly called *sufism*) is the discipline for granting purification (*tazkia*) and then its verification (*tasdīq*). But what is the significance of purification! The *TF* holds: Purification (*tazkia*) and success in both the worlds (*falah*) are essential for each other. He attained *falāh* who kept his self pure.<sup>28</sup> Indeed he attained *falāh*(success) who was granted purification.<sup>29</sup> Allah promises *falāh* for *muminūn*—the faithful.<sup>30</sup> The *shāhid* certainly imbibes in him these qualities par excellence.

According to the *TF*, following in the footsteps of their *shāhid* at all these stations the faithful attain purification and thus *falah*.<sup>31</sup> If it was necessary in the life time of the prophet (pbuh) that the *shāhid* grants purification how can it be attained without *shāhid* in any other time! Allah Almighty has sent His prophet (pbuh) as lamp that gives light.<sup>32</sup> Lamps will go on lit by the light-giving beacon. *Shāhid* is pure/righteous. According to the *TF*, two authorities confirm his purity: i) His precepts are straight.<sup>33</sup> Word of Allah as ‘standard of righteous precept’ verifies his position. ii) In practice he always follows in the footsteps of his mentor.<sup>34</sup> Allah is the protecting friend of those who believe. *Shāhidīn* are the friends of Allah. *He bringeth them [His friends] out of darkness into light*.<sup>35</sup> It is the glory of the friends of Allah to be free of fear and grief.<sup>36</sup> He who befriends any friend of Allah, befriends Allah. He is directed towards light and becomes free from fear and grief.

According to *TF*, *shāhidīn* are beloved servants of Allah. Allah Almighty has stated in the Qur’ān: Allah loves the beneficent (*mohsinīn*). (al-Qur’an, 2:195) Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance (*tawwābīn*). (ibid., 2:222) Allah loves those who keep themselves pure (*motatahhirīn*) (ibid., 2:222). Allah loves those who fear Him (*muttaqīn*). (ibid., 3:76) Allah loves the steadfast (*ṣābirīn*). (ibid., 3:146) Allah loves those who place their trust in Him (*mutawakkilīn*) (ibid., 3:159). Similarly, the purifiers, the just dealers, and those who for the cause of Allah fight in ranks as if they were a solid structure are beloved of Allah. (ibid., 9:108, 60:8, 61:4). Those who have inculcated vices in them are also mentioned in the Qur’ān. For example, Allah does not love the transgressors (*zalimīn*). (ibid., 3:140) Similarly, Allah does not love the corrupters (*mufsidīn*), the prodigals (*musrefīn*), the aggressors (*m’utadīn*), the treacherous (*khāinīn*), the proud (*mustakbirīn*) and the like. (ibid., 5:64, 6:141, 7:55, 8:58, 16:23) One who develops in him the attributes of any of the beloveds of Allah, comes near him and becomes dear to Allah. The attributes of a beloved of Allah cannot come except by following him with love. And after all it is the beloved of Allah who is to certify that one is following him. Only one of the beloved servants of Allah at present is to be followed but all others are to be respected.<sup>37</sup> Those who claim nearness with any of the beloveds of Allah without following him, their claim is devoid of evidence. The claim not supported by evidence does not prove to be true. The prophet (pbuh) is the absolute standard of servitude (*‘abdiyat*) to Allah.<sup>38</sup> Allah certifies the prophet (pbuh) as *‘abdohū* or *‘abdehī* (His servant).<sup>39</sup> He (pbuh) enjoys the highest place in servitude to Allah. None of the attributes of the beloveds of Allah is to be found in any one equal to the prophet (pbuh). Allah Almighty Himself has granted these good qualities to His beloved servant (pbuh), the followers are granted these qualities from the beloved servant of Allah at present. The prophet (pbuh) is the most beloved servant of Allah and the lamp that gives light. Those who are lit from this lamp are also light-giving lamps and beloveds of Allah. How beautifully the *TF* narrates the saying of Hazrat Fazal Shah:

Beloveds of Allah (*shāhidīn*) are one embodiment, for their purpose is one and the same and that is to bring people out of darkness into light.<sup>40</sup>

Some consider *taṣawwaf* as *‘kashf’-o-shahūd* (unveiling and direct witnessing). The *TF* does not consent to it. It is not true of the way of *shāhidīn*. According to *TF*, *kashf-o-shahūd*, or *karamat* (making miracles) if granted by Almighty, is appreciable but it never is the objective of those who love the beloved of Allah. The worthy authors of *TF* believe that anyone’s *kashf-o-shahūd* bears no authority, and *karamat* is the outcome of profuse repetition of a ‘word’, be it meaningless. To make miraculous things is never evidence of one’s piety.<sup>41</sup> Who can be the better knower of what is needed to bring people out of darkness towards light except the Al-Mighty! Allah by Himself grants to His beloved whatever knowledge is needed to him.<sup>42</sup> Those who seek ranks by their own choice, make themselves fall in trouble.<sup>43</sup>

*Shri’at* (the law), *tariqat* (the practice/the way), *haqiqat* (realism) and *m’arifat* (gnosis) are four grades of believing. *Sharia* is Allah’s *amr* (command) which is to be followed. *Sharia* in essence is a way, a royal road on which Allah has set us and has commanded to follow. He who follows it as he likes, does not follow Allah’s *amr*, he only follows his own likes and dislikes.<sup>44</sup> Such a person may develop high expertise in rituals, but never reaches the core. According to the *TF* to act upon *sharia* following in the footsteps of *shāhid* is *tariqat*.<sup>45</sup> The cadre of *haqiqat* is related to knowledge. *‘Ilm* (knowledge) is always post-experience. It is granted after *‘amal* (acting upon *sharia*).<sup>46</sup> It is only after following in the footsteps of the beloved of Allah that the faith in the unseen (*imān-bil-ghaib*)<sup>47</sup> is converted into the witnessed faith (*imān-bish-shahādat*).<sup>48</sup> He who keeps on following his *shāhid* at all the three grades is granted *m’arifat* (the level par excellence of what the Qur’ān calls *irfān-i-ḥaqq*).<sup>49</sup> He is granted togetherness with *shāhidīn*.<sup>50</sup> He is included among those whom Allah has blessed with His favour i.e., among the truthful ones, the martyrs and the righteous.

Al-Qur'an says: *Who so obeyeth Allah and the messenger, they are with those unto whom Allah hath shown favour, of the prophets [an-nabiyīn] and the saints [as-siddiqīn] and the martyrs [as-shuhadā] and the righteous [as-sālihīn]. The best of company are they!* (al-Qur'an, 4:69) The Qur'an states four ultimate categories of those whom Allah has blessed with His favor and they are: *nabiyīn* (the prophets-pbut), *siddiqīn*(truthful ones), *shuhadā*(martyrs), *ṣālihīn* (the righteous). All other epithets used in the Qur'an for those whom Allah has blessed with His favour will come under these heads, for example, messengers (*rasool*), *olul-azam*, *shāhidīn*, *mukhlaṣīn*, the *abrār*, the *muttaqīn*, the *mohsinīn* etc. Thus according to the *TF*, to consider messengership (*risālat*) a higher category than prophet-hood (*nabuwat*)<sup>51</sup> or to consider *olulazm* as a category independent from *an-nabiyīn*,<sup>52</sup> is not correct in the light of this verse. All prophets (*nabiyīn*) are also messengers (*rasool*) by virtue of their being *nabī* but it is not true otherwise. *TF* supports the primacy of prophet-hood over the messengership.

Word of Allah affirms that those whom Allah has blessed with His favour (*in'amyafṭa*) will remain in the world till the last day and that there is no better company than to be with them. Only whoso is with them here, will be with them in the hereafter, for the same present is going to convert into the future (i.e., hereafter). (al-Qur'an, 2:25, 82, 110, 130). The *TF* expounds these grades of believing in the following manner: *Shri'at* is similar to milk, *tariqat* is like curd, *haqiqat* is like butter and *m'arifat* is akin to butter oil. If there is no milk, none of these could be made nor can anyone make. Butter-oil is ultimately the essence of milk. The *TF* also explains it in another way: The reality of *shri'at* step/journey (*qadam*), *tariqat* is footprints (*naqsh-e-qadam*), *haqīqat* is the knowledge derived from it and is one and eternal (*qadīm*). *Shri'at* is the beginning of journey (*ibtidā-i-qadam*) and *m'arifatis* the ultimate end of journey (*intihā-i-qadam*).<sup>53</sup>

### Seyyed Hossein Nasr

To rightly appreciate the value of the thought and approach of *TF* about what is called *Sufism* let us compare it with the thought and approach of a contemporary scholar who is also one of the chief representatives of a school of *sufism*. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933), an eminent scholar, and presently professor of Islamic Studies at the George Washington University in America wrote a book in 1966 entitled *Ideals and Realities of Islam (IR)* to help the world understand Islam. In this book he also gives his views about *sufism*. Two instances from this book will be presented here.

*Ideals and Realities* states an analogy of a circle to explain the relationship between *shri'at*, *tariqat* and *haqiqat*. In this analogy the circumference of a circle depicts *shri'at*. *Shri'at* is for all believers and all the believers are on the circumference. The radii of this circle symbolize the *Turuq* (plural of *Tariqat*—the way). *Tariqat* is that radius which connects each and every point on the circumference to the center which is *haqiqat*(Reality). Because of cultural and psychological difference of the people *tariqat* is apparently found in various shades but it does not differ in essence. *IR* states that there are as many as ways of *tariqat* as the number of the children of Adam. By affirming faith in Allah one comes on the circumference (i.e., the *shri'at*) from where one can travel on the path (i.e., the *tariqat*) towards the center of the circle (i.e., *Haqiqat*) which is God. *Haqiqat* is the source of *shri'at* and *tariqat*. God has created *shri'at* and *tariqat* separately from each other. These both have a different relation with *Haqiqat* [i.e., God]. Observing *shri'at* alone is necessary as well as enough to achieve salvation but there are such persons who do not stop short of reaching *Haqiqat*.<sup>54</sup>

Examining from the point of view of *TF* all aspects of this analogy are contrary to Qur'anic teachings. The center of this circle is *Haqiqat*(The Truth or God or Reality as *IR* calls it.) But the Qur'an never uses the word '*Haqiqat*' for Allah. The word '*Haqiqat*' is a derivative of the root *Hā-Qāf-Qāf*. The following derivatives of this root occur in the Qur'an:

*Haq* (occur twelve times) meaning just, right; to occur or fall rightly or justly; to be justly due; coming true of the Words, promises, warnings or glad tidings of Allah etc.

*Haqqat*(five times): justified;

*yaḥiqqo* (once); fulfilling of the word;

*Huqqat* (twice): be made fit;

*yuḥiqq* (four times): to cause the truth come true or become manifest; *astahaqqa* (once): to deserve; to merit;

*astahaqqaa* (once): be ascertained;

*ḥaqqa/n* (17 times): duty incumbent on someone to fulfill; certainty (of promise of Allah); certainly or in truth; a promise which is binding on Allah to bring about; coming true of a dream;

*ḥaqqāhō* (3 times): the due;

*aḥaqqo* (10 times): to have a better right; to be more deserving; to be truer than, to be more worthy than (e.g., testimony, or party);

*ḥaqqīq* (once): to be bound;

*al Ḥāqqah* (3 times): The day of judgment as reality, the sure event, the undeniable truth;

*Al Ḥaqq* (227 times). The Word of the Lord; (02:26), the truth or reality as opposed to *al-bātil* (falsehood); 02:42, as opposite to *aḍ-dalāl*(error); (10:32), or as opposite to *ẓann* (conjecture) etc. (03:154)<sup>55</sup>

There is no scope for calling God *Haqiqat*(Reality) while talking in the light of the Qur'an. It cannot be derived from the derivative *al ḥāqqah* even which occurs only three times in the Qur'an in the first three consecutive verses of surah *al-Ḥāqqah*. Pikhthal translates these verses as follows:

The Reality! What is the Reality? Ah, what will convey thee what the reality is! (al-Qur'an, 69:1-3)  
Abdullah Yousaf Ali translates the same verses in this way:

The Sure Reality! What is the Sure Reality? And what will make thee realize what the Sure Reality is?

But the translation of verses 13 to 37 of the same surah by Pikhthal as well as Abdullah Yousaf Ali leave no doubt that in all the first three verses the reality, the sure event, the undeniable truth referred to is nothing except the Day of Judgment when everyone will be requited for his doings during worldly life. (al-Qur'an, 69:1-3, and 13-37)<sup>56</sup>

The analogy of a circle to depict the Person of Allah, too, is un-Qur'anic. The Qur'an never uses this analogy, nor does it befit to His Glory. The writer has stated above that *shariat* denotes 'teachings' or precept, *tariqat* comprises practice and *haqiqat* denotes a stage of spiritual knowledge. Whoso follows in the footsteps of his mentor in all these three places he is blessed with *m'arifat*. *M'arifat* is a favour (*in'ām*) as approval of his piety. He becomes a sage, a saint, a gnostic. *IR* does not mention *ma'rifat* except as a passing reference and that too without authority. After identifying Allah as *Haqiqat* how could there remain any further stage!<sup>57</sup> If Allah is Reality then what is the status of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them which He has claimed to have created with truth! (Cf. *ibid*, 45:22) It would not be anything other than appearance or a relative reality<sup>58</sup> of the Reality! But the universe as manifestation of Absolute Reality could not be less than being eternal or everlasting which is contrary to the Qur'anic teachings. Allah has created the heavens and the earth in truth... (al-Qur'an, 06:73, 10:05, 45:22 and many more.) If the word '*haqiqat*' is to be used in the sense of 'reality' in Qur'anic perspective, it can be used for 'the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them'. They are 'reality' and Allah is the Creator of reality. It is commonly believed in by Muslims from centuries, that '*al-ḥaqq*' is one of *al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā* (the Beautiful-Names of Allah). However, the *wahdat al-wajūd* school of sufism, (of which Seyyed Hossein Nasr is a present day representative<sup>59</sup>), has chosen '*al-ḥaqq*' as their preferred name for Allah which they use for translating God into The Reality or The Truth. The belief that '*al-ḥaqq*' is one of *al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā*<sup>60</sup> and to identify Allah with this as His preferred name is one of the two fundamental presuppositions of the doctrine of *wahdat al-wajūd*<sup>61</sup> propounded by a renowned sufi scholar Ibn al-'Arabi (d. 638/1240).<sup>62</sup> The *TF* doesn't believe *al-ḥaqq* as one of *al-Asmā-ul-Ḥusnā*. Hence identification of Allah with *al-ḥaqq*, referring Him as 'The Truth' or 'The Reality' and drawing implications thereof, *TF* does not accept. According to *TF* the status of being *al-ḥaqq* (*the truth*) only befits to the Word of Allah in the light of the Qur'an.<sup>63</sup> Some references from the Qur'an are hereby given for the perusal of the readers.

“Say: *Al Ḥaqq* is from the Lord of you all. Then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve. (cf. *Ibid.*, 18:29); His Word is the truth (*Qawlo hul-ḥaqq—Ibid.*, 6:73) What Allah says is the truth (*Wallahu yaqoolul ḥaqq—33:34*), al-Qur'an is the truth from your Lord (*ho wal-ḥaqqo mir-Rabbika—Ibid.*, 32:02-03) What Allah descends unto His Messenger is the truth (cf. *Al-Qur'an —5:83-84, 11:120, 13:01, 19; 21:55; Allah's Injunctions are the truth* (cf. *Ibid.*, 02:149, 33:53) etc.

*Al-Ḥaqq* means ‘the standard of truth’. Whatever the Qur’an verifies is truth (*ḥaqq*), whatever it disapproves is untruth. Wherever the Qur’an is silent, to express one’s views is to express opinion or conjecture and *batil*(false) is the opinion of those who disbelieve. (cf. 38:27) ‘Assuredly conjecture (الظَّنَّ *az-zanna*) can by no means take the place of truth.’ (cf. 10:36, 53:28) Deviation from what Qur’an states is but error (*ad-ḍalāl*) (إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ) *Famādhā ba`da al-ḥaqqi` Illā ad-ḍalālu*.(10:32) To give views opposite to the Qur’an is but *al-bāṭil*.(cf. 17:81, 21:18) ‘To say anything in violation to the Qur’an is without justification, and wrongful (*bi ghair-il-ḥaqq*— cf. 02:61).’ Allah commands the believers ‘not to utter aught concerning Allah save the truth, (i.e., what is in accordance with the Qur’an. cf. 04:171)’<sup>64</sup>

The *TF* upholds that the Qur’ān is authoritative, it is perspicuous and internally self-consistent and *TF* gives no reference from anything other than the Qur’an. The *TF* holds *al-ḥaqq*(i.e., the Qur’ān) to be the final standard for determining the truth or validity of a doctrine, belief, view, concept, principle or teaching, unveiling, intuition, imagination, religious experience or whatever. The views about sufism, *wahdat al-wajud*, or the way of *shāhidīn* expressed in *TF* arise in the same perspective.

*TF*, as we have already seen, do not see *shri`at* and *trīqat* to be separately created by Allah for common people and for the chosen one’s respectively. It holds that *al-ḥaqq* (the Qur’ān) is the source of knowing *shri`at*.<sup>65</sup> The way to act upon its teachings—the straight path (*trīq-i-mustqīm* i.e., the *trīqat*)—is also shown by this Book.<sup>66</sup> For *trīq-i-mustqīm* to be as many in number as the children of Adam is but contrary to the Qur’anic teachings. What this means is that there is no need to follow him *who is turning towards Allah*, that whatever way one likes to act upon *shri`at* is *trīq-i-mustqīm*. But this is absolutely contrary to Divine injunctions. (...And follow in the footsteps of the one *who is turning towards Allah*—cf. *TF*, vol.5,31:15, p. 253) Islam has from ever been the Dīn—the way of life approved by Allah for His servants.<sup>67</sup> All the *shāhidīn*—*the beloved servants of Allah*—presented Islam to their people. It was perfect guidance for every people. Since it was revealed on the last of the prophets (pbuh) for all humanity and for all the ages, it now comprises of a guidance which is absolutely perfect (*akmal*). *Shri`at* now comprises of the teachings of this Dīn and the essence of *shri`at* is a royal road. (Cf. *TF*, vol. 6,45:18) *Al-ḥaqq* uses the analogy of the straight path (*sirāt-i-mustqīm*) for the way traversed on this royal road by those whom Allah has blessed.<sup>68</sup> To follow in the footsteps of one among the blessed ones is *sirāt-i-mustqīm* or the *trīq-i-mustqīm*’ or *trīqat*. It is the shortest and the surest way to destiny i.e., *falāh*. Allah witnesses Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) to be on the straight path. (al-Qur’an, 36:3-4) Whom he (pbuh) witnesses as his follower is also on the straight path. Whosoever follows this devout (*shāhid*) and is witnessed by him is also on the straight path, and so on. Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) is *shāhid*(witness). Allah Himself has witnessed it.<sup>69</sup> (33:45) All others among his followers are raised as *shāhid* from those who are *mash-hood* (85:3) i.e., either directly witnessed by the prophet (pbuh) or indirectly verified by one whom he (pbuh) verified. Straight path (*sirāt-i-mustqīm*) is the shortest distance between two points and to follow a witnessed guide is the safest and guaranteed way to reach the destiny. The circumference has neither beginning nor it takes anywhere. The analogy of a *circle* is used in the Qur’ān either in the sense of ‘befalling of a bad fortune’ or ‘evil turn of fortune’.<sup>70</sup> Nowhere has it been used to depict *shari`at* or its relationship with *trīqat* and *ḥaqīqat*.

*IR* asserts in the name of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that

“the *basmalah* begins the *surah al-Fatihah* and therefore the whole of the Qur’ān..., [and] all the Qur’ān is contained in the *surah al-Fatihah*, all of the *surah al-Fatihah* is contained in the *basmalah*, and all of the *basmalah* in the letter *ba`* (ب) with which it begins, all of the letter *ba`* in the point (diacritical mark) under ب and I am that point.”<sup>71</sup>

No doubt, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) is among the chiefs of *shāhidīn* and *shāhidīn* have ever been admitting this fact and ever shall they admit it. But what has been said in the above analogy, can it be substantiated on the authority of the Qur’ān! Never! It does not befit the glory of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that he would claim anything which could not be substantiated on the authority of *al-Ḥaqq*. A diacritical point under *ba`* is a ‘point’. A ‘point’ is always dimensionless as well as directionless. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) always followed the footsteps of the prophet (pbuh) and submitted to him (pbuh). How could he (a.s.) be dimensionless or directionless! The *TF* nowhere supports such mystifying and mythologizing the personality of any beloved servant of Allah in the name of esoteric knowledge. Hazrat Ali (May peace be upon him!) is at a very very high rank among the beloved servants of Allah and a leader of the Gnostics till the last day. Hazrat Ali acted upon the teachings of the Qur’ān throughout his life, following in the footsteps of the prophet (pbuh) taking him as ultimate role model.<sup>72</sup>

IR further asserts:

“the beautiful symbolism indicated in this saying refers to Ali’s ‘supreme identity’ as the perfect saint who is inwardly in union with God.”<sup>73</sup>

The *TF* nowhere uses words like ‘union with God’. It holds that the concept of anyone’s ‘union with God’, inward or outward, is contrary to Qur’anic teachings. According to *TF* one’s nearness or togetherness (*m’aiyyat*–معييت) with Allah is the right concept. For instance the Qur’ān says that Allah is ‘with’ those who show perseverance (*sābirīn*), those who fear Allah (*muttaqīn*), and those who do good (*mohsinīn*).<sup>74</sup> During migration in their way from Mecca to Madīnah, when they were hiding themselves in the cave and the enemy came very near to them and the worthy companion Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddique feared lest the disbelievers harm the prophet (pbuh), he (pbuh) said to his worthy companion: “Don’t be afraid, We are in togetherness with Allah.” (لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا ‘*Lā taḥẓan ‘inna Allāha Ma`anā*’)<sup>75</sup> Hazrat Ali, a perfect saint, certainly was in supreme togetherness with Allah in seclusion as well as in public but not in union with God.

Most of what has been presented and is going to be so in the name of *sufism* is but mysticism (*bātiniyat* or *sirriyat*). It has nothing to do with Islam. The *Way of Shāhidīn* is absolutely different from it.

It can be asked why one cannot purify oneself without a *shāhid*! If someone says that one has purified oneself it would only be a claim. Who would witness this assertion! Allah enjoins: ..follow him who turns towards me. (al-Qurān, 31:15)<sup>76</sup> According to *TF*: One who talks of doing his own purification, one who does not identify anyone better in knowledge than himself, how could he act upon Allah’s injunction stated in verse 31:15! What was the problem of Iblis! Were it not the case that to acknowledge Ādam (pbuh) better than him was difficult for Iblis! (cf. al-Qur’an, 7:12) Had Iblis acted upon Allah’s Injunction to prostrate before Ādam (a.s.), he would have come out of the orbit of his own likes and dislikes. Allah Almighty at Surah 31 (Luqmān) verses 14-15 enjoins man to be grateful to Allah and to his parents. If his parents ask him to attribute associates with Allah he is enjoined not to submit to them. However, he is to serve them even then. It is in this context that Allah enjoins: ...and follow the path of him who turns towards Me... To identify that beloved servant of Allah who is turning towards Allah, and following in his footsteps, is what is called *trīqat*. To allege to act upon *shri’at* without following in the footsteps of the beloved of Allah at present time is to follow one’s own likes and dislikes.<sup>77</sup>

### **Bifurcation of the Personality of *Shāhid* into Various Facets**

It is observed that in presence of the Qur’ānic saying “Allah purifies whom He likes.”,<sup>78</sup> why should, one search, identify and acknowledge a *shāhid*! According to the *TF*, it is Allah Almighty Who has granted His Most Beloved Servant (pbuh) the authority to purify the believers. Allah purifies him whom the prophet (pbuh) purifies. According to *TF* Allah Almighty says to His prophet (pbuh) to ask the believers to follow him (pbuh) if they aspire Allah’s love, and to tell them if they do so Allah will include them in those whom He loves.<sup>79</sup> The claim to follow the prophet (pbuh) can only be substantiated if one follows the *shāhid* at present. Al-Qur’ān says: *And know that the messenger of Allah is among you...*(49:7) According to the *TF* the prophet (pbuh) is among the believers in the shape of *shāhidīn*(3:53, 5:83) and *mukhlaṣīn*(the sincere servants of Allah–15:40).<sup>80</sup> According to the *TF*: Whosoever follows Allah’s beloved at present, Allah likes him and to whom Allah likes to purify, the beloved of Allah grants purification and verifies him.<sup>81</sup>

If one classifies the person of the prophet (pbuh) into various facets of authority, asserting his being a messenger only one among these aspects and maintaining that he (pbuh) is to be followed only in this respect; and even in this respect, if one maintains, he (pbuh) is to be followed in matters pertaining to religion alone, and not in matters pertaining to mundane world, how he could submit to the prophet (pbuh) or follow him (pbuh) even if he happened to be in the life time of the prophet (pbuh)! The *TF* believes in the indivisibility of the personality of *shāhid*; that he (pbuh) is *shāhid* and *shāhid* alone. Father, wife, son, relative or non-relative whoever believes in him (pbuh) as *shāhid* and follows him (pbuh) belongs to him (pbuh) and whoso does not follow him (pbuh) does not belong to him (pbuh). This is true of all *shāhidīn*.<sup>82</sup> *TF* holds messengership as a whole time affair covering the whole life. A messenger (pbuh) is first and foremost a messenger and then anything else.

The reason for bifurcating the personality of the prophet into facets and holding messengership just a facet by such people seems to be that are stitched with their likes and dislikes and on the face of Allah's injunctions mentioned above that if anybody aspires for Allah's love, he should follow the messenger, and that he who will obey the messenger Allah will include him among the ones whom He has blessed, such people find no scope for giving preference to their own likes and dislikes. Making *risalat* just a facet of the personality of prophet they have tried to procure ample space for entering their likes and dislikes into the teaching of the Qur'an.

### Tradition Concerning Date Palms

Those who hold being messenger only one facet of the life of the prophet, maintain that there are two types of matters—*umūr-i-Dunya* (matters pertaining to mundane world) and *umūr-i-Dīn* (matters pertaining to religion)—and maintain that believers are bound to follow the prophet (pbuh) in *umūr-e-Dīn* alone. They base their contention on a tradition which says: That some growers of date-palm presented themselves before the prophet (pbuh) and said that before the prophet (pbuh) had migrated to Madīnah, they used to get pollen-grain from the flowers of male date-palm and would rub it manually over the flower of a female date-palm. This, they would call 'marriage of date-palms'. The tradition further narrates: But when it came to the knowledge of the prophet (pbuh) they thought that the prophet (pbuh) did not like it so they abandoned the age old practice. But the yield next year was very small. Here the tradition adds: The prophet (pbuh) asserted that they were better knowledgeable concerning their *umūr-i-Dunya*.<sup>83</sup> According to *TF* it is absolutely contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an to believe that anyone can be more knowledgeable than the prophet (pbuh) in any sort of affair/s. Let us examine this alleged *tradition* in the light of *Tafsīr-e-Fāzli*.

This tradition divides *umūr* (affairs) into *umūr-i-Dunya* and *umūr-i-Dīn*. There is no basis in the Qur'an for such distinction in the nature of affairs (*umūr*). *Umūr* (singular *amr*) in the diction of the Qur'an are either *m'aruf* or they are *munkar*.<sup>84</sup> The prophet (pbuh) always commanded the former and asked to hold back from the latter. The Qur'an forbids the believers to force the prophet (pbuh) to comply with their wishes, and warns them had the prophet (pbuh) accepted their opinions in most of the affairs (*amr*) they would surely be in trouble. (cf. al-Qur'an, 49:07)<sup>85</sup> The righteous do not even imagine to intentionally disobeying the mentor (*shāhid*), however, if such thing happens unintentionally, they do not delay in making repentance/excuse and seeking guidance.<sup>86</sup> Whosoever submits to the advice of his *shāhid*, succeeds, and whosoever does not submit to him, the *shāhid* would not fail to accommodate him so that the relation is not broken. However, one who follows his likes and dislikes necessarily falls in trouble and it is then that he may turn towards acting upon the advice of the *shāhid* if Allah so Wills. Al-Qur'an asserts the absolute following of the prophet (pbuh). The significance of following the prophet (pbuh) can be measured from the fact that who so follows the prophet (pbuh), Allah Almighty includes him/her among those whom He loves.<sup>87</sup> And who so submits to the prophet (pbuh), is included among those whom He has blessed.<sup>88</sup> Let us see where does the word '*umoor*' occur in the Qur'an and in what sense:

The word '*umoor*' occurs in the Qur'an as the following: ...All cases [*umoor*] go back to Allah (for judgment).<sup>89</sup> Then how could they be divided into *U Moor-i-dunya* and *umoor-i-Dīn*! Hazrat Luqmān (pbuh) advised his son to establish prayer, enjoin kindness and forbid inequity, persevere on whatever befalls him. These, Hazrat Luqman said, were of the steadfast heart of things (*min azmil-umūr*). (cf. al-Qur'an, 31:17) Which of these they would declare as *umoor-i-dunya* and which of these as *umoor-i-Dīn*! The constructions '*taṣīrulumūr*' (of the steadfast heart of things) (ibid, 42:43) and '*āqiba tul umūr*' (sequel of all things) (ibid, 31:22) have also been used in the Qur'an. But none of these uses of the word '*amr*' (or *umūr*) meaning affair/s or case/s warrants bifurcation of the affairs into *umūr-i-Dunya* and *umūr-i-Dīn*.<sup>90</sup>

The Qur'an mentions that Allah has made everything in pairs: night and day, death and life, darkness and light, believer (*Muslim*) and non-believer (*Mujram*), knowledgeable ('Ālim) and ignorant (*Jāhil*), seer and blind, male and female etc. Nowhere in the Qur'an Allah pairs '*dunya*' with '*Dīn*'. Al-ḥaqq (the Qur'an) invariably pairs '*dunya*' (world) with '*ākhirah*' (hereafter) for example: ...*Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good...* (al-Qur'an, 2:201) The word '*Dīn*' (the way of life) wherever it occurs in the Qur'an it refers either to *Dīn al-Islam* or *Dīn al-kufr*. (109:6) It proves that the above tradition is contrary to the Qur'anic teachings and cannot be a saying of the prophet (pbuh).



### Sufism as *Ihsān-i-Islām*

Some people have tried to trace the origin of *tasawwaf* from another tradition commonly known as *Ḥadith-i-Jibrāel*.<sup>91</sup> On the bases of this *tradition* they assert that there are three levels of believing: *Islām*, *Imān* and *Ihsān*. To make a declaration of faith is *Islām* and to confirm it in heart is *Imān*. *Ihsān* is the highest state and it is to always act with the conviction that I am seeing Allah, and if not this level of conviction then to act with the conviction that Allah definitely sees me. The exponents of this view maintain that sufi is at the highest stage of believing (i.e., at *Ihsān*).<sup>92</sup>

*TF* does not support this view. According to this tradition *Imān*(faith) is the second stage of believing. Al-Qur'ān states nine qualities of a *mo'min*. These are in fact nine stations (*muqāmāt*) of being a *mo'min* which are as follows: *taubah*(penitence), *ibādāt*(worship), *ḥamd*(praise of Allah), *ṣaom*(fasting), *rukū'* (bowing before Allah), *sijdah*(prostration), *amr-bil-m'arūf*(bidding good), *nahi-anil-munkar*(forbidding evil) and *hifāzāt li-hudud-Allah* (observing the limits prescribed by Allah Almighty). (al-Qur'ān, 9:112) If *Ihsān* is the higher stage of *Imān*, the exponents of this view must mention with authority the stations denoted by *Ihsān* but not covered by *Imān*. According to the Qurān, *Ihsān* means kindness, doing of good, adding convenience to anyone's life and *moḥsinīn* are the people who add convenience to the life of the people keeping Allah's Pleasure their objective.<sup>93</sup> Is it stated anywhere in the Qurān that you should act with the conviction that you are seeing Allah? Does the *mo'min* not act with the conviction that Allah sees him on the face of the verse that 'Allah is Seer of what you do.'! (Cf. 2:96, 110) According to *TF* only he who maintains his togetherness with Allah in seclusion remains pure in seclusion (*khalwat*) and he who keeps his togetherness with the prophet (pbuh) when in public remains pure in public (*jalwat*); and a *mo'min* remains pure in seclusion and in public. Even if Allah says that "... and over every lord of knowledge there is one more knowing." (12:76) the fact is that to acknowledge someone better in knowledge than them is the real problem of those who present their conjectures under the label of knowledge. It is easy to go on guessing, every now and then, about oneself, and self-certifying that one is at the place of *Ihsān* or at the place of *Imān*! To follow anyone is not possible until one acknowledges the beloved servant of Allah better in knowledge, and self-centered people would never acknowledge anyone better than them. One who does not hesitate from asserting himself better knowledgeable than the prophet (pbuh)—in what he alleges the matters of mundane world (*umoor-i-dunya*), and asserts that the prophet (pbuh) is a human being (*basher*) like him, how could he acknowledge anyone better than him!

According to the *TF* if the prophet himself says that he (pbuh) is a human being (*basher*) like them it is absolutely correct, for only *basher* can be a model to be followed by the *basher*. (Angel could be a model only for the angel.<sup>94</sup> Even the angel could not offer a model through his words and deed for *basher*.)<sup>95</sup> But if anyone other asserts that the prophet (pbuh) was like him/them it would be absolutely wrong for how can the mercy-of-all-the-worlds (*rahma-tullil-ālamīn*) be like us. Is it not same thing the non-believers would say concerning the prophet (pbuh)!<sup>96</sup> Whoever molds himself according to the standard becomes a standard when he is verified.

There are people who believe that one can purify himself.<sup>97</sup> If one could purify himself why did the prophet Ibrahīm pray to Allah for sending a messenger who will grant purification to the people! Similarly, while stating the purpose of sending the prophet (pbuh) why did Allah mention that he purifies the believers!<sup>98</sup> Some people think that the prophet (pbuh) has shown how to perform prayers (mandatory and discretionary), fasting, conducting remembrance of Allah (*ziker*) and other religious rituals and the same was his (pbuh) way to grant purification. Everything is preserved in the Qur'ān and in the books of tradition. One should act upon these teachings to become pious. The *TF* does not recognize that anywhere in the Qurān it is commanded to Muslims that they purify themselves on their own. What the books contain is only words. One cannot get from books except the information, principles, teachings or the precept. Should the 'book' be raised to the status of *teacher* (*muallim*) what need was there for Allah to send the prophets (pbuh)! What difficulty could the Arabs face in understanding the Arabic Qur'an! One who claims to have taken the 'book' for *teacher* (*shāhid*), follow none but himself. If the 'book' could act for a *teacher* (*shāhid*) then none else except the Qur'ān was needed. It is the dignity of the prophet (pbuh) that he (pbuh) is teacher (*muallim*). (Al-Qur'an , 2:151; 3:164.) Commentary on verse 02:151 including in *TF* reads: "Those who are to be reformed must always have a perfect model before them... It is the Order of Allah alone which is worthy of obedience and it is His beloved who is worthy of being a model, an ideal. One who is purified by the beloved of Allah Almighty, is practically initiated into guidance."

Commentary on verse 3:164 reads: “He (pbuh) read unto the people the verses revealed to him by Allah Almighty and honored them by purifying them, because success comes after purification. He taught them the Divine Book and wisdom, imparted them the knowledge of Divine injunctions and the way to benefit from them. ... His (pbuh) lovers continue to educate people in His verses as well as wisdom and purify the believers to enable them to benefit from the bounties of Allah Almighty. Our own suggestions lead us astray.”<sup>99</sup>

Tomb can also not play the role of a teacher (*shāhid*). How could any tomb play for a teacher on the face of the prophet’s tomb! To grant purification is no more the privilege of those who have passed away. The *TF* narrates this fact in a very beautiful manner when it says: Purification is granted in the present, and it is granted by him who has the honour of being *shāhid* at present.<sup>100</sup> One should keep in touch with *shāhid*. When the greatness of the *shāhid* dawns upon one, one’s *qawl* (belief, idea, statement, precept, ritual) is rectified. When one gets in love with *shāhid*, his *‘amal*(practice) gets reformed and becomes righteous. Now the knowledge is granted. Knowledge is always post experience. Who follows in the footsteps of the mentor (*shāhid*) at all these three stages he is included among the *mukhlaṣīn*(the sincere, the devout). *Al-ḥaqq* certifies that Satan cannot mislead a *mukhliṣ*.<sup>101</sup> Those who disprove *shāhid* or whose action does not confirm their claim of submission to *shāhid*, they are not proved true.<sup>102</sup> If a person comes to *shāhid* in a position that he/she has already freed himself (or herself) from contradictions, confusions and doubts and the soil is ready to accept the seed of righteousness, it is sown.

If the soil is not ready and the seed of righteousness is sown, the person becomes abnormal, his personality is defaced, and it is not something wise. A Qur’anic parable would help understand this position: The heart of man is like a niche in which is placed the lamp. The lamp is encased in a glassy globe. The globe is so clean that it glitters like a star. Imagine how much illumination the globe can add to the light of the lamp when it is lighted, and how beautifully will it distribute this light! The lamp in the heart of man is filled with blessed oil, the *reason*. Heart is the seat of reason.<sup>103</sup> This blessed oil is pure like the oil extracted from the fruit of an olive tree which is neither in the east nor in the west but in the center of the garden where the sun shines over it the whole day. The oil of such a tree is so pure that it is just to be lighted up as soon as spark approaches it. Now imagine when this lamp is lighted up, how luminous would it be! Light upon light! The role of reason is to free man from contradictions. The reason, when pure, has the greatest capacity to catch light from the light of guidance of Allah by which the heavens and the earth are lit and luminous. But when man follows his desires, the reason loses its purity.<sup>104</sup> The heavens and the earth are filled with the light of Allah’s guidance. If there is a heart, whose oil has not lost its purity and whose globe has not lost its shine, Allah guides him to the way of His light, to the way of His gnosis. *Shāhid* is that light-giving lamp. (33:46) When the heart of Mo’min gets lighted up it becomes light upon light. Allah is the Knower of everything, He knows with absolute Knowledge whom to bless with this favour. Allah sets parables for the guidance of mankind.<sup>105</sup>

Some people understand that *Awaisia* is a chain of *shāhidīn* (*silsila*) where one does not need a *shāhid* for granting purification or for verification. They make the process of granting purification a sort of mystery.<sup>106</sup> The *TF* does not agree with this view. *Awaisia* is not a chain of *shāhidīn*, rather it is a way of imparting knowledge.<sup>107</sup> It is the glory of *shāhid* that he can impart knowledge to a sincere seeker living physically at a distance from him.

*Wahdat al-wujūd* may also need to be discussed in the context of *the Way of Shāhidīn*. The view that Allah is *wujūd-e-mutliq* (Absolute Existence) and whatever else is His manifestation, is known in the history of Muslim thought as *Wahdat al-wujūd* or the principle of the unity/oneness of all-being. It is also known as the principle of the unity/oneness of all-Existence.<sup>108</sup> One of its fundamental presuppositions (i.e. Allah is *al-Ḥaqq*) has already been discussed above. The second fundamental presupposition is going to be discussed here. The *TF* upholds that the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujūd* is un-Qur’anic, therefore contrary to truth.<sup>109</sup> Let us examine this view.

‘*Wujūd*’ is a word of Arabic origin. It is a derivative of the root *wao-jīm-dāl*. Were Allah *Wujūd-i-Mutliq* in His Essence, what difficulty was there to mention it in the Qur’ān which is in Arabic. But Allah has not liked to use this word or any other derivative of the same root to mention His Being. Could anyone else know Allah’s Essence better than Him! Chittick observes that “Ibn-al-‘Arabi is not a philosopher” but a sage, a visionary, and “*wahdat al-wujūd* is one of the many dimensions of his overall vision of reality which Ibn al-Arabi wants to convey to his reader.” “One of Ibn al-Arabi’s themes is that reason or intellect (*‘aql*) is inadequate as a source of knowledge of God, the world, and the self.

His own teachings are based primarily upon “unveiling” (*kashf*), “direct witnessing” (*shahūd*), “contemplation” (*mushāhida*), and “tasting” (*dhawq*), all of which transcend the limitations of intellect.”<sup>110</sup> It is clear from the above quotation from Chittick that Ibn al-‘Arabi’s own ‘vision’ is the standard-of-truth to him. The same is true of his school.<sup>111</sup> *Al-ḥaqq* (The Qur’an) testifies that Allah is Incomparably Unique and Matchless. To consider one’s own vision or speculation regarding Allah to be truth whereas Allah has not accorded any validity to it, is a grievous wrong. (al-Qur’ān, 07:21) Shaykh Ahmed Sirhandi criticized this view saying that *wahdat al-wujūd* is only a stage in mystic journey and asserted that when Allah, by His Grace, elevated him from this stage only then he realized that it was not the final stage and the concept of God based on this level of experience was not the right concept. Shaykh Ahmed Sirhandi asserted that Allah is the Creator and the universe is His creation. Creation in no way partake the being of Allah either as His manifestation or adumbration (*tajalli*) or what not. ‘Creation’ is reality but the Creator absolutely transcends it, He even transcends it with respect to any analogical reference. Shaykh Ahmed Sirhandi termed his view as *wahdat ash-shahūd* (transcendental unity of all manifestation).<sup>112</sup> If Ibn ‘Arabi has presented his *wahdat al-wujūd* on the base of his vision/mystic experience, Shaykh Ahmed Sirhandi was no better than him in this respect. None of them talked with reference to *authority i.e.*, the holy Qur’ān. According to the *TF* talking with reference to authority ‘the oneness of all *shāhidīn*’ (*wahdat-i-shāhidīn*) is the right view, for the way of *shāhidīn* (the certified witnesses, the devout) has ever been to bring people from darkness to light and to purify them and to verify him whom they grant purification.<sup>113</sup>

## Note

Translation of verses in this article has been taken from Pikhall, The Glorious Qur’an— Text and Explanatory Translation, Lahore, Pakistan: Taj Company, 1984 and is given in *italics*.

<sup>1</sup> The Qurān says: The (Qurān) is the *qawl* of the illustrious messenger. (لَقَوْلِ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ) *innahu la-qawlur-rasūlin karīmīn*. 69:40, also 81:19. In order to understand this verse it is necessary that we i) know the referent of *rasūlin karīmīn* (the illustrious messenger), and ii) that we rightly determine the meaning of the word ‘*qawl*’. *Rasūlin karīmīn* may not refer to the archangel Hazrat Jibrael for he has only brought down the revelation to the holy heart of the prophet (pbuh) by Allah’s Command (*Fa innahu Nazzalahu ‘Alā Qalbika Bi ‘idhni Allāhi*, *ibid*, 2:97) It may not refer to Allah, for the Qurān is *كَلِمَ اللَّهِ* (*Kalām Allāhi*), the Word of the Lord. (cf. *ibid*, 2:75, 09:06, 48:15); Allah is the Sender of revelation (*ibid*, 69:43) so He may not be the *rasūl* (the messenger). The prophet (pbuh) can be the only referent of the phrase *rasūlin karīmīn*. ‘*Qawl*’ may not mean ‘the inspired word’ as Muhammad Asad translates it. (The Message of the Qurān , 69:40, 81:1) He is a naturalist and may mean that Qurān is a speech which the messenger (pbuh) articulated in his words under Divine inspiration. This is not correct for the Qurān is *Kalām Allāh* and revealed as such. ‘*Qawl*’ may not mean ‘speech’ or ‘word’ as Pikhthhal translates it. (cf. The Glorious Qurān , 69:40 and 81:19, Abdullah Yousaf Ali also translates it as ‘word’.) Allah warns a disbeliever of flinging into Hell-fire who says that this is nothing but the ‘*Qawl*–speech or word’ of a *bashar i.e.*, a human being (إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ). (cf. 74:25) The Qurān verifies that the Messenger (pbuh) is a *Bashar*–human being (cf. 18:110). The (Qurān ) also asserts that ‘it is the *Qawl* of the Illustrious Messenger.’ How to reconcile this! ‘*Qawl*’ means the ‘precept’, ‘the guidance’, the teachings. ‘*Qawl*’ is a complimentary of the concept of ‘*amal*’ (the human moral action). The auspicious person of the prophet (pbuh) is the absolute model of acting upon this precept–‘*qawl*’. The auspicious life of the prophet (pbuh) is the best embodiment of this ‘*qawl*’. The Tafseer-e-Fāzli translates the verse in question as ‘The (Qurān ) is the *qawl* of the illustrious messenger (69:40), and rightly draws the conclusion that the Qurān is *qawl*. *TF* , vol. 7, (Lahore: Fāzli Foundation, 1998) 69:40-43, 264-65.

<sup>2</sup> *howal-Ḥaqqomir-Rabbika*: The Qurān is the truth from your Lord. The revelation of the Scripture whereof there is no doubt is from the Lord of the Worlds. Or say they: He hath invented it? Nay, but it is the truth from thy Lord, that thou mayst warn a folk to whom no warner came before thee, that haply they may walk aright. 32:02-3 ...What is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth (ho wal-Ḥaqqo), ...34:06, As for that which We inspire in thee of the Scripture, it is the truth (ho wal-Ḥaqqo) 35:31, ... That which is revealed unto Muhammad – and it is the truth from their Lord (ho wal-Ḥaqqo mir-Rabbihim) ... 47:02, al-Ḥaqqo mir-Rabbihim: 47:03.

From centuries onward the belief that *al-ḥaqq* is one of *al-Asmā al-Husnā* (the Beautiful Names of Allah) is prevalent in Muslims. The *TF* does not agree with it. According to it ‘*al-ḥaqq*’ means the standard of truth and this epithet is to be used for the Qurān. *TF*, vol. II, (Lahore: Fāzli Foundation, reprint 1996), 305.

<sup>3</sup> Assuredly conjecture (*ẓann* -ظن) can by no means take the place of truth. Cf. Al-Qurān, 10:36; A guess can never take the place of truth. Cf. *Ibid*, 53:28. Commentary on this verse in the *TF* includes: The conjecture (*ẓann*) cannot spare anyone from the truth (*ḥaqq*). *Ẓann* relates to one’s desires whereas *ḥaqq* is Allah’s revealed Guidance. It is not possible to have knowledge if one follows one’s conjecture. Cf. *TF* vol.7, 1998, 68.

<sup>4</sup> Say: *Al ḥaqq* is from the Lord of you all. (cf. al-Qurān, 18:29); al-Qurān is the truth from your Lord (*ho wal-ḥaqqo mir-Rabbika*—*Ibid*, 32:02-03) What Allah descends unto His messenger is the truth (cf. *ibid*,—5:83-84, 11:120, 13:01, 19, 21:55; More references will follow in the body of the article.

<sup>5</sup> Allah Almighty says: I swear by all that ye see. And all that ye see not. That it is indeed the *qawl* [teachings, precept] of an illustrious messenger [*rasool-e-karīm*). It is not the *qawl* of a poet, it is not the *qawl* of a diviner. It is a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds. (*TF* vol.7, 69:38-43, 264-65) also see, nor is it the *qawl* of an evil, accursed spirit. *Ibid*, 81:19, 383. Also see note 2 above.

<sup>6</sup>*Bātil* is only the opinion of those who disbelieve. *TF* vol. 6, 1997, cf. 38:27; *What is opposite to al-ḥaqq is al-bātil*, *TF* vol. 1, 2 and 6, cf. 02:42, 109, 144, 146, 213; 07:118, 18:56, 40:78;

<sup>7</sup>*TF* vol., 5, 1996, cf. 33:70-71, 319-20.

<sup>8</sup>*O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not? It is the most hateful in the sight of Allah that ye say that which ye do not.* (*Ibid*, 61:2-3) The *TF* apply this principle to all aspects of life. It doesn't agree with any preaching if what the preacher preaches is contrary to what he practices. Commenting on *bism-Alah* they say that a claim not supported by accordant actions does not prove to be true. Cf. *TF*, vol. 1, Eng. tr. p.1.

<sup>9</sup> Allah granted sustenance, facilities and honor to the Children of Israīl but "rather than keeping themselves on the right path in accordance with the Divine Message, they begin to give the same importance to their speculations which was worthy of truth, and truth alone so they fell into schism after the knowledge had come to them. For knowledge is the capacity to draw a line of demarcation between right and wrong. *TF*, vol. 3 (Eng. tr.), 2008, cf. exegesis of verse...*Famā-akhtalafū hattā jā'ahumul- 'Ilmu...*10:93, p.51.

<sup>10</sup> cf. *TF* vol. 2 (Eng. tr.) commentary on verse 5:15 which says: ...al-Qurān is an enlightening Book., p.13 also cf. *Ibid*, commentary of verse 5:44 which says: who do not judge in accordance with the Qurān are disbelievers. p.29

<sup>11</sup> Neither the word '*taṣawaf*' nor the word 'ṣufi' occur in the Qur'ān. The words '*aṣ-ṣaf*', '*ṣaffann*' and '*aṣṣafoon*' the derivative of the root '*Ṣa-Fa-Fa*' does occur in the Qur'ān but the above epithets which relates to *Ṣ-W-F* cannot be derived from them. Some people try to link the words *ṣufi* or *taṣawaf* with *aṣhāb as-ṣuffa* (people of the bench) who lived on a platform near the residence of the holy prophet (peace be upon him). But it again is just speculation, Qur'ān does not refer to them by the epithet *ṣufi*. Hence, the *TF* nowhere uses these words in all its seven volumes notwithstanding of the fact that the worthy authors of this exegesis themselves are what is commonly known as practicing sufi saints of *Qādiriyya* Order.

<sup>12</sup>*Yā 'Ayyuhā An-Nabīyū 'Innā 'Arsalnāka Shāhidāan Wa Mubashshirāan Wa Nadhīrāan.* (O Prophet! Truly We have sent thee as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, and warner), al-Qurān, 33:45, also cf. 48:8, 73:15

<sup>13</sup> al-Qurān, 21:56, 73:15

<sup>14</sup> *Wa shāhidīn wa Mash-hūd* (Wa *shāhidīn wa Mash-hūd*) By the witness and by the witnessed. Cf. al-Qurān, 85:03. 'To be witness' is one of the illustrious positions granted to the beloved servant-of-Allah. One who affirms the beloved servant-of-Allah as witness (*shāhid*), he becomes 'witnessed' (*mash-hūd*). He does not keep any reservations from his *shāhid*. It is not love if it is subject to any condition. The *mash-hūd* is a model of the glory of his *shāhid*. In this way lamps go on lit, have been lit, and will go on lit.' Allah sent the prophet (pbuh) as *shāhid*; whom he certified among the followers (*mash-hūdīn*) also became *shāhid*. Cf. *TF* vol. 7, 403.

<sup>15</sup> cf. al-Qurān, *Enroll us among those who witness (to the truth.)* 3:53; ...*They say: Our Lord, we believe. Inscribe us as among the witnesses.* 5:83

<sup>16</sup> *Lo! We have sent thee (O Muhammad-pbuh) as a witness and a bearer of good tidings and a warner.* Al-Qurān, 33:45, 48:08, 73:15

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 73:15

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 6:48; 18:56

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Asad translates it as '...and cause them grow in purity...'. Muhammad Asad (tr.), *The Message of THE QUR'AN* (Jibralter: Dar Al-Andalus, 1980), 93. The worthy authors of *TF* translate this verse as: "Indeed Allah has conferred a favour upon the believers by raising a messenger (pbuh) amongst them, who recites His verses to them and purifies them..." Hazrat Fazal Shah and Mohammad Ashraf Fāzli, *Tafseer-e-Fāzli*, (Eng. tr.) vol. 1 (Lahore: Fāzli Foundation, 2002), 241.

<sup>20</sup> For further reference see Al-Qurān , 2:129, 62:2.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *ibid*, 02:248

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ibid*, 03:42

<sup>23</sup> cf. al-Qurān , 3:33; 3:42; 27:59 and commentary given in *TF* .

<sup>24</sup> cf. Commentary given in *TF* on the following verses: 3:33; 3:42; 27:59 In verse 03:42 it has been stated that the angels say to Hazrat Maryam (pbuh) that Allah has definitely chosen her and has exalted her above the women of the world.

<sup>25</sup> al-Qurān , cf. 56:7-10, 09:100

<sup>26</sup>*TF*, (Eng. tr.) vol. 1, p. 187. For details see: Abdul Hafeez Fāzli, "Islamic View of Omniscience and Human Freedom," *Al-Hikmat*, 2006, Pakistan: Philosophy Dept, Punjab University Lahore.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, commentary on verse 3:33

<sup>28</sup> Cf. al-Qurān, 91:09

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *ibid*, 87:14

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *ibid*, 23:01

<sup>31</sup> *TF* , (Eng. tr.) vol. 1,x. also cf. 87:14, 81:09

<sup>32</sup> al-Qurān ., cf. 33:46

<sup>33</sup> Cf. ibid, 33:70

<sup>34</sup> Cf. ibid, 31:15

<sup>35</sup> Cf. ibid, 2:257

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, cf. 10:62

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 31:15, for a detailed discussion on the meaning of this verse see note 45; also cf., *TF*, (Eng. tr.) vol. 1, viii.

<sup>38</sup> Every prophet (pbuh) was a standard of servitude of Allah for his followers for he demanded the believers to follow him and to submit to him.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Qurān , 25:01, 17:01

<sup>40</sup> *TF*, (Eng. tr.) vol. 1, Introduction, viii. Also, al-Qurān, 14:1,5; 33:43; 57:9; 65:11

<sup>41</sup> Qurān recites the story of a man who had such capacity. Qurān says: And recite unto them the tale of him to whom We gave Our revelations [Signs is the proper word] but he sloughed them off, so Satan overtook him and he became of those who were led astray. And had We willed We could have raised him by their means, but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust. ...Ibid, 7:175-76

<sup>42</sup> Qurān narrates the story of a pious man, a courtier of Hazrat Sulaimān (pbuh) who could make miraculous things. When Hazrat Sulaimān learned that the Queen of Sheba was coming he said to his council that which of them could bring her throne before they come to him. A djin said that he could bring the throne before he adjourns the court. But a courtier whom Allah had given some knowledge of the Scripture said he could bring it before twinkling of his eye ceases. And the throne was there before him! Ibid, 27:38-40

<sup>43</sup> Al-Qurān, 02:61.

<sup>44</sup> And now We have set thee (O Muhammad) on a clear road [*Shari'a*] of (Our) commandment [*amar*]; so follow it, and follow not the whims of those who know not. Ibid, 45:18 The verse does not address to the prophet (pbuh) as Pickthall thinks, it addresses to the believers. Cf. *TF* vol. 6, 314.

<sup>45</sup> And follow the path of those who turn towards Me. Ibid, 31:15 The *TF* translates this verse as the following: “And follow the path of one who turns toward Me.” (*TF*, Urdu, manzil 5, Lahore: Fāzli Foundation, 1996, 252-53.) This translation seems better and correct for one can follow only one person, one cannot follow many. The righteous and the evil-doers always have different *triqat*(way). (cf. Ibid, 72:11) The *Triqat* (way) of the righteous is that they follow their *shāhid* as one who turn towards Allah (Cf. *TF* vol. 5, commentary on 31:15, 253) and submit to Allah and His messenger (cf. 3:32,132). The *Triqat* of the evil-doers is that they take their own likes and dislikes as standard (cf. *TF* vol. 1, Eng. tr., commentary on 2:145, p.75). They are the ones who follows the way of those who are oblivious of Allah’s remembrance, follow their own desires and do not observe the limits prescribed by Allah.(18:28) Holy Qurān is the Book that guides to the truth and guides to the straight road (*tarīq-e-mustaqīm*) (46:30)

<sup>46</sup> O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not? It is most hateful in the eyes of Allah that ye say that which ye do not. (al-Qurān , 61:02) That which is most hateful in the eyes of Allah cannot be knowledge. Commenting on 2:08 and 61:02 the worthy authors of *TF* say: A claim of faith not witnessed by accordant actions does not prove to be true. A claim of faith in Allah and the Last Day proves true only by following the Beloved of Allah. (cf. *TF* vol. 1 (Eng. tr.), p. 07, and vol.7, p.190).

<sup>47</sup> According to the *TF*, to accept as true without asking how and why, the statement of one whose truthfulness and integrity has been acknowledged is *Imān-bil-ghaib*. The *muttaqīn* accept as true whatever is stated by their *shāhid* whether they understand it or they understand it not. *Qurān* imparts its guidance only to *muttaqīn*(the pious). Qurān also states the qualities of *muttaqīn* because of which they succeed in getting guidance from it. *Imān-bil-ghaib* (Faith in the unseen) being the first of those qualities. (*TF* vol.1 Eng. tr., p.5) commentary on, 02:02-3)

<sup>48</sup> Before acting upon Allah’s injunctions having faith is only a claim or precept (*qawl*) but not knowledge. Hence *Imān-bil-ghaib* is *qawl*. Qurān enjoins to join claim of faith with righteous deed. (cf. al-Qurān , 02:82) A claim of faith not witnessed by accordant actions does not prove to be true. (cf. al-Qurān, 2:08) *Imān-bil-ghaib* converts into knowledge when one acts upon it doing righteous deed for knowledge is always post-experience. The doings of the righteous are righteous-deeds. Following one’s *shāhid*/mentor raises faith from *Imān-bil-ghaib* to *Imān-bish-shahādat*. Mentor *vis-à-vis* *shāhid* is at the level of *Imān-bish-shahādat*. When one follows his *shāhid* in totality of his life the mentor purifies him and certifies him, the follower becomes *shāhid* and his faith becomes *witnessed faith*.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Qurān, 05:83

<sup>50</sup> It is the way of the pious that they yearn and pray for togetherness with *shāhidīn*. Al-Qurān says: Our Lord! We believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow him whom Thou hast sent. Enroll us among those who witness to the truth [*shāhidīn*]. (03:53, also 5:83)

<sup>51</sup> Javed Ahmed Al-Ghamdi, “Nabi aur Rasūl” in *Mizān*, part-1, Lahore: Dār al-Ishrāq, 1985, p. 15.

<sup>52</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd), 1966. p.86.

<sup>53</sup>Cf. *TF* vol. 7, p. 228. Also see, *TF* vol.1 (Eng tr.), viii. To use analogies to help people to come to light is Allah's way in the Qurān. But only that analogy which conforms to Qurānic teachings is right. What this analogy explains is that neither of the higher grades of believing could be attained without believing and acting upon *shariah* as neither the curd, nor the butter nor the butter oil could be attained without first having milk. They are analogical in other aspects also. The present Fāzli saint says that if one is physically healthy, milk suits him, but if one is physically unhealthy, milk aggravates his condition. Similarly if one is spiritually healthy (*i.e.*, rightly-directed) acting upon *shariat* benefits him, but if one is not rightly-directed, he takes rituals as *Dīn* and boasts over it.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Ibid*, p. 122. *IR* identifies *Ḥaqīqah* with *Truth* when it says "Finally at the Center there is the *Ḥaqīqah* or *Truth* which is the source of both the *Tariqah* and the *Shariah*." Similarly it identifies *Ḥaqīqah* with *Center* when it says: "...that *Ḥaqīqah* or *Center* which is 'everywhere and nowhere, ...'". It also identifies *God* with the *Truth* when it says: "...*God* who is the *Truth*." *Ibid*, p.122. Thus in *IR*, *Ḥaqīqah*, *Center*, *God* and *the Truth* refer to one and the same being. *IR* also identifies 'Reality' and 'Unity' with the above. For treating *God* as 'Reality' or 'Absolute Reality' or 'Real' see: *IR*, Pp. 15, 16, 17, 19, 137 etc.

<sup>55</sup> For an elaborate study on the meaning of *al-ḥaqq*, please see: Dr. Abdul Hafeez Fāzli, "Is *al-ḥaqq* one of *Al-Asmā al-Husnā!*," *Bazyaft*, University of the Punjab Lahore: Oriental College, 2006

<sup>56</sup> Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Glorious Qur'an (Text and Explanatory Translation)*, Taj Company Ltd, 1984, 580-81; and Yousaf Ali, Abdullah, *An English Interpretation of the Holy Qurān*, Lahore Pakistan: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1934, p.927-28

<sup>57</sup> *M'arifāt* is excellence in /ultimate height of what Qurān calls 'recognition of the truth'. The Qurān says: When they listen to that which hath been revealed unto the messenger, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears because of their recognition of the truth. They say: our Lord, we believe. Inscribe us as among the witnesses. (05:83) *IR* mentions it but as a passing reference and without quoting authority from the Qurān when it says: "*Imān*, when transformed by *iḥsān*, becomes that illuminative knowledge that unites, that gnosis ('*irfān* or *ma'rifā*') which penetrates and transforms man." *Ibid*, p.134.

<sup>58</sup> *IR*, p. 137

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, p. 137, Nasr also calls himself a representative of what he designates the *Traditionalist school*. See: Leif Stenberg, *The Islamization of Science (Four Muslim Positions Developing an Islamic Modernity)*, Lund, 1996, p. 101 This is Nasr's interpretation of the doctrine of *wahdat al-wajūd* in present times.

<sup>60</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Qur'an and *Hadīth* as source and inspiration of Islamic Philosophy", *History of Islamic Philosophy* part-1, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (eds.), (London: Routledge) 1996, 29.

<sup>61</sup> With reference to Hazrat Bāyazīd, Frithjof Schuon writes "*Al-Ḥaqq=God*", Footnotes at pp. 48, 50. *Dimensions of Islam*, (trans., Townsend) Lahore Pakistan: Suhail Academy, 1999. Schuon also belonged to the same *wahdat al-wujūd school* as Nasr. He explains the word 'God' in footnote 2 as '*Al-Ḥaqq*', '*the Truth*', or '*the Reality*'. *Ibid*, p. 33

<sup>62</sup> According to William C. Chittick the first clear and detailed formulation of *wahdat al-wujūd* is usually ascribed to al-Shaykh al-Akbar, Muḥyi al-Dīn Ibn al-Arabi (560/1165–638/1240). The term *wahdat al-wujūd* itself is not found in any texts before the works of Ibn al-Arabi's school. Ibn al-Arabi himself never employs the term *wahdat al-wujūd* in his enormous corpus of writings however he frequently discusses *wujūd* and often makes explicit statements that justify that he supported the idea of *wahdat al-wujūd* in the literal sense of the term., William C. Chittick, "Wahdat al-Wujud In Islamic Thought" *The Bulletin*, Jan.- Mar. 1999, p. 8. Also, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Qurān and *Hadīth* as source and inspiration of Islamic Philosophy", *History of Islamic Philosophy* part-1, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (eds.), (London: Routledge) 1996, 29.

<sup>63</sup> For detailed study of this thesis of the *TF* please see: Dr. Abdul Hafeez Fāzli, "Is *al-ḥaqq* one of *al-Asma al-Husnā!*"

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, p. 20

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *TF*, vol.6, 45:18, p. 314

<sup>66</sup> Cf., *ibid*. cf. 46:30

<sup>67</sup> *Lo! Religion with Allah (is) the Surrender* [Al-Islam]...(03:19)Al-Islam is the *Dīn* which Allah has chosen for His servants, and which He absolutely perfected on prophet Muhammad (pbuh). (Cf. al-Qurān , 05:03) The followers of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) are called Muslims. But the followers of the prophet s (pbut) of the past were also called Muslims. When Hazrat Ibrahīm and Hazrat Ismāīl (pbut) were raising the foundations of *Baitullah* (Ka'ba) they prayed to Allah Almighty to make them and a community from their seed as Muslim. (cf. 02:128,) Ibrahīm (pbuh) enjoins upon his sons, and also Y'aqoob [pbuh]not to die save as Muslimūn...(cf. 2:132) The disciples of prophet Īsa (pbuh) would call them Muslimūn. (cf. 03:52) Prophet Ibrahīm was neither a Jew nor a Christian but a single-minded Muslim. (cf. 03:67) Allah sent revelation on Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as He did on Noah and the prophets (pbut) after him; and on Ibrahīm and Ismāīl and Ishāq and Yaqūb and the tribes; and on Īsa and Ayūb and Yūnus and Hārūn and Sulaimān (pbut). And to Mūsā (pbuh) Allah spoke directly. So in principle all the prophets were sent with the same guidance. It is inconceivable that their teachings/revelations should contradict each other.

<sup>68</sup> *Guide us to the Straight Way. The way of those upon whom You have bestowed Your Blessings* .(al-Qurān 1:5-6)

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*. *O prophet! Lo! We have sent thee as a witness [shāhid] and a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And as a summoner unto Allah and as a lamp that giveth light.* (33:45-46)

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*. 5:52; 48:6.

<sup>71</sup> Nasr, *Ideals And Realities of Islam*, p. 63.

<sup>72</sup> Commentary on verse 33:21 which says that in the prophet (pbuh) you have excellent example to be followed. Cf. *TF*, vol. 5, 1996, 291-92.

<sup>73</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ibid*, 63. Nasr also says: “a Sufi is one who has realized the end of the Path, the Supreme Union.” *Ibid*, p.131

<sup>74</sup> *Al-Qurān*, cf. 2:153, 194; 29:69

<sup>75</sup> *ibid*, 9:40.

<sup>76</sup> Pickthall translates it in following way: “...and follow the path of him who repenteth unto Me...” but to my understanding the phrase ‘turns towards me’ conveys the sense in a better way than “who repenteth unto Me”. Marmaduke Pickthall, *ibid*, 763.

<sup>77</sup> *TF*, vol. 5, 1996, cf. verse 31:15.

<sup>78</sup> Cf., *al-Qurān*, 4:49; 24:21

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *al-Qurān*, 3:31. The *TF* holds that the status of Allah is that of a Lover: He loves the *mohsinīn*-2:195), *tawwābīn*(2:222), *motatahhirīn*) (2:222), *muttaqīn*). (3:76), (*sābirīn*), (*mutawakkilīn*) (3:159) as stated earlier. Status of Allah is not that of a Beloved. *Shāhidīn* are Allah’s beloved, they are also the beloved of the believers. The right translation of this verse according to the worthy authors of *TF* would be: ‘Say: If you aspire Allah’s love, then follow me, and Allah will love you ...’ They write: “Whosoever holds Allah’s beloved as his beloved, Allah makes him His loving friend.” Some people and especially draw from—*Wa Mina An-Nāsi Man Yattakhidhu Min DūniAllāhi ‘Andādāan Yuḥibbūnahum KaḥubbiAllāhi; Wa al-Ladhīna ‘Amanū ‘Ashaddu Ḥubbāan Lillāhi ...02:165* ‘that as for the believers, they love Allah ardently.’ But the *TF* would translate it as the following: ‘And there are people who choose others beside Allah, and aspire that they (i.e., the others) love them as Allah loves. But as for the believers, they ardently aspire Allah’s love.’ (*TF*, Vol. 1, Urdu, reprint 1992, commentary on verse 3:31, p. 207 and commentary on verse 2:165, *Ibid*, p. 95.)

<sup>80</sup> Cf. *TF* vol. 1, Eng tr., 192, Cf. *TF* vol.2, Eng. tr., 50, Cf. *TF*, vol.3 (Urdu version), 1993, 274.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. *ibid* vol.1, exegesis of 04:49.

<sup>82</sup> Hazrat Nūh’s son did not believe in his father, he did not belong to Hazrat Nūh (pbuh). Similarly, Hazrat Lut’s wife and Hazrat Ibrahim’s father did not believe in them, so they did not belong to them.

<sup>83</sup> Dr. Israr Ahmad, “Khilafat kay Iqtisādi Nizām ki Usūli Asass” (Urdu), *Nida-E-Khilafat*, 1(4-5), 1992, 10.

<sup>84</sup> *Al-Qurān*, 07:157; 22:41; 31:17

<sup>85</sup> Commenting on this verse the worthy authors of *TF* say that Allah has done a great favour on the faithful by placing love for guidance in them and by having adorned their hearts with faith. And because of this they are always inclined to follow the *shāhid* and never incline to make him comply with their wishes. *Tafseer-e-Fāzli* vol. 7, p. 394.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid* vol. 2, cf. exegesis of 09:102-105

<sup>87</sup> *Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.* 3:31

<sup>88</sup> *Qurān* says: *Whoso obeyeth Allah and the messenger, they are with those unto whom Allah hath shown favour, of the prophet s [nabiyīn] and the saints [ṣiddiqīn] and the martyrs [shuhadā] and the righteous [ṣāliḥīn]. The best of company are they!* *Ibid*, 04:69

<sup>89</sup> *al-Qurān*, 2:210; 8:44; 22:76; 35:4; 57:5

<sup>90</sup> The word ‘*amr*’ in Arabic has another meaning i.e. ‘command’ and it occurs in the *Qurān* at many occasions. But it has ‘*awāmir*’ as its plural. Similarly the word ‘*Amr*’ also occurs in the *Qurān* in ontological context: whatever has come into being out of Allah either belongs to the category of *khalq* or to the category of *amr*. But neither of them partakes in the Being of Allah. It is clear that word ‘*umūr*’ in the present context does not refer to any of these two senses of the word ‘*amr*’.

<sup>91</sup> Text of the Hadith is as follows: ‘Umar ibn Khattab said: One day when we were with God’s Messenger, a man with very white clothing and very black hair came up to us. No mark of travel was visible on him, and none of us recognized him. Sitting down before the prophet, leaning his knees against his, and placing his hands on his thighs, he said, “Tell me Muhammad about submission [*Islām*].” He replied, “Submission means that you should bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God’s Messenger, that you should perform the ritual prayer, pay the alms tax, fast during Ramadan, and make the pilgrimage to the House if you are able to go there.” The man said, “You have spoken the truth.” We were surprised at his questioning him and then declaring that he had spoken the truth. He said, “Now tell me about faith [*Imān*].” He replied, “Faith means that you have faith in God, His angels and His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and that you have faith in the measuring out, both its good and its evil.” Remarking that he has spoken the truth, he then said, “Now tell me about doing what is beautiful [*Iḥsān*].” He replied, “Doing beautiful means that you should worship God as if you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you.” Then the man said, “Tell me about the Hour.” The prophet replied, “About that he who is questioned know no more than the questioner.” The man said, “Then tell me about its marks.” He said, “The slave girl will give birth to her mistress, and you will see the bare foot, the naked, the destitute, and the shepherd vying with each other in building.” Then the man went away. After I had waited for a long time, the prophet said to me, “Do you know who the questioner was, ‘Umar?’” I replied, “Allah and His Messenger know best.”

He said, "He was Gabriel. He came to teach you your religion." Schiko Murrata and William C. Chittick, *The Vision of Islam*, (Lahore, Pakistan: Suhail Academy, 1998), 25-26. They have quoted it from *Muslim*, Iman 1; *Bukhari*, Iman 37; MM 5-6.

<sup>92</sup> Dr. Ahmed Afzaal, "Rendezvous in Orlando," *The Qurānic Horizons*, 3 (1998), Quarterly Journal of the Qurān Academy, Lahore, Pakistan, 6. Nasr, *IR*, p. 133-34

<sup>93</sup> Those who spend (of that which Allah has given them) in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind; Allah loveth the good [*Mohsinin*]. (Al-Qurān, 3:134) Is the reward of goodness (*Ihsan*) aught save goodness (*Ihsan*)! (55:60) Lo! Allah enjoineth justice and kindness (*Ihsan*),...

<sup>94</sup> al-Qurān, 17:95

<sup>95</sup> Al-Qurān., Say: I am only a mortal [*bashar*] like you. [With the difference that] My Lord inspireth in me that your God is only One God...(18:110; 41:06); Their messengers said unto them: We are but mortals [*bashar*] like you, but Allah giveth grace unto whom He will of His slaves... (14:11)

<sup>96</sup> The chieftains of his folk, who disbelieved, said: This is only a mortal like you... Al-Qurān, 23:24. Also see, 11:27, 14:10, 33:34.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Maulana Amin Ahsan Işlāhi, *Tazkia-e-Nafs*, (Faisalabad: Malik sons, 1989), 95-113.

<sup>98</sup> Al-Qurān, 02:129; 02: 151

<sup>99</sup> *TF* vol. I (Eng. tr.), 78; also, *ibid*, 241.

<sup>100</sup> *TF* vol. 1, p. iv.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*. 15:40; 38:83

<sup>102</sup> al-Qurān, 2:129, 151; 3:164; 62:2

<sup>103</sup> *Have they not travelled in the land, and have they hearts wherewith to feel [to reason—ya'qiloon] and ears wherewith to hear? For indeed it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts, which are within the bosoms, that grow blind.* Al-Qurān, 22:46.

<sup>104</sup> Those who follow their desires go astray. (Al-Qurān: 18:28; 25:43; 45:23; ...)

<sup>105</sup> Cf. *Ibid*, 33:46. For detailed study of this parable see: Abdul Hafeez Fāzli, "Iqbal's View of Omniscience and Human Freedom," *The Muslim World*, 95/1, 134-35.

<sup>106</sup> Qudratullah Shahāb, *Shahāb Nama*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meal Publications, 1987). cf. p. 1114 Qudratullah Shahāb was a bureaucrat in Ayyub Khan's regime in Pakistan, a novelist, and a sufi who died in 1987. *Shahāb Nama* is his memoir/autobiography which was published after his death.

<sup>107</sup> In fact there are many ways of imparting knowledge other than the normal. Al-Qurān does not fail to mention these. For example, Allah imparted knowledge to Hazrat Musa's mother (a.s.) what to do when Hazrat Musā (pbuh) is born. Similarly Allah guided and granted knowledge to Hazrat Maryyam. Similarly there are different kinds of knowledge which Allah grants to His servants. For example al-Qurān mentions a servant of Allah whom the prophet Musā met at river side. Allah states that: Then they found one of Our slaves, unto whom We had given mercy from Us, and had taught knowledge from Our presence. (18:66) But only Hazrat Musā (pbuh) was at the status of *shāhid*. Similarly, al-Qurān narrates the story of a pious man, a courtier of Hazrat Sulaimān (pbuh) whom Allah had given some special knowledge of the Scripture and could make miraculous things. (*Ibid*, 27:38-40) Ref. footnote nos. 21, 22. This special kind of knowledge is known as *Ilm-e-Ladunni*.

<sup>108</sup> Please see, foot note no. 48 above.

<sup>109</sup> *TF* vol. 6 (Urdu), 1997, p.251. See peroration of verse 43:15.

<sup>110</sup> Dr. Burhan Ahmed Faruqi, *The Mujjaddid's Concept of Tawhid*, (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, first published 1940 reprint 1989). p.9

<sup>111</sup> Ibn al-ʿArabi, and his followers present their view on the base of their own mystic experience which they call *kashf-o-shahūd* (unveiling). *Ibid.*, p. 35-6.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 42. Usually it is considered that pantheism and *wahdat al-wajud* are one and the same thing, and pantheism and *wahdat ash-shahud* ascribed to Sheykh Ahmed Sirhandi are one and the same thing. Both these things are incorrect. Pantheism is a philosophical term which considers the universe and God identical; and pantheism is a philosophical term used to denote a view which considers that being of God has two aspects: immanent and transcendent. The universe is a manifestation of God; God is immanent in the universe or reality. So reality or manifestation is identical with God but God is also transcendent to His manifestation or reality. In Muslim *tasawuf* and especially in school of thought relating Ibn Arabi the term *wahdat al-wajud* is used in the sense close to pantheism.

<sup>113</sup> Commenting on verse 04:26 which says 'Allah wishes to make clear to you what is right and to show you the ways of those who preceded you ...' the *TF* says: The present is proved true by the attestation of the past, and past is proved true by the verification of the present. It is in fact the greatest favor of Allah that one who has definite knowledge of relieving from fear and grief is *Shahid* in present time and a verifier of *Shahidīn* who preceded him in the past. *TF*, Eng. tr. Vol. 1, 274. In Surah Muzzammil it has been said that Allah has sent a Messenger (pbuh) who is *Shahid* (Witness) upon you as he sent a messenger towards Pharaoh. (73:15) Thus *Shahidīn* have been sent in the past. *TF* vol. 7, 301.



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