

محمد بن عبد الله القوسوف والمعروف بالوجود والغلام، الختم الغيوم الطمانينة أعليه قنأه وأتم
الضالة والسلام الأمل الأمل علم سيد ولد آدم، سيدنا ومولانا **محمد** بن يوسف قر تلختر وقت
قدم وعلمه العواضلة الثابتة ومعرفة الله والرائحة الخيرة القدم **وتهد** وقد
رأت ارتقيت وولات استأجرت وقلات وعطيت وعفا لي وبغيتي ومراجلي، شيخ الهير يفسد
قدولة فالله ارباب الشريعة والغيرة نخبة الوجوه وانسا ربهم اهل معرفة العيان
رياض العماره والاعمال

**KANZ
AL-ASRĀR**
*Mulay al-'Arabī al-Darqāwī
and some of his goodly companions as
seen through the eyes of a loving disciple*

❖

**Muḥammad Būziyān
al-Gharīsī al-Ma'āskarī
(d. 1271/1854)**

الشهوه خلاصة خاض
سرخ البحر يا بغيره يوم
لوكاية الجامعة العطف
سواء التوحيد هو الداعي
تعيينه طل علمه رايحه
سدام السطر والضحك
عليه تربية العمير والعلم
علمي فنواله وكاعلمنا بزقنا
عزيب اب العطارم سيدنا ومولانا **القريب** ابريدنا ومولانا
لخبر النريه الطر فابو خلدك الله في جوارك وجعلنا من جنبه وشيخته وانصاره وامين
مع ضعيه وفصرنا يي وعلمه معرفتي بعفاريه والهلالي **واركش** قد صجبت والحمد لله فط
يدية واعوام اعديده كتير يط علم العشر شنة ومفها لم نستوف معرفة اسعده ورسيه
باعتريه فيل بات يسهه وعلمه هو اني لعلمي ارحيمه بعلمه او يدية لسه حفايه محله مع الفار



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TRANSLATORS' INTRODUCTION

Shaykh Mūlay al-ʿArabī al-Darqāwī (ca. 1743 to 1823) was the gifted spiritual master whose teachings inspired a Sufi order and movement that attracted tens of thousands of followers in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and beyond. For many of them, because of the distances involved and the difficulty of travel at the time, affiliation to the order was mainly through the Shaykh's representatives (*muqaddams*), who were usually in charge of local *zāwiya*s. The *muqaddam*'s role, besides offering food and shelter to travelers, was to organize and lead regular gatherings for communal *dhikr*, impart the order's litany to those who sought it, and teach the principles of the order both by example and by reading and explaining passages from the Shaykh's letters of instruction, copies of which would be sent to them from the mother *zāwiya* in Bū Brīḥ, in the mountainous region of north-eastern Morocco. In addition, when the trails were passable and the means available, the *muqaddam* might organize a trip, either in a small group or a large caravan, to take the *fuqarā*' of his region to spend time in the presence of the Shaykh. It was with such a caravan of over 100 men, women, and children, led by the Shaykh's *muqaddam* for Algeria, Sidī ʿAbd al-Qādir Bensharīf, that a young man named Muḥammad Būziyān al-Gharīsī came to Bū Brīḥ in 1803 from his native Algerian town of Maʿaskar, a journey which could have taken as many as twenty days by camel or mule at the time. The visit may well have been for the observance of the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ, a time when members of Sufi orders in Morocco (and elsewhere) have gathered to celebrate for centuries, and which that year would have fallen in late June. Whatever be the case, after spending about one week at the mother *zāwiya*, a time that would have been filled with communal worship, circles of invocation, teachings, the singing of *qaṣīdas*, and spiritual companionship with scores of other *fuqarā*,¹ all in the illuminated presence of the Shaykh, when the caravan was ready to leave for its return journey to Maʿaskar, the young Būziyān came to Bensharīf in order to ask his permission to stay on a while longer. Besides whatever blessing he had experienced during his week there, Būziyān may well have found the prospect of the long journey back home daunting. As he

1 In recounting this occasion, Būziyān mentions hearing someone from the *zāwiya* mention that they had fed five hundred people the previous night.

would later write in *Kanz*, recounting this moment, “[I] was sickly, weak, (and) still young.”² But before he could utter a word, Bensharīf said to the young disciple that it would be good for him to stay on, “with my father and yours . . . and rest for a while.” “So praise be to God:” Būziyān writes, “[Sīdī Bensharīf] had intuited my purpose.”³ This permission “to stay and rest a while” marked the beginning of a period of twenty years during which Būziyān lived near the Shaykh, served him, learned from him, and became one of the scribes who made copies of his letters, and only ended with the Shaykh’s passing in 1824. Very soon afterwards, Būziyān began to set down in writing as much as he could remember about the man himself and about some of his greatest early disciples, interwoven with teachings he had heard, as well as with his own reflections on the Way. All of this he collected into a book he would call *Kanz al-asrār fī munāqib Mūlay al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī wa ba‘ḍi aṣ-ḥābihi ‘l-akhyār* (“A treasure of mysteries in recounting the saintly lives of Mūlay al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī and some of his goodly companions,”)⁴ and he would continue to work on this until his own death in 1871 .

2 Since Būziyān’s date of birth is not known, we cannot know for sure his exact age when this journey took place and what he meant by saying “I was still young.” Dr. ‘Abd al-Hādī Baṣīr, the editor of our principal source, suggests that he could have well have been quite young indeed since he mentions, in his entry about Ibn ‘Ajība, that he was about to start out on a *silka*, a complete reading of the Qur’ān from beginning to end, using from a wooden tablet, and asked Sīdī Ibn ‘Ajība to write something on it for blessing (see page 195). If this was indeed his first reading, the normal age for this to happen in North Africa would have been ten or twelve. However, Būziyān also informs us in *Kanz* (page 113) that he had been formally received into the Darqāwī order by the Bensharīf three years before he took the hand of Shaykh al-Darwāwī himself, and it would have been quite unusual, though not impossible, for a child of eight or nine to be received into the Ṭarīqah. Our view is that it is quite likely that the *silka* he mentions was not his first, and was one he wanted to undertake with new eyes after having entered the order in his late teens or early twenties.

3 *Kanz*, 142.

4 *Kanz* also became known as *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Darqāwiyya* (*A Chronicle of Darqāwīs*).

Translators' Introduction

THE AUTHOR: MUḤAMMAD ABŪ ZIYĀN⁵ IBN AḤMAD AL-ḤAMDĪ
AL-ḤUṢAYNĪ AL-GHARĪSĪ

Although we know Būziyān's full name and that he was born in the northwestern Algerian town of Ma^ʿaskar sometime in the later part of the 18th century, there is no record of the exact date of his birth nor of his childhood and upbringing. In fact, it could probably be said that had it not been for *Kanz al-asrār*, Būziyān might well have lived and died in complete anonymity. The little we can piece together concerning his life, beyond the few things he says about himself in the pages of *Kanz*, comes from three sources: the Algerian historian al-^ʿArabī al-Mashrifī (d. 1895) who was a contemporary of Būziyān in Ma^ʿaskar, and the two Moroccan biographers, Muḥammad bin Ja^ʿfar al-Kettānī (d. 1927) and ^ʿAbd al-Salām Bensouda (d. 1979).

HIS ROLE IN THE ṬARĪQAḤ

Although there is no record of his being formally appointed by the Shaykh, it appears that because of how long he had been close to him and how he had been actively involved in transcribing his letters, Būziyān came to be regarded by many of the Shaykh's disciples as a *muqaddam* in his own right with the authority to impart the order's litany and to answer questions concerning its teachings. Bensouda notes in his biographical dictionary, *Sall al-Niṣāl*, under the entry for Maḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Qādir al-A^ʿraj al-Sulaymānī (d. 1332/1914), that “[al-Sulaymānī] had been received into the ṬarīqaḤ [al-Darqāwīya] by Shaykh Abū Ziyān al-Gharīsī, who passed away in 1270,”⁶ and Kettānī adds that “he had companions and followers who became affiliated to the ṬarīqaḤ through him,”⁷ Al-Mashrifī, in his compendium of literature produced during and about the epidemics in the Maghreb, even goes so far as to describe Būziyān as “the saintly and gnostic ascetic and successor (*khalīfa*) to the Shaykh,” but in the context, this would appear to be mostly laudatory, since Būziyān's name does not figure into any of the recorded initiatic chains following the passing of Shaykh al-Darqāwī. Be that as it may, he was remembered for his sanctity later in life, after he had moved to Fes. As al-Mashrifī continues:

5 Shortened to *Būziyān* in the North African dialect.

6 *Sall al-Niṣāl*, p 10.

7 Kettānī, *Salwat al-anfas*, vol. 2, entry 828.

He could habitually be found sitting in the Qarawiyyan Mosque waiting for the prayer such that he did not miss offering even one of the five daily prayers there, nor did he ever stop visiting his brethren or the children of his Shaykh even in his older years. He was a person of humility and reverence who invoked God silently and aloud and was endowed with virtues that were rare for his time. He would exhort anyone who sat with him towards God, and he would love or be angered only for the sake of God. In his relationship to God, he had no fear of the tyrant's power nor the blamers' censure.⁸

In addition to what these biographers have to say, another testimony to his place in the Ṭarīqah can be found in a long letter sent to him by al-ʿArabī ibn ʿAṭīyyat Allāh al-Wansharīsī^b concerning the famous statement of Abū'l-ʿAbbās al-Mursī, “If the Prophet ﷺ were absent from me for the blink of an eye, I would not count myself a Muslim.” Ibn ʿAṭīyya sent this letter to Būziyān and to five other of the wisest disciples alive at the time, all of whom were considered *muqaddams*, and Būziyān's lengthy and nuanced response⁹ reflects the understanding of someone who was both a gnostic and guide.¹⁰

HIS DEATH

Būziyān lived and died at a time when epidemics continued to decimate the population of Morocco. It is recorded that the outbreak of plague that occurred between 1799 and 1800 killed between a quarter and a half of the entire population of the country.¹¹ In Chapter 5 of *Kanz*, of the twenty closest companions of the Shaykh al-Darqāwī mentioned, Būziyān notes that seven of them succumbed to the epidemic, and in 1871 he himself, by this time living in Fes where the daily death toll at the peak of the plague had reached into the hundreds, would also be among its victims. “He was stricken by cholera on Thursday just before the ʿ*asr* prayer,” al-Mashrifī records. “They wanted to carry him back to his house, but he refused until he had offered the prayer. Then, already unconscious, he was borne to his

8 Al-Mashrifī, *Adabiyāt al-Awbiʿat*, 187-188.

9 The essence of this response is explained in *Kanz*, p. 47 ff.

10 For the Arabic text of this long exchange, see Sharaf, *al-Rasāʿil al-ikhwāniya*, p. 42

11 El-Mansour, Mohamed. *Morocco in the Reign of Mawlay Sulayman*, 98-99.

INTRODUCTION




Kanz al-Asrār

*Kanz al-asrār fī munāqib Mawlānā
al-^ḥArabī al-Darqāwī wa ba^ḥḍi aṣ-ḥābi al-akhyār*

IN THE NAME OF GOD, the All-Merciful and Compassionate. May God shower blessings upon our beloved master, our prophet and protector, Muḥammad, and upon and his family and companions, and send them salutations of peace.

Praise be to God, described and known by His attributes of Excellence and Beginninglessness, the Living and Eternal One Who is not subject to annihilation and extinction, and may perfect and complete blessings and salutations be upon the master of the children of Adam, our master and protector Muḥammad, the spring of those who came before and those who came after, and upon his family and companions, affirmed and deeply rooted in the knowledge of God.

To Proceed: thus says the needy and thirsty servant, the Ḥuṣaynī *sharīf*¹⁷ of Ma^ḥaskar, Muḥammad Būziyān:

I wished to record the passing of my teacher and sanctuary, the father of magnanimity, our lord and protector, al-^ḥArabī ibn Aḥmad, ibn al-Ḥuṣayn al-Sharīf al-Darqāwī al-Ḥasanī . He was my pillar and support, my hope and desire, shaykh of the *Tarīqah* and model for the people of *Sharīa^ḥ* and *Ḥaqīqa*, a flower of existence and spring of the knowledge that arises from witnessing and perception, a synthesis of sanctity and election, a locus where the pools and meadows of gnosis and sufficiency met,¹⁸ an

¹⁷ That is, a person related to the Prophet  through his grandson al-Ḥuṣayn.

¹⁸ The allusion to “pools” (*ḥiyād*) and “meadows” (*riyād*) evokes the words of the

isthmus between *the two seas which they do not transgress*,¹⁹ a center of the two illuminated presences,²⁰ and one of those chosen by God to impart perfect and complete spiritual training, to be an heir to the Muḥammadan sanctity, revive the religion, and uncover the inner realities of nearness and love. He bore the banner of Oneness (*al-tawḥīd*) and called people by God and for God to the way of *tajrīd* and *tafrīd*.²¹ He was a vanguard of the masters, mooring-place for the ships of the gnostics, *ghawth*, gatherer,²² and glistening ocean, perpetually intoxicated and perpetually sober, immutable in the midst of transience and extinction, the one to whom turned the aspirations of both the seekers and the sought, and in whom rested the training of both the lovers and beloveds.²³ He was the unique one of his age upon whose loom none other wove, and I know of no one else in this our time who has been given a tenth of a tenth of a tenth of his excellence and gifts ... may God keep him eternally in His nearness and make us among his rank, his circle, and his allies. Amen!

Even though I was his companion for many years – more than twenty, praise be to God – in my weakness and paltry understanding, I could scarcely grasp anything beyond his name and physical appearance, and certainly not the hidden depths of his being and knowledge. It would be

Ṣalāt al-Mashishiyya. See bibliography, *Two Sufi Commentaries*.

19 This paraphrases *Sūrat al-Raḥmān* [55:20], *He has let free the two seas, and they meet one another. Between them is an isthmus which they do not transgress*. The *tafsīr* of Ibn ʿAjība, another of the Shaykh's students, alludes to the two seas as “formal religious knowledge (*ilm al-sharīʿ*) and gnosis (*maʿrifā*).” See *The Immense Ocean*, p. 17.

20 That is, the presence of God and the presence of the Prophet ﷺ.

21 *Al-tajrīd*, literally “stripping away,” that is, intermediary causes between God and one's provision, which in practice means withdrawing from the workaday world. *Al-tafrīd* refers to eliminating from one's soul and consciousness all forms of duality and multiplicity.

22 The *ghawth*, literally, “aid or relief,” is a saintly person through whom it is believed that divine aid flows into creation at a particular time, and the *jāmiʿ* (“the gatherer”) is someone who combines perfectly in his being the outer form of the religion and the inner truth.

23 *Al-Murīdīn wa'l-murādīn*, “the seekers and the ones sought,” refer to those whose way God is predominantly by methodic practice and those whose way is predominantly by divine attraction (*al-jadhḥ*). *Al-muḥibbīn wa'l-maḥbūbīn*, the lovers and beloveds, is another way to express this.

CHAPTER TWO



Concerning his Spiritual Birth and His Path Through the Stages of Training

KNOW, MAY GOD teach us the true reality of our own souls and remove from us the illusions of our forms and senses, that for anyone who wishes to travel the path, and especially anyone who aspires for unveiling¹²² and realization, it is indispensable to go through a birth and nurturing, and to be nursed like a baby until the time of weaning, and this has no agreed upon duration or legal ruling about how long it takes because each person has his own particular entrance and exit, descent and ascent. If, for example, God wishes to guide a servant along the way of rational proofs, “earning,”¹²³ and methodic practice, He will inspire him with direction and place within him a restrainer for his heart and an admonisher for his soul. Then the aspirant will reflect with a pure and sound mind upon the origin of these worlds, and their inner realities will call out to him saying, “You were not created for this nor were you commanded to be taken up by [the ego]. Rather, you were created for divine perfection and were commanded to turn away from play and distraction. You are a sovereign and Creation is your domain, so how could you trade a kingdom (*mulk*) for a possession (*milk*)? ‘Would you trade what is lower for what is better?’¹²⁴ Then the mind asks, “How can I reach this [understanding]?”

122 *Al-kashf*, by which an aspirant may be granted direct perception of the reality and proximity of God.

123 *Al-iktisāb*: literally, “earning” or “acquiring,” the deeds or knowledge by which an aspirant might come nearer to God.

124 This echoes Q. 2:61, the response of Moses ﷺ to the Israelites when they begged him to provide them with a food more varied than manna and quails.

And it is told, “It will be through someone of your own kind, and few are they!” *There certainly has come to you a messenger from among yourselves ...* [9:128] *He raised among them a messenger from among themselves* [3:164]. So [the seeker] returns to his own kind, amongst whom his heart and soul find rest, and searches for someone who is higher than he in knowledge and practice and more acquainted than he with the states, tastes, and stations of Way, until he finds that one who is complete – who combines within himself intoxication and sobriety and is immutable in the midst of all that is transient – and he weds his soul to him and does not turn away from him for a moment. Then there flows forth between the heart of the shaykh and the soul of the aspirant a water from which God creates singularity and oneness. When the seeker first hears the shaykh, it becomes like a drop suspended in the womb, and when he begins to follow the shaykh, it becomes like a clot, and when he begins truly to derive benefit [from the shaykh’s teachings], it becomes like a lump of flesh, and when he then ascends [the stations of the way], it becomes yet another creation. *So blessed be God, the best of creators* [23:14].¹²⁵

Or, if you want, you could say that he is led through the phases of knowledge, practice, and state, or through the kingdom (*al-mulk*), the angelic realms (*al-malakūt*), and the Realm of Omnipotence (*al-jabarūt*), or through worship, servanthood, and slavehood, or through presence, unveiling, and witnessing, or through the knowledge of certainty, to the eye of certainty, to the truth of certainty, or through separation, union, and the union of union. *[God] endows upon whomsoever He wills daughters, and upon whomsoever He wills, sons, or He joins them, together, male and female* [42:49–50], that is, in separation, union, and all else that God ﷻ gives to His sincere friends (*awliyā’uhu al-mukhlashīn*), about whom it has been said that whoever totally devotes themselves to God (*akhlaṣa li-Llāhi*) for forty mornings will enter the angelic realms (*al-malakūt*), and springs of knowledge will gush forth from their hearts and flow upon their tongues.”¹²⁶ But no one will

125 Here, Shaykh Būziyān is viewing spiritual birth through the lens of verses 12 through 14 of *Sūrat al-Muminūn* (23) which describe the development of a human being from a sperm drop, to a foetus, and finally to a new-born.

126 This is recorded as a *ḥadīth* in Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, the *Masnad al-Shihāb al-Qaḍā’i*, in Ibn al-Mubārak’s *al-Zuhd wa al-Raqā’iq*, and a number of oth-

know sincerity (*al-ikhlas*) except by knowing the way of someone who has knows it. Or as Tāj al-Dīn said in his *Hikam*, “He does not unite anyone with [his saints] except someone He wishes to unite to Himself.”¹²⁷ And Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī رحمته^b said, “I heard the shaykhs in Iraq say, ‘He who never sees someone who has succeeded will never succeed.’”¹²⁸ And here is Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī رحمته^b who said, “He who has no shaykh, Satan is his shaykh,”¹²⁹ and Shaykh Muḥiyy al-Dīn al-Ḥātimī رحمته^b who said, “He who has no shaykh has no *qibla*,” and Ibn Shaybān رحمته^b who said, “Whoever has no master has no worth,” and Tāj al-Dīn Sīdī Ibn ‘Aṭā’illāh^b who said, “Anyone in this affair who has no teacher is a foundling, a fatherless child, an orphan without lineage,”¹³⁰ and shaykh Abū ‘Alī al-Thaqafī رحمته who said “If a man collected within himself all the forms of religious knowledge and sat in [all] the circles of learning, he would still not reach the level of the men [of the way] ¹³¹ except by keeping company with a pious shaykh,”¹³² or words close to these. The proof of Islam, Imām al-Ghazālī,^b says about someone like this – that is, someone who collects every kind of formal knowledge and practices every form of physical worship – “[He] is like a tree that grows wild in the mountains and valleys: it will not bear fruit, or if it does, the flavor will not be like the flavor of a cultivated tree or those grown in carefully tended orchards.”¹³³

er collections with the wording, “For anyone who devotes forty days to God, springs of wisdom will flow forth from his heart to his tongue.”

127 In Danner’s translation, this is Aphorism 156, which begins, “Glory be to the One Who has not made any sign leading to His saints save as a sign leading to Himself.”

128 ^c *Awārif al-Ma‘ārif*, I:332

129 The exact wording of this saying, which can be found quoted in Qushayrī’s *Risāla*, is, “He who has no master (*ustādh*, which can also be translated as ‘teacher’), his imam is Satan.”

130 Ibn ‘Ajība, in *al-Futūḥāt al-Ilāhiyya*, section three concerning the shaykh (lines 98–100), quotes this from the concluding section of *Laṭā’if al-Minan*, p. 204.

131 *Al-rijāl*, in this context, refers to people on the path, regardless of gender.

132 In Ibn ‘Ajība’s *al-Futūḥāt al-ilāhiyya*, p. 92, this is quoted as “except by the spiritual training given to him by pious shaykh, an imam, or an advising teacher.”

133 The exact quote in *al-Iḥyā’*, Book 3 (Dar al-Minhāj edition, V:266) is “The aspirant by himself is like a tree that grows by itself. It can quickly dry out, and even if it lasts long enough to make leaves, it does not give fruit...”

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

- ABŪ BAKR AL-ŞIDDĪQ, ibn Abī Quhāfa al-Taymī (d. 13/634) – 6, 114, 177. He was among the greatest of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and the first of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs. His rule lasted just over two years before he succumbed to an illness. His tomb is next to that of the Prophet and ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in Medina.
- ABŪ ḤAZM, Salama ibn Dinār al-Madanī (d. ca. 140/757) – 51. He was one of the better known of the successors (*al-tābiʿin*) and figures in the transmission of many *ḥadīths*.
- ABŪ MADYAN, Shuʿayb b. Ḥusayn (d. 594/1197) – 20, 21, 59, 83, 156. A Sufi who figures prominently in the spiritual lineage (*silsila*) of the Shādhiliyya-Darqāwiyya. He was born near Seville in poverty and after some travel in search of knowledge in Andalusia, he travelled to Morocco, first to Marrakesh and eventually to Fes, where he became a student of Sīdī ʿAlī Ḥirzihim in Sufism. Later he became a disciple of the near-legendary saint Abū Yaʿzā (see below) and eventually a shaykh in his own right. His writings include a collection of *qaṣīdas* which are still sung all over the Muslim world and a short book of *ḥikam* (aphorisms).
- ABŪ YAʿZĀ, Yallanūr (sometimes rendered Abū Yiʿzzā Yalannūr) (d. 572/1177) – 20, 111. Known in Morocco to this day as Moulay Bouʿazza, he was the near-legendary illiterate Berber Sufi who was one of the teachers of Abū Madyan (see above). It is said that he spent years of his youth wandering the mountainous regions of Morocco living off wild plants. His tomb is on the site of the *zāwiya* he built in the Middle Atlas Mountains near the town of Azrou.
- ʿALĪ ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/660) – 24, 39, 42, 62, 198. He was the fourth and last of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and the father of his beloved grandsons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. He is regarded as a source of great wisdom and as the first imam for Shiʿi Muslims.
- AL-ʿAMRĀNĪ, ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad (d. 1193/1779) – 16, 29, 30-32, 45-49, 52, 80, 86, 91, 118, 132, 134 ff, 138, 141, 147, 149, 150, 158, 163, 170, 189, 190, 192, 193. Known as Sidi ʿAlī al-Jamal (“The Camel”), he was the spiritual master of Shaykh al-Darqāwī who could be seen as the one who translated Sīdī ʿAlī’s teaching into a way that could be practice. He left one written work behind,

a collection of esoteric insights into the Way called *Naṣīḥat al-Murīd fī ṭarīq ahl al-sulūk wa-l-tajrīd* also called *al-Yawāqūt al-ḥissān fī taṣrīf maʿānīya l-insān*.

AL-ANDALŪSĪ (see *al-Shuṭaybī*)

AL-AṢBAHĀNĪ, Abū Nuʿaym (d. 430/1038) – 88. Best known as the author of *Hilyat al-Awliyāʾ* (“Ornament of the Saints”), a voluminous collection of biographies beginning with the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, then the Successors (*al-tābiʿūn*), and those who followed them, up Abū Nuʿaym’s own time. Although he mentions something about their lives in each entry, his main focus is on the *ḥadīth*, narrations, and wisdom that they passed down. As his name indicates, his origin was Isfahan, in what is now central Iran, which is also where his tomb is located.

AL-BASTĀMĪ, Abū Yazīd Tayfur, also called Bayazīd, Bistāmī or Bustāmī (d. 208/874) – 41, 111, 190. A disciple of Dhū’l-Nūn al-Miṣrī, he was one of the great ascetic and ecstatic Sufis from the classical period.

AL-BŪṢĪRĪ, Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Saʿīd b. Ḥamād al-Sanhājī (d. 693/1294) – 5. He was an Egyptian Sufi of the Shadhiliyya order, a disciple of Abū’l-ʿAbbās al-Mursī, and poet best known for his *Qaṣīdat al-Burda* (Ode of the Mantle) and his *Hamziyya* (Ode ending in *Hāʾ*), both of which are sung all over the Muslim world.

AL-DEBBĀGH, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Idrīsī al-Ḥasanī (d. 1132/1719) – 44. He was a gnostic Sufi, illiterate but possessing God-given knowledge, who was born and passed away in Fes. His life in teachings are recounted in a book called *al-Dhahab al-Ibrīz min kalām Sayyidi al-Ghawth ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh*, written by his friend and disciple, Aḥmad ibn al-Mubārak al-Lamātī.

AL-FĀSĪ, ʿAbd al-Rvḥmān Abū Zayd (972-1036/1564-1626) – 60. He was a scholar and Sufi. He was born in Qaṣr al-Kabīr in northern Morocco and studied in Fes with some of the greatest scholars of his day including Yaḥya Sirāj and Abū’l-ʿAbbās al-Mansūr. He authored several useful works, among them marginal annotations (*ḥāshiyāt*) to the *ḥadīth* collection of al-Bukhārī, the Quranic commentary of Jalālayn, *Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt*, and *al-Ḥizb al-Kabīr* of Imam al-Shādhilī (see below). He is included in the chains of transmission (*silsila*) of the *Ṭarīqat al-Shādhiliyya* from the sixteenth century on.

FĀṬĪMA AL-ZAHRĀʾ ﷺ bint Muḥammad (d. 11/632) – 21, 32, 44. She was the youngest daughter of the Prophet ﷺ Muḥammad and Khadījah and became the wife of ʿAlī b. Tālib (see above) and mother of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. She died at a young age, probably in her early 20s, shortly after the death of her father ﷺ.

AL-GHAZĀLĪ, Abū Ḥamīd Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (d. 504/1111) – 20, 41, 45. Sufi, scholar, prolific author and known as *Hujjat al-Islām* (“The proof of Islam”). He was born and died in Ṭūs, in Khorasan. After an illustrious career as teacher and lecturer, he renounced his position at the age of around forty and took up the life of a wandering dervish. The fruits of both his scholarship and efforts in the