

AN ANALYSIS OF AL-HAKIM AL-TIRMIDHI'S MYSTICAL IDEOLOGY BASED ON BOOKS: BAD'U SHAANI AND SIRAT AL-AWLIYA

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Abstract. Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Hasan bin Bashir Bin Harun Al Hakim Al-Tirmidhi, also called Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi, is a Persian mystic living in the 3rd century AH. He is important in the history of Persian literature and the Persian-Islamic mysticism due to several reasons. First, he is one of the first Persian mystics who has significant works in the field of mysticism. Second, early instances of Persian prose can be identified in his world and taking the time that he was living into consideration, the origins of post-Islam Persian prose can be seen in his writings. Third, his ideas have had significant impacts on Mysticism, Sufism, and consequently, in the Persian mystical literature; thus, understanding and analyzing his viewpoints and works is of significant importance for attaining a better picture of Persian mystical literature. The current study attempts to analyze Al-Tirmidhi's mystical ideology based on his two books: *Bad'u Shanni Abu Abdullah* (The Beginning of Abu Abdullah's Journey) and *Sirat Al-Awliya* (Road of the Saints). Al-Tirmidhi's ideology is going to be explained through investigating and analyzing his viewpoints regarding the manner of starting a spiritual journey, the status of asceticism and austerity in a spiritual journey, transition from the ascetic school of Baghdad to the Romantic school of Khorasan. Clearing the status of Sufism and Mysticism in Khorasan in the 3rd century AH and pointing to the differences between the schools of Baghdad and Khorasan in the early centuries of Hegira as well as their mutual interactions and influences are among the findings of the current study.

Keywords: Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi, Mysticism and Sufism, *Bad'u Shaani Abu Abdullah*, *Sirat Al-Awliya*, Mystical Ideology, Mystical Literature.

Introduction. In the investigation of the key mystical figures' viewpoints regarding mysticism, explaining and analyzing their ideology and foundations and principles of their thought is essential; that is because mystical methods are not the same and in analyzing each mystic's opinions, criteria specific to that person have to be applied. Al-Tirmidhi is among the first group of mystics who attempted to codify their own methods and manners in mystical ideology. He has two major works in the field of mysticism; the first one is *Bad'u Shaani Abu Abdullah* (The Beginning of Abu Abdullah's Pursuit) which can be considered as his autobiography and contains significant materials regarding the author's spiritual journey. The second book is titled "*Sirat AL-Awliya*" (Road of the Saints) and explains AL-Tirmidhi's most significant mystical viewpoints. In the current article, first, the *Bad'u Shaani* is investigated and after getting familiar with Al-Tirmidhi's spiritual journey, *Sirat Al-Awliya* is analyzed. Before starting to do anything, the mystical thought has to be portrayed in a general framework and Al-Tirmidhi's status within that framework has to be identified in order for us to enter the investigation of Al-Tirmidhi's works with a holistic view.

Of course, Al-Tirmidhi was a prolific writer and has left 25 books, many of which are accessible in their original form (6/241). However, not all of his works are related to mysticism and some of them contain juridical and philosophical materials. The two books that are going to be investigated in the current study, nevertheless, are specifically related to mysticism.

Thus, based on what went before, the current study consists of five sections. Apart from the first (i.e., interdiction) section, the second section (The Status of Al-Tirmidhi in the History of Mysticism and Sufism) portrays the general framework of the mystical thought during the early centuries of Hegira and identifies Al-Tirmidhi's status in that framework. The third framework is devoted to the analysis of *Bad'u Shaani* and is composed of four sub-sections: from Sharia to asceticism, from asceticism to love, the status of dreams in Al-Tirmidhi's mystical ideology, and analyzing Al-Tirmidhi's Persian prose. In the fourth section, AL-Tirmidhi's viewpoints mentioned in *Sirat Al-Awliya* are investigated, while the fifth section is devoted to concluding remarks.

The Status of Al-Tirmidhi in the History of Mysticism and Sufism

If we follow Shafei Kadkani's definition and regard Mysticism and Sufism as the aesthetical view towards theology and religion (13/78), we can argue that Sufism is equivalent to the aesthetical view towards Islam. Of course, such an aesthetical view is not unified and integrated in the field of Sufism, but differing views having diverse theoretical foundations exist in that regard. In sum, it can be argued that the main endeavor of Sufism and its followers was to "gain the understanding of theism" (5/61) and in this way, Sufis believed that the instrument of science, in the form of jurisprudence, and mind, in the form of Islamic scholastic theology, are not sufficient; thus, they moved towards intuition and their own inner self and in the way to attain an intuitive understanding, "they devoted all their efforts to the purification of their souls" (ibid: 29). At this stage, they moved towards the principles of asceticism, which was an acknowledged and praised by Sharia and great scholars. Islam allows its followers to have either a strict or an easy adherence to the religious doctrines and lets the individual "create a disciplinary system which is in line

with his intentions and plans and is an indicator of his higher conscience and obsession compared to other believers” (2/ 55); thus, mystics in Baghdad, as the western center of the Islamic world, chose the strictest form of asceticism to meet their objectives.

In other words, Sufism decided to have a stricter behavior towards matters that have been allowed in Sharia since they believed that attaining an intuitive understanding depends on giving up earthly and carnal attractions.

By putting asceticism into the form of a new theory, the Sufis established the foundation of a new spiritual school in the Islamic world (i.e., Sufism). The theory of asceticism in this approach can be explained in the following form: anything that has no relation to God Almighty is an earthly attraction and one has to make efforts in order free himself from that attraction and all its representation; instances of the matters that have no relation to God Almighty include the earthly living and the self. Thus, in a Sufism that has been founded on the theory of asceticism, one is faced with a torturous battle against the earthly living and its representations such as business, marriage, politics, and all the others representations of a social life on one hand, while on the other hand, he is battling against the self and its representations such as eating, sleeping, pleasure-seeking, and making one’s appearance more attractive.

This theory resulted in the establishment of a series of foundations and principles that were codified by such people as Hasan Al-Basri, Rabia al-Adawiyya, Maruf Al-Karkhi, Davood Tae, Abu Sulayman Al-Darani, Ahmad ibn Abi Al-Havari, Habib Al-Ajami, among others. The works of this school were codified by such people as Hares Mahasebi, Junaid and Abu Taleb Makki and later, reached perfection through the works of Al-Ghazali and Suhrawardi.

On the other hand, many mystics who had started their spiritual journey based on the theory of asceticism, become doubtful in the effectiveness of austerities on attaining an intuitive understanding; thus, Abu Sa’id Al-Kharraz (1/ 50) and Hallaj in the West and Hakim AL-Tirmidhi in the East started to talk about love and weakened the foundations of the asceticism theory. Of course, this new trend was cruelly suppressed as Kharraz was dismissed out of Egypt (11/ 136), Hallaj was murdered in Baghdad, and Al-Tirmidhi was brought to the trial and was prohibited to talk about love anymore. In addition, inconveniences created against by Abu Saeed have been documented in the history. Despite all such harshness, the new theory got famous in Khorasan and was referred to as “Malamatiyya”. In defining the Theory of Love, it can be argued unlike the Theory of Asceticism, it did not endeavor to battle against what was not related to God Almighty. That is because this theory does not have an entity with the title of “matters that are not related to God Almighty” and all the efforts in this school are focused on creating a link with the single truth that is flowing all over the universe of existence.

Thus, all figures and all mystical works can be divided according to these two theories. Some micro theories such as Qalandariyyah or Malamatiyya can be classified as belonging to the above macro theories. Of course, a definite and exact line can never be drawn between the two schools since in many cases, the two theories overlap each other; however, the differences are significant enough to classify them as two distinct theories within a single movement (i.e., Islamic Sufism). Likewise, Shafiei (12/ 32) believes that Qalandariyyah and Malamatiyya are the two sides of a single coin and consequently, cannot be segregated from each other. Thus, Qalandaris and Malamatis have theoretical arguments with each other and while Qalandari is related to Asceticism, Malamati is related to Love.

Hence, it can be argued that from a general viewpoint, Hakim Al-Tirmidhi can be classified as belonging to the Islamic school of mystical thinking. Though no definite judgement can be passed on Al-Tirmidhi’s mystical approach (i.e., whether he belongs to the ascetic Sufism of Baghdad or to the Malamatiyya in Khorasan), as we will observe in the third section of the current article, Al-Tirmidhi started his spiritual journey based on the ascetic foundations of the Sufi’s in Baghdad, but in the halfway, he rejected those ideas and started talking about love. Since he was one of the first mystics in Khorasan, it can be argued that he was one of the finding fathers of the branch of Sufism in Khorasan that became famous as Malamatiyya.

Now that the mystical thought during the early centuries of Hegira has been portrayed, of course in a very brief mode, and Al-Tirmidhi’s status in the history of Islamic mysticism was discussed, the following sections deal with the investigation of Al-Tirmidhi’s mystical viewpoints based on his two books, *Bad’u Shaani* and *Sirat Al-Awliya*, in order to shed more light into the above discussions.

3. *Bad’u Shaani Abu Abdullah (The Beginning of Abu Abdullah Pursuit)*

Bad’u Shaani, as Al-Tirmidhi’s autobiography, has to some extent been overshadowed by the author’s other work, *Sirat Al-Awliya*, and for this purpose, few researchers have focused on this book; nevertheless, analyzing this book can be a significant step ahead in identifying the private aspects of Al-Tirmidhi’s spiritual life and getting to a better understanding of his other work, *Sirat Al-Awliya*. In *Bad’u Shaani*, Al-Tirmidhi has portrayed valuable details of his mystical manners and methods and has described all the stages in his mystical journey. With regard to structure, the book can be compared to Al-Ghazali’s book “*al-Munqidh min al-Dalal*” (Rescuer from Misguidance). The content analysis of *Bad’u Shaani* reveals three stages in the author’s mystical journey. The first stage starts with his intense desire to forsake the earthly matters and asceticism and can be considered as a transition stage where he moves from Saria towards being an ascetic. The second stage starts with his move from extreme asceticism and strict austerity towards the Theory of Love. Within this stage, he is condemned for apostasy and is forbidden to talk about love. It was at this time that the School of Love in Khorasan declared its existence against the Ascetic School of Khorasan. The third stage is the time that he reaches perfection in his journey and attains the status of Qutb (pole), defining a prophet-like status for himself. In this part of the article, the three stages in Al-Tirmidhi’s spiritual journey are going to be investigated. In addition, based on the fact he uses dreams in describing his spiritual journey, the status of

dreams in Al-Tirmidhi's mystical thought is going to be investigated. Another important feature of the book is quoting some Persian sentences for describing the dreams. Since the book has been written in Arabic and the Persian sentences have been inserted within the Arabic ones, investigating and analyzing the Persian sentences can be significant from the viewpoint of the history of Persian mystical literature; so, a section has been devoted to investigate these sentences.

1.3. From Sharia to Asceticism

Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Hasan bin Bashir bin Harun Al Hakim Al-Tirmidhi (Termizi) was born in the early years of the 3rd century A.H. in Termez, a city on the banks of Amu Darya, in what is now a part of Uzbekistan. His father was a muhaddith (narrator of hadiths) and from his childhood, Al-Tirmidhi started to study hadiths and Hanafi jurisprudence (10/38; 5/ 114). However, when he reached the age of youth, the pilgrimage to Mecca made a deep impression on him and he was inclined towards asceticism. At this time, Al-Tirmidhi started to memorize the Holy Quran and have a life of austerity. Thus, these early attempts to turn his life towards asceticism were a part of his general interest in finding a way to satisfy his perfectionist soul.

It can be argued that the asceticism has been the most widespread doctrine across all the Islamic sects and factions and all Muslims tried to follow their religious leaders in having an ascetic life. In this manner, Muslims defined asceticism as the point in contrast to the pursuit of earthly pleasures and aristocracy. However, according to Sharia, asceticism is related to peripheral issues and has been considered by Muslims as a moral conduct suggested by religious leaders. By the passage of time, nevertheless, this moral conduct changed into a mystical theory and people such as Hasan Al-Basri, Habib Ajami, Maroof Karkhi, and others appeared and followed a specific form of asceticism in the life. The kind of asceticism that such people introduced was much more extreme than the one that had been suggested by Sharia. This kind of asceticism was based on giving up the world and all its representations and attractions; thus, in the way to attain the standards of such asceticism, extreme acts such as giving up business and marriage, temporary or permanent isolation from the society and making use of unusual forms of austerity were allowed. Unlike the eastern provinces of the Islamic world (i.e., Khorasan), this approach found avid followers in the western provinces (i.e., Baghdad). Major works written related to this approach include Muhasibi's "Kitab al-Ri'aya li-Huquq Allah" (Obeying God's Permits), books written by Junayd of Baghdad, Suhrawardi's "Awarif-ul-Maarif", and Al-Ghazali's "The Alchemy of Happiness". Though mystics in Khorasan showed adherence to this school in the early years of their spiritual journey, they gradually gave it up and were inclined towards another theory; i.e., the theory of love or kindness. This created bitter disagreement between mystics in Baghdad and Khorasan and sometimes led to the harassment, sentences of apostasy, and sometimes the execution of mystics of the Khorasan school by the followers of Baghdad school of mysticism. In his autobiography, too, Hakim Al-Tirmidhi points out his inclination towards asceticism in the early years of his spiritual journey and his later change of direction towards the theory of love.

Al-Tirmidhi describes the early stages of his spiritual journey in this way: "Those days when I was in pilgrimage to Mecca, I prayed to God Almighty to correct my state and make me hate the earthly living and bless me with an opportunity to memorize the Holy Quran" (10/39-40). As it can be observed, Al-Tirmidhi saw the correction of his state as "hating the earthly living" and it is evident that the idea of giving up the earthly living was dominant at that time. Al-Tirmidhi saw the world as a bound that had to be torn apart and believed that the earthly living and spiritual matters such as memorizing the Holy Quran is impossible. As he points out, in the same journey a state of complete repentance and giving up the world occurred to him (ibid, p. 39).

Before starting a strict life of austerities, Al-Tirmidhi had been involved himself with praying, memorizing the Holy Quran, staying up late, and deliberating on religious books (ibid, p. 40). Since he had not found anyone to guide him, he had started to pray and fast (ibid). When he read a book by Al-Antaki, his method of austerity changed significantly and became stricter and to some extent, extreme. According to Al-Tirmidhi, these austerities included intense meticulousness in Halal and Haram matters, abstaining from drinking cool water or the water of a stream and instead, drinking water from a well or big rivers, abstaining from carnal desires, and isolating himself at home, deserts, ruins and cemeteries around the city (ibid, p. 41). Therefore, after Al-Tirmidhi got to know the mystics and Sufis, his method of asceticism changed dramatically and turned to a kind that was common among the followers of Tasawwuf (Sufism). This form of asceticism was so much stricter and more serious than the common forms of asceticism suggested by Sharia.

Nevertheless, this manner of asceticism did not last long in Al-Tirmidhi and since the time that, through the mediation of a dream, he was able to make connection with the hidden world, he changed the direction of his spiritual journey towards the theory of love; in a way that in a gradual way, his strange forms of austerity such as riding a donkey through the market and wearing ragged clothes looked futile to him and for breaking down the self, he found that tolerating the other people is much more useful (ibid, p. 47). Thus, it can be argued that Al-Tirmidhi started his spiritual journey with adherence to asceticism; however, after many spiritual and inner experiences, he got to know that asceticism is not sufficient to attain his goals and was inclined towards the theory of love. In the following section, this aspect of Al-Tirmidhi's spiritual journey is going to be investigated.

2.3. From Asceticism to Love

In Bad'u Shaani, Al-Tirmidhi did not refer explicitly to his theories regarding love. However, when he refers to the slanders that his opponents used against him and their attempts to bring him into a trial, he says that they prohibited him from talking about love (ibid, p. 45). With this reference, it can be understood that in the middle of his

spiritual journey, Al-Tirmidhi gave up the asceticism that was supported by Baghdad and was inclined towards the theory of love. Although some have argued that in the works of Al-Tirmidhi, there is no sign of his acquaintance with the school of Baghdad (ibid, p. 70), we can see that the early stages of Al-Tirmidhi's spiritual journey was completely in line with the asceticism of Baghdad school. Of course, no definite line can be drawn between the two mystical approaches and we cannot define Al-Tirmidhi's life into separate periods of asceticism and love, but his process of development from asceticism towards love can be investigated.

The key to the change in Al-Tirmidhi's direction in his spiritual journey can be attributed to the accusations of heresy and sectarian orientations made by a group of shallow-minded scholars against him. It seems that the main reasons for such accusations were the inclination that Al-Tirmidhi showed towards the theory of love since in a trial-like gathering that was held in the presence of the ruler of Balkh, Al-Tirmidhi was ordered not to talk about love at all (ibid, p. 45). Al-Tirmidhi's attempt in giving up asceticism and moving towards love can be explained in the following manner: he was pursuing to overcome his self through such strange and unusual forms of austerity as riding a donkey through the market, walking with ragged and poor clothes, and carrying things that usually belong to the slaves and the poor; however, he saw that he cannot attain his goals through these ways. Only when Al-Tirmidhi was able to overcome his self that he faced a torrent of slanders and accusations and the sadness and unhappiness caused by such misfortunes resulted in weakening his self (ibid, p. 47). Thus, events that accompanied his inclination towards the theory of love enabled him to break down his self; a breakthrough that harsh austerities were unable to attain. This stage of his thoughts can be regarded as one of the early points in the development of Malamatiyya movement, which itself is one of the branches of Sufism inclined towards the theory of love.

3.3. *The Status of Dreams in Hakim Al-Tirmidhi's Mystical Ideology*

Analyzing the status of dreams in Al-Tirmidhi's spiritual journey is an easy undertaking. Should one really believe that the dreams mentioned in Bad'u Shanni are true ones or they should be analyzed as a symbolic matter? It seems that Al-Tirmidhi had to link his sayings and claims to an undeniable spiritual source in order to guarantee their legitimacy. Generally, in Tasawwuf (Sufism), this role is played by a master who is credible in everyone's eyes. As we know, Sufism regarded their masters as having the same status as prophets and saints and in this manner, they narrated their hadiths; thus, the sayings narrated from the masters of Sufism were considered as having the same status as hadiths narrated from Imams and were regarded as undeniable documents. However, Al-Tirmidhi was deprived of the support and guidance of such a master (10/40). Thus, he found another way to legitimate his sayings and that was linking them directly to the hidden world through the introduction of dreams in his works. By reference to the Holy Quran, Muslims believe that dreams are instruments for relating to the hidden world. One of the Qur'anic verses related to this matter is: "Certainly has Allah showed to His Messenger the vision in truth. You will surely enter al-Masjid al-Haram, if Allah wills, in safety, with your heads shaved and [hair] shortened, not fearing [anyone]. He knew what you did not know and has arranged before that a conquest near [at hand]" (Al-Fath/27); furthermore, another instance is related to Abraham's dream seeing that he is sacrificing his son. When Abraham and his son passed God Almighty's test, they were told, "You have fulfilled the vision" (Al-Saffat, 105). Therefore, Al-Tirmidhi's attempt to refer to dreams in order to prove his link with the hidden world was not a strange undertaking. In addition, those who are familiar with the styles of narration in mystical texts know that the dreams of higher-order mystics and questions regarding God Almighty and their answers is a common style of narration in such texts. For instance, the story of Majnun by Al-Qushairi is quoted here. In "The Risalah: Principles of Sufism", Al-Qushairi writes, "They saw Majnun Banu Amir in a dream. They asked him, "what did God Almighty do to you?" He responded, "He forgave me and made it as a proof for lovers" (8/ 562). Of course, there is no need to mention that Majnun in mystical figures has been sublimed from a historical and lyrical figure to a mystical one. In addition, Al-Qushairi has titled a section of "The Risalah: Principles of Sufism" as "What they showed to this tribe in a dream" (ibid, p. 696). In explaining the meaning of "Theirs are good tidings in the life of the world and in the Hereafter" (Yunus/ 64), Al-Qushairi says, "Whether a man sees a dream or is seen in a dream, it is good" (ibid). In addition, he considers dreams as a kind of munificence in his mystical ideology and believes that a dream is an impression that has been made on the soul "(ibid, p. 697).

Based on what went before, it is not strange that Al-Tirmidhi has quoted his revelations in the form of dreams.

Having said this, we can begin the analysis of the dreams that have been mentioned in "Badu Shaani Abu Abdullah". In this book, Al-Tirmidhi recounts the development of his spiritual journey from beginning to the status of being a master in the form of dreams. In the first dreams, Al-Tirmidhi pursues the Prophet and follows in his footsteps (10/ 42), which can be interpreted as the rightfulness of his manners and other mystics. The next dream is related to his presence before God Almighty in which, he is told in a desert that he will be taken before God Almighty and then, he enters into a collection of curtains where he can feel the presence of God Almighty (ibid, p. 43). This dream, also, emphasizes the rightfulness and legitimacy of the way that he has chosen. From this point on, Al-Tirmidhi moves away from the theories of asceticism in a gradual mode and speaks of love as slanders and accusations as well as his trial and prohibition from talking about love occur at this stage (ibid, p. 45). Here, he talks about experiencing the present time (ibid, p. 47) and expresses his connections with the hidden world in a way as if he is guided through the mediation of his wife to act fairly and speak a little (ibid, pp. 49-51). It can be argued that dream play the role of master and sheikh for Al-Tirmidhi. In one of such dreams, the angle that played the role of master for Al-Tirmidhi says to his wife, "God Almighty would bless you with a garden not because you have prayed and fasted regularly, but

because of the goodness of your heart and because you favor the good and hate the evil” (ibid, p. 52). It can be seen that in this dream, the importance that he assigns to the heart has increased in comparison to the importance given to practical forms of worship.

Al-Tirmidhi’s process of spiritual development gets to its climax through reporting his wife’s dreams where Prophet Muhammed and Jesus Christ go to their house and say, “Al-Tirmidhi is one of the guardians of the Earth and has to guide and empower the weak and disciples.” Apparently, they also add that he does not need to continue with his austerities and asceticism (ibid, p. 56). In this manner, through saying that there is no need to extreme forms of austerities, he formally declares that he has given up asceticism.

The interesting point is that in the same dream, some other people, such as Abu Dawud Al-Khayyat reach the status of Al-Tirmidhi, too, and cause his astonishment (ibid, p. 58). In addition, Al-Tirmidhi is seen in dreams by other people that refer to his high status; like the dream of Ahmad bin Jibril Al-Bazzaz who dreamed that Al-Tirmidhi is going round Kaaba in such a way that he was very tall and Kaaba reached to his waist (ibid, p. 58) or the dream of Muhammad ibn Najm Khashab who dreamed that Al-Tirmidhi is saying his prayers in the presence of Prophet Muhammad (ibid, p. 59). In the last pages of “Bad’u Shaani Abu Abdullah”, some other names are mentioned to have seen Al-Tirmidhi in their dreams, while some others are unknown. Some dreams deal with details of his personal life to the extent that he gets forbidden to study astrology in a dream (ibid, p. 59); this dream makes the role of dream in his guidance much more significant. In another dream, God Almighty is referred to as an Amir (i.e., Lord) who has chosen forty guardians for the Earth and Al-Tirmidhi is among them (ibid, pp. 61-64). A few dreams in the end of the book are related to the same discussion of being chosen and being blessed with God Almighty’s grace.

3.4. Analyzing Hakim Al-Tirmidhi’s Persian Sentences

A notable point about Bad’u Shaani Abu Abdullah is the narration of some dreams through the use of Persian language; while the text of some sentences are confusing because of the obsolete language being used, these few sentences are important because of Al-Tirmidhi’s claim that they have been inspired to his wife in her dreams in Persian. That is because in this manner, those sentences can be considered as the starting point of Persian mystical literature. As we know, Persian language was regarded as the language of religion in the latter half of the 4th century A.H. at the time of Abu Salih Mansur of the Samanids (died 13 June 976) after the translation of Tafsir Al-Tabari. With regard to the fact that Al-Tirmidhi lived in the 3rd century A.H. and Persian language had not been turned into a language through which religious texts, even in the translated form, could be written, the importance of the few Persian sentences mentioned by Al-Tirmidhi gets more apparent. Writing mystical books in Persian started from the 5th century A.H. through Ismail Bukhari’s “Sharh Taaruf” and Khajeh Abdullah Ansari’s “Sad Meydan” (One Hundred Grounds); thus, Al-Tirmidhi is not only the first author who wrote about Tasawwuf (Sufism) in Persian, but also he is the first one who started writing his works in Persian after the Islamic conquest. Of course, Persian language had also been used before the translation of “Tafsir Al-Tabari” as the language of religion, but it was in the oral mode. Islamic centuries, narrators and storytellers were responsible for making Persians familiar with religious concepts and many masters of Sufism, such as Abu Hafis Al-Haddad, taught their disciples in Persian (7/ 4). Some Persian quotes have been made of Habib Al-Ajami in the mystical literature of the 5th and 6th centuries A.H., but none of them are comparable in significance to the sentences written by Al-Tirmidhi; that is because Al-Tirmidhi’s Persian sentences have been mentioned when narrating about revelations about the hidden world, some of which had the state of an inspiration; in other words, the importance of the Persian sentences is because they Al-Tirmidhi claims that they have been directly received from the hidden world. The first Persian sentence quoted by Al-Tirmidhi from his wife’s dream regarding his selection as being one of the forty guardians of the earth is “the whole world is watching you” (3/ 29). The second Persian sentence in this dream is an unclear one where Al-Tirmidhi responds to his wife’s question, “how did you depart from the Lord?”, he answers “I wish, be” (ibid, p. 30). Of course, the translator of “Bad’u Shaani Abu Abdullah” has added in the footnote that the complete sentence might have been “I wish I could tell you” (10/ 62). Another Persian sentence has been mentioned when narrating one of the revelations by Al-Tirmidhi’s wife about him, “I gave you a piece of jewel” (3/ 31). The German translator has explained the jewel as “the Persian word for jewel (i.e., negin) is a translation from the Arabic *Khatam* which can refer to both a seal with a piece of jewel on it or just a seal. This brief mention of *Khatam* in the “Bad’u Shaani Abu Abdullah” refers to *Khatam Al-Awliya* (i.e., the lord and master of God Almighty’s acquaintances and has been discussed in detail in ‘*Sirat Al-Awliya*’ (10/ 66). Other Persian sentences include “I blessed you with three things: my glory, my greatness, and my value” (3/ 32). “And there was something, and the movement of all creatures was because of Him; all things were created by Him, and the value and existence of everything came through Him”. This sentence is an unclear one. In addition, some incomprehensible Persian sentences exist in the text that cannot be understood. And the last one “I provided you with the science of the beginning and the end”

These sentences were quoted from the Arabic translation of “*Khatam Al-Awliya*” (Ismail Yahya, 2001) in order to distinguish Persian sentences from the Arabic ones.

4. *Sirat Al-Awliya* (Road of the Saints)

The title of this book in Arabic is “*Khatm Al-Awliya*” and is published in Beirut a single volume together with “Bad’u Shaani Abu Abdullah”. However, two German researchers, Bernd Radtke and Joh O’Kane, have published the book as “*Sirat Al-Awliya*” which “provides one of the most systematic analyses of the concept of guardianship in Islamic thought” (5/ 116). In the history of Sufism, Al-Tirmidhi’s name has been intertwined with guardianship. In classifying sects within Sufism, Al-Hujwiri mentioned the school of Hakimiyya and points out that

Al-Tirmidhi was the head of this school and their motto was guardianship (4/ 267). Contemporary to Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Abi 'l-Dunyā and Abu Sa'id Al-Kharraz discussed guardianship in the western territories of the Islamic world. In his book "Mukhtasar", Al-Kharraz discusses a number of issues that Al-Tirmidhi has investigated in "Sirat Al-Awliya", while in "Kitab Al-Awliya", Ibn Abi 'l-Dunya provides a disorganized collection of materials regarding the concept of guardianship without any comment or interpretation (10/ 70). In addition, Al-Hujwiri and Abu Nasr Sarraj have discussed this concept and in his "Al-Risala", Al-Qushairi has devoted a complete chapter to the discussion of guardianship (8/426) and "in expressing some of the sentences, without confessing to do so, makes great reliance on Sirat Al-Awliya" (10/ 71). Several centuries after Al-Tirmidhi, Aziz ad-Din Nasafi wrote a book titled "On Perfect Human Being" where he discussed guardianship. At that time, the influence of Ibn Arabi, who was continuing the viewpoints of Al-Tirmidhi, was obvious (Ibid, p. 72).

The structure of "Sirat Al-Awliya" does not bear any resemblance to the common format of writing at that time and the main theme of the book starts without any preliminary parts devoted to theism and praising the God Almighty. The book has been written in the form of questions that Al-Tirmidhi's disciples ask him in a meeting and he responds to them. Prior to Al-Tirmidhi, Muhasibi's "al-Ri'āya" and Kharraz's "Risala" had been written in the form of questions and answers (ibid, p. 69). After Al-Tirmidhi, Golshane Raaz (The Flower Garden of Secrets) was written in the same format, although it was a collection of poems.

Al-Tirmidhi's mood in "Sirat Al-Awliya" is critical, but except Yahya bin Maaz Al-Razi, he does not mention the name of those who he criticizes and even when he is asked their name, he does not reveal their names and we are unaware of their identity (ibid. p. 70).

The concept of guardianship in the thought system of Al-Tirmidhi got clearer to some extent in the investigation of "Bad'u Shaani Abu Abdullah". As it was mentioned, in describing his spiritual journey, Al-Tirmidhi defines a status for himself that if we do not consider it equal to the status of a prophet, it surely is next to him. He regards himself as the first person who was chosen to be among the forty guardians of God Almighty on earth; in such definition, the salvation of human beings is dependent on him and he is the one who completes guardianship (3/62). Of course, attaining such a status requires passage through some stages that have been described in Bad'u Shaani Abu Abdullah in the form of dreams. In addition, these issues have been discussed theoretically in "Sirat Al-Awliya".

According to Al-Tirmidhi, guardianship cannot be attained through gaining science (3/ 115). He refers to this type of science, which is abused by false guardians, as equivalent to two terms: analogy and delusion (ibid). It seems that he meant by "science" the Jurisprudence or Hadith and in this manner, makes a critique against traditional scholars (10/ 75). After this brief introduction, he begins the main discussion in the book.

Al-Tirmidhi believes that there are to levels for God Almighty's guardians: guardians of Haqullah (Allah's rights) and God Almighty's chosen guardian (3/118). The guardian of Haqullah is equivalent to an amateur mystic who has started his spiritual journey by repentance. This status is one of the seven levels in a spiritual journey that in another work (Manazil ul-Ibad), Al-Tirmidhi mentions them as "repentance, asceticism, fighting with the self, love, giving up whims, being overcome by awe, and being favored by God Almighty" (5/ 132). The reference to the guardian of Haqullah can represent Al-Tirmidhi's asceticism in the early stages of his spiritual journey (described in "Bad'u Shaani Abu Abdullah") and his later progress through a series of stages towards the highest stage, i.e., being God Almighty's chosen guardian.

According to Al-Tirmidhi, a spiritual journey starts from a person's awakening from forgetfulness and his repentance and goes through the preservation of body organs (tongue, ears, eyes, hands, legs, stomach, and sexual organs) and the efforts of a mystic to perform his duties and maintain the principles; this process continues until the mystic's self is overcome and his organs are tamed. By performing such acts, the real mystic intends to make light glow on his heart; in mystical ideology, such light causes the mystic to see facts that he would not be able to discover through shallow sciences. At this stage, all desires, including the ones for eating, drinking, and wearing as well as the desires of ears, eyes, hands, and legs are eliminated from the person's self. The self gets freed from such burdens and the doors to the universe of theism are opened to him. During all these stages, Al-Tirmidhi emphasizes insulation from people and believes that intercourses with other people are a plague for mystics (3/ pp. 115-122).

If "the guardian of Haqullah" passes successfully through all these stages, he would be transferred to a higher domain whose stages include, Qurb (nearness), Jabarut (invincibility), Sultan, Jalal (glory), Jamal (beauty), Heybat (awe), Rahmat (compassion), Baha' (value), Bahjat (happiness), and the Realm of Individuality. The last one of the stages is the status given to the head of guardians and not all of the guardians are able to attain that (9/ pp. 78-79). By reference to Prophet Muhammad's words "Those people who remind others of God Almighty", Al-Tirmidhi has recounted some signs for being a guardian of Haqullah. They include having dominance and intelligence, being connected to the source of inspirations, being supported by God Almighty in a manner that those who annoy them get punished severely, being praised by people and being a source of jealousy for the enemies, being Mustajab al-Daawa (people whose prayers are fulfilled), and showing wondrous acts such as walking on water, speaking with Prophet Khidr, and Tayy al-Ard (covering long distances in the twinkling of an eye. (Ibid, pp. 79-80). The status that Al-Tirmidhi assigns to the Guardian of Haqullah is similar to the status that has been assigned to Imams in Shiism. For this purpose, some scholars believe that the concept of "Genetic Guardianship" in Shiism has its origins in the works of Al-Tirmidhi (Ibid/ pp. 71-94).

After Al-Tirmidhi until the time of Ibn Arabi (born on 638 A.H.), no mystic dealt specifically with the concept of guardianship; of course, many of them including Sarraj Toosi (born in 387 A.H.), Abu Bakr Al-Kalabadhi

(born in 380 A.H.), Abu Talib Al-Makki (born in 386 A.H.), Al-Salmi (born in 412 A.H.), Al-Qushairi (born in 465 A.H.), and Najmuddin Kubra (born in 610 or 618 A.H.) dealt with the concept of guardianship in their works, but what makes Al-Tirmidhi's works distinct from them is that "discussing the concept of guardianship in Al-Tirmidhi's works was not only more systematic, but also it was placed in a much wider ideology, including a mixture of anthropology and cosmology. In that ideology, the human being and the common get together and form a unified construct. From this point of view, God Almighty cannot be known with regard to His nature, be His creatures could try to understand Him through His names and feature" (5/ 116).

Conclusion. Careful investigation of "Bad'u Shaani Abu Abdullah" reveals three distinct stages of Al-Tirmidhi's mystical journey. The first stage represents his complete abidance by the rules of Sharia. The second stage is characterized by his familiarity with Baghdad's asceticism and following their principles. In the third, Al-Tirmidhi reaches perfection characterized by giving up asceticism and being inclined towards love (that resulted in his trial). These three stages can be generalized to the overall mystical atmosphere in Khorasan in the 3rd century A.H. and later. Another significant point is the important status given to dreams in Al-Tirmidhi's mystical ideology as the instrument of making direct links with the hidden world. In addition, the Persian sentences placed within the Arabic sentences in the book are very important in the history of Persian literature. Al-Tirmidhi's other work "Sirat Al-Awliya" explained the author's mystical ideology in a principled and proper manner and points to the process of author's spiritual journey from its beginning to the end (i.e., getting to the status of Wilaya).

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND MYSTICAL TEACHINGS OF SHAMS TABRIZI

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Abstract. One of the significant topics in the school of Shams Tabrizi is the attention paid to the high status and importance of human beings in the creation. Such emphasis is in a way we can refer to Shams's school of mysticism as an anthropological one. He regards the human being as the goal of creation and more important than the whole existence. According to Shams, merely being a human being is of high value and privilege and because of his heart, the human being is the supreme universe whose perfection and salvation is in hands of truthfulness. Human being, and more importantly the perfect human being, is the mirror of all names and features of God. Such a high status can be achieved through having a pure self or training. In the relationship of human beings with their God, Shams puts emphasis on the mutual love. According to Shams, the goal of creation is for the human beings to be informed of their beginning and end. In the school of Shams, knowing the self is a prerequisite to know God. Thus, in his writings he attempts to make human beings familiar with the value of the existence. The mystic person in his view has not been isolated from the society and sees his own salvation related to the salvation of all the others. Shams emphasizes the importance of nature and aptitude in the upbringing of human beings and believes that prophets have