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The Origins and Development of the Office of the "Chief Sufi" in Egypt, 1173–1325

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Abstract

In 969/1173, Saladin endowed a *khānqāh* in Cairo for the use of foreign Sufis arriving in that city. This *khānqāh*, known as the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ, also included a stipendiary position for a "Chief Sufi" (*shaykh al-shuyūkh*), who would direct the day-to-day operations of the *khānqāh* and guide the Sufis who lived there. However, virtually nothing is known about the origins and development of this elite position. In this article I reconstruct the roster of individuals who held the office of Chief Sufi in Egypt between 969/1173 and 724/1325, when the office of Chief Sufi was moved to a new *khānqāh* outside Cairo. I trace the origins of the office in Seljuk Baghdad and its subsequent development in Syria and Egypt. These findings show that the Chief Sufi was almost always from the East, typically Iraq or Khurasan. He was nominally a Sufi, but was known primarily for being a jurist, having trained in Shāfiʿi jurisprudence and Ashʿari theology. Perhaps most interestingly, the position was ineluctably tied to the politics of the Ayyubid and Mamluk states. The position was thus often unstable and the object of fierce competition among other elites.

Résumé

En 969/1173 Saladin établi une *khānqāh* douée au Caire pour l'utilisation des soufis étrangers qui étaient arrivés dans la ville. Connu sous le nom de Saʿīd al- Suʿadāʾ cette *khānqāh* inclus une position rémunérée pour un « chef soufi » (*shaykh al-shuyūkh*) qui était chargé des opérations quotidiennes de *khānqāh* ainsi que guider les soufis qui y résidaient. Cependant, on ne sait presque rien à propos des origines et du développement de cette position élevée. Dans cet article je reconstruis la liste de personnes qui occupaient le position de chef soufi en Egypte entre 969/1173 et 724/1325 (lorsque le poste de chef soufi a été déplacée à une nouvelle *khānqāh* en dehors du Caire). Je trace l'origine de la position dans Bagdad au cours de la période seldjoukide et son évolution

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ultérieure en Syrie et en Egypte. Ces résultats montrent que le chef soufi était presque toujours de l'orient, généralement Irak ou Khorassan. Il était nominalement un soufi qui a été connu pour être un juriste qui été instruit en jurisprudence shafi'ite et théologie ash'arite. D'un grand intérêt est le fait que le poste a été inévitablement liée à la politique des etats ayyoubide et mamelouk. La position était donc souvent instable et l'objet d'une concurrence féroce entre les élites différentes.

Keywords

Ayyubids – Egypt – *khānqāh* – Mamluks – prosopography – Saladin – *shaykh al-shuyūkh* – Sufism – ulamology

In 969/1173, two years after the coup that ended Fatimid rule in Egypt, Saladin (d. 589/1193), the former vizier and now sultan, ordered that an old Fatimid palace known as the Sa'īd al-Su'adā' be repurposed into a Sufi *khānqāh*.[1] Saladin intended that his *khānqāh*, known as *al-khānqāh al-ṣalāḥiyya* or *khānqāh sa'īd al-su'adā'*, would function as a center of state-sponsored Sunni outreach, much like the several madrasas he had founded.[2] Thanks to a

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1 For a brief overview of this *khānqāh*, see Leonor Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: The Khanqah* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1988), 21–5; and 'Āṣim Rizq, *Khānqāwāt al-ṣūfiyya fī miṣr fī l-'aṣrayn al-ayyūbī wa-l-mamlūkī* (*Sufi Khānqāhs in Egypt during the Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*) (Cairo: Maktabat al-Madbūlī, 1997), 127–58. The medieval historians generally agree that this *khānqāh* was the first in Egypt. For example, see Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1968–72), 2:206; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iẓ wa-l-i'tibār fī dhikr l-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid, 6 vols. (London: al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002), 4:728; and al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ al-a'shā' fī ṣinā'at al-inshā'*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Rasūl Ibrāhīm, 14 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Khidyawiyya, 1913–20), 3:368–79. However, while it was the first structure to be known by the term *khānqāh*, it was not the first state-sponsored hospice for Sufis in Egypt. The Fatimid Caliphs—at least al-Ḥākim (r. 386–411/996–1021) and al-Āmir (r. 495–524/1101–30)—supported Sufis monetarily and the latter seems to have set aside a small structure for them in the Qarāfa Cemetery in Cairo. See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:570–1. I am currently preparing an article on the Sufis of Fatimid Egypt.

2 For all the different names of the *khānqāh* and its history through the pre-modern period, see 'Alī Bāshā Mubārak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-tawfiqiyya al-jadīda li-Miṣr al-Qāhira*, 20 vols. (Cairo: Būlāq, 1304–6/1886–9), 4:102–7. On these Ayyubid madrasas, see Gary Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt: Madrasas and Mudarrisūn, 495–647/1101–1249" (PhD diss., University of

generous *waqf* (endowment), the *khānqāh* provided room and board for foreign-born Sufis who had immigrated to Cairo. In exchange, the Sufis would publicly support and bless the nascent Ayyubid polity and its legitimacy in a variety of ceremonies. Beyond mandating food, shelter, and a place for immigrating Sufis to practice their devotions, the *waqfiyya* (endowment deed) outlined several stipendiary positions, the holders of which would help direct day-to-day operations at the *khānqāh*.[3] At the head of this organized activity, Saladin established a formal office known as the *shaykh al-shuyūkh*: the Chief Sufi. Much like the Chief Judge, this position would become one of the more prestigious and influential posts within the Ayyubid and early Mamluk polity, offering a large stipend and influence with the ruling elites. During the reigns of al-Malik al-ʿĀdil (r. 596–615/1200–18) and al-Malik al-Kāmil (r. 615–35/1218–38), for example, the Chief Sufis were intimate confidants of the sultans, important military leaders, and held teaching posts at several madrasas in Cairo. This situation would change during the early Mamluk period, when the Chief Sufi, while still influential, was no longer so closely allied with the sultans. Nevertheless, and not surprisingly given its stipend and prestige, the office of Chief Sufi was the object of often fierce contestation and competition throughout the Mamluk era.

This state of affairs continued until the third reign of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 693–4; 698–708; 709–41/1293–4; 1299–1309; 1310–41), who moved the office of the Chief Sufi to his new *khānqāh* outside Cairo at Siryāqūs.[4] In Jumāda II, 724 (May, 1325), al-Nāṣir convened a large celebration at his new

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Pennsylvania, 1976); and Ayman Shāhīn Salām, "al-Madāris al-islāmiyya fī Miṣr fī l-ʿaṣr al-ayyūbī wa-dawruhā fi nashr al-madhhab al-sunnī" ("Islamic Madrasas in Egypt during the Ayyubid Period and their Role in Spreading Sunnism") (PhD diss., University of Ṭanṭā, Egypt, 1999).

3 The original *waqfiyya* for the *khānqāh* is no longer extant. However, we do have the *waqfiyya* for Saladin's other *khānqāh*, the Nāṣiriyya in Jerusalem, founded in 585/1189. For this *waqfiyya*, see Kāmil Jamīl al-ʿAṣalī, *Wathāʾiq maqdisiyya taʾrīkhiyya* (Amman: Maṭbaʿ al-Tawfīq, 1983), 83–100. Daphna Ephrat discusses this *khānqāh* in her *Spiritual Wayfarers, Leaders in Piety: Sufis and the Dissemination of Islam in Medieval Palestine* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 112–14. A comparison of this *waqfiyya* and contemporary descriptions of the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ lead me to conclude that the *waqfiyya*s for both *khānqāh*s were basically the same in form and content.

4 On the Siryāqūs *khānqāh*, see al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4:767–70; John Williams, "The Khanqah of Siryāqūs: A Mamluk Royal Religious Foundation," in *In Quest of an Islamic Humanism: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Mohamed al-Nowaihi*, ed. A.H. Green (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1984), 109–22; and Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 29–32.

khānqāh in which he formally transferred the office of the Chief Sufi from the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ to the Nāṣiriyya at Siryāqūs.[5] Like Saladin before him, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad patronized the *khānqāh* and its Sufis as part of a broader political strategy to garner the backing of the ulama, whose support was crucial to his legitimacy.[6] Before the move to Siryāqūs, between the years 569/1173 and 724/1325, the Chief Sufi of the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ was one of the most important figures in Egyptian political and religious life. Indeed, the history and development of this office is intimately bound up with the political and educational history of Cairo, revealing a great deal about the strategies of rule and legitimation employed by the sultans. But where did the idea for such an office come from? Who served in the office? Perhaps more intriguingly, what kinds of Sufi would be willing to accept overt and public state sponsorship in exchange for their support for the ruling regime?

Recent years have seen a growing body of sophisticated scholarship investigating the nature and structure of the ulama class in Mamluk Egypt and Syria.[7] This is not surprising given the rich wealth of sources from this period that bear directly on the lives and careers of that class Carl Petry aptly termed the "civilian elite."[8] More specifically, the annalistic historiography (*taʾrīkh*) and biography (*ṭabaqāt* or *muʿjam*) of the period reveal a great deal about the

5 On the transfer of authority, see Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab*, ed. Mufīd Qamīḥa et al., 33 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2004), 33:181–2; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4:768–9; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abū Rās, *Shaykh al-shuyūkh bi-l-diyār al-miṣriyya fī l-dawlatayn al-ayyūbiyya wa-l-mamlūkiyya* (*The Chief Sufi in Egypt During the Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*) (Cairo: Maktabat ʿAlim al-Fikr, 1987), 63–70; and Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 29–30. There still continued to be an office at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ, known as the *shaykh al-ṣūfiyya*, but his jurisdiction was strictly limited to the *khānqāh* itself.

6 The relationship between the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultans and the ulama has been treated extensively. A still quite useful survey is Ira Lapidus, "Ayyubid Religious Policy and the Development of Schools of Law in Cairo," in *Colloque international sur l'histoire du Caire/al-Nadwa al-duwaliyya li-taʾrīkh al-Qāhira*, ed. André Raymond et al. (Cairo: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa, n.d.), 279–86. For a recent survey and reappraisal of the Mamluk period, see especially Yaacov Lev, "Symbiotic Relations: Ulama and the Mamluk Sultans," *Mamluk Studies Review* 13.1 (2009): 1–26. For a sense of Mamluk religious policies more generally, see Jonathan Berkey, "Mamluk Religious Policy," *Mamluk Studies Review* 13.2 (2009): 7–22.

7 Rather than list exhaustively the myriad work being done in this area, I refer readers to the excellent essays in Stephan Conermann, ed., *Ubi Sumus? Quo Vademus?: Mamluk Studies—State of the Art* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013). Of particular interest to readers of this journal will be Th. Emil Homerin's contribution to that volume, "Sufism in Mamluk Studies: A Review of Scholarship in the Field," in ibid., 187–210.

8 The civilian elite were not, of course, a monolithic socio-economic class. Petry argues persuasively that they were of "three broad occupational categories . . . bureaucrats, jurist-scholars,

origins, training, education, and careers of the ulama; they were, after all, the authors of most of this literature. The scholars typically mediated between the military rulers, primarily Kurds and Turks, and the local Egyptian populace; they arbitrated disputes at different levels of society; they infused Egypt with new ideas and learning thanks to their networks and travel; and they served in a variety of civil administrative positions. In short, the ulama made Cairo run. It is no wonder then that this elite class and the ulamology they produced has drawn much of the attention of contemporary scholarship.[9] However, to date, nobody has dealt with the Chief Sufi in Cairo in any substantive detail.[10] While references to the Chief Sufi appear often in modern histories of Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt and Syria, a more detailed and composite account of the early development and function of this office remains obscure. In particular, it has been difficult to say anything substantive about what the Ayyubid and Mamluk rulers expected of their Chief Sufis, how the latter discharged their duties, and the role the *khānqāh* played in medieval Egyptian Sufism because we know very little about who held that office. In this sense, I tend to agree with Stephen Humphreys' recent assessment of Mamluk studies more broadly:

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and religious functionaries" (Carl Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981], 312).

9 Many attribute the (variously spelled) neologism "ulamology" to Roy Mottahedeh, who famously wrote that "Ulemalogy is a noble science—at least we have to think so, because it is almost all the Islamic social history we will ever have for this period," in his review of Richard Bulliet's *The Patricians of Nishapur* in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 95 (1975): 495. Others have attributed the term to L. Carl Brown, see for example, Vincent Cornell, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sainthood* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 295 n. 4.

10 There are a few minor exceptions. Louis Massignon, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam*, trans. Herbert Mason, 4 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 2:153, offers a brief reconstruction of the history of the office of the Chief Sufi in Syria and Egypt from the sixth/twelfth century. However, Massignon's brief sketch is full of errors and should be replaced by the information that follows. The only other sustained attention to the topic are a few works in Arabic that leave much to be desired: Ḥāmid Zayyān Ghānim, *al-'Ulamā' bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa fī l-'aṣr al-ayyūbī: usrat shaykh al-shuyūkh* (*Scholars Between War and Politics in the Ayyubid Era: The Shaykh al-Shuyūkh Family*) (Cairo: Dār Nashr li-l-Thaqāfa, 1978); Rizq, *al-Khānqāwāt al-ṣūfiyya*, 139–41; and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Abū Rās, *Shaykh al-shuyūkh bi-l-diyār al-miṣriyya* (cited above). Leonor Fernandes devotes some attention to the office of the Chief Sufi in *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 47–54. However, her remarks are primarily drawn from later Mamluk sources, especially the *waqfiyya*s for the many late Mamluk *khānqāh*s. The state of affairs that obtained during that period was quite different from the Ayyubid and early Mamluk eras, as I hope to show here.

> For Mamluk institutions, in short, we have a vast jigsaw puzzle, where a few scattered sections have been assembled and thousands of pieces (though many are missing) are strewn on the worktable. The sort of work needed to put all this together is far from what the current Zeitgeist regards as cutting-edge, but until it is done any effort to pursue more innovative ways of decoding the Mamluk state will only be word games with (at most) a certain heuristic value.[11]

My aim in this article is to put some of the puzzle pieces related to the Chief Sufi and the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ *khānqāh* into place. More specifically, I offer a preliminary attempt to reconstruct the roster of those who held the office of Chief Sufi in Egypt before 724/1325. While it may not be, as Humphreys says, "cutting-edge," I do hope that it might spur and facilitate more theoretical work in the future on the *khānqāh* and the Sufis who lived there. After all, how much can we actually know or say about the Chief Sufi and his role in medieval Egyptian political, social, or religious life if we do not even know the identities of those who held the office and why they were chosen to do so?

In what follows I locate the historical antecedent of the office of the Chief Sufi in Seljuk Baghdad and trace its movement to and development in the West at the hands of the Zengid and Ayyubid rulers. I then reconstruct, as much as is possible, the list of all those who held the office between the founding of the *khānqāh* in 569/1173 and its transfer to Siryāqūs in 724/1325. This is thus an essentially prosopographical study of a single office in a specific time and place. I will not deal here with issues of the *khānqāh*'s function, the activities that took place therein, or the role of the *khānqāh* in popularizing Sufism in Egypt, all of which I deal with elsewhere. Nor will I discuss in any detail the motivations behind the sultans' patronage and sponsorship of the Sufis of the *khānqāh*, which, again, I treat elsewhere.[12] Rather, my task here is simply to put together a small portion of the larger puzzle of Ayyubid and Mamluk Sufism in hopes that it will be useful for others trying to capture a more complete picture of Sufism in medieval Egypt.

This prosopographical material yields some perhaps surprising results. In general we see a striking uniformity of those who held the office, which tells us a great deal about how the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultans envisioned its function. First, with one notable exception, none of the Chief Sufis were native to

11 R. Stephen Humphreys, "The Politics of the Mamluk Sultanate: A Review Essay," *Mamluk Studies Review* 9.1 (2005): 221–31, quotation on 225.

12 I am currently preparing a monograph on the popularization of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt, the first three chapters of which address these questions.

Egypt. Each of them came to Cairo from the East—typically Iraq or Persian-speaking areas. This fits well into the larger pattern of religious appointments in Ayyubid and early Mamluk Egypt in which most of the professors at madrasas, judges, and other religious functionaries originated from the East. Second, while nominally a Sufi, the Chief Sufi's legitimacy and reputation rested primarily on his training as a jurist, particularly in the Mamluk period. With only one notable exception, the Chief Sufis were all experts in Shāfiʿī jurisprudence and theologically partisan to the Ashʿari creed. This also correlates well with what we know of Ayyubid patronage of Shāfiʿi-Ashʿari scholarship in general, a policy that the early Mamluks would continue.[13] Thus, these Chief Sufis constitute examples of what Vincent Cornell has called "juridical Sufis."[14] That is, Sufis whose primary epistemological orientation was toward jurisprudence. Third, the Chief Sufi served at the pleasure of the ruling establishment. Contrary to Leonor Fernandes' assertion that the holder of this office operated independently of the sultan before the eighth/fourteenth century, the following data reveals that the sultan, or his vizier, was personally involved in picking and installing the Chief Sufi.[15] Particularly in the Ayyubid period the Chief Sufis were intimately involved in Ayyubid politics at the highest levels. Furthermore, the rulers could and often did remove the Chief Sufi from office whenever he posed a problem of some kind. As a result, the office became increasingly unstable and contested during the Mamluk period. This often had as much or more to do with internal Mamluk politics as it did with any individual Chief Sufi. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I want to suggest that it would be misleading to imagine the *khānqāh* in Cairo as simply a quiet place set aside by benevolent Muslim rulers for Sufi devotions. The history of the Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ reveals that the *khānqāh* was a highly politicized space in its own right. It was often the site of internal struggle, jealousy, and the *Realpolitik* of the sultans and their viziers whose grasp on power depended on shifting alliances and the at least tacit support of the ulama.

13 See, for example, Lapidus, "Ayyubid Religious Policy"; and Yaacov Lev, *Saladin in Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 131–2. However, while the early Baḥri Mamluks patronized the Shāfiʿis, the Burji Mamluks tended to appoint Ḥanafis to their *khānqāh*s; Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 48; and Howayda al-Harithy, "The Patronage of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, 1310–1341," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 4 (2000): 219–44, esp. 233.

14 Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*, 67.

15 Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 23.

The Origins of the Chief Sufi

The earliest attestation of a *title* similar to that of "Chief Sufi," as opposed to the *office*, occurs in the *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya* of al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021). Here al-Sulamī describes Muḥammad b. Khafīf al-Shīrāzī (d. 371/981) as *shaykh al-mashāyikh fī waqtihi*—the master *shaykh* of his age.[16] A generation later, in the *Risāla* of al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072), Ibn Khafīf has become "*shaykh al-shuyūkh wa-wāḥid waqtihi*" (the master *shaykh* and the peerless one of his age).[17] In later biographical dictionaries, Ibn Khafīf is usually described as both *shaykh al-shuyūkh* and *shaykh iqlīm fārs*—the *shaykh* of the region of Fars in southwest Iran—or sometimes as *shaykh al-shīrāzīyīn* (the *shaykh* of the Shirazis).[18] The various nomenclature—*shaykh al-mashāyikh, shaykh al-shuyūkh, shaykh iqlīm fārs, shaykh al-shīrāzīyīn*—undoubtedly indicates the high esteem Ibn Khafīf enjoyed among the Sufis of the East. But he was not, in the sense that developed in an organizational context, a "professional Sufi;" that is, he was not a Sufi on the payroll of the state in exchange for his services as a *shaykh*. While this may be the earliest attestation of the title, it was not yet attached to an office.[19] One must look elsewhere for the beginning of a group of professional Sufis.

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16 Al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shurayba (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānijī, 1997), 462–4. On Ibn Khafīf see Florian Sobieroj, *Ibn Ḫafīf Aš-Šīrāzī und seine Schrift zur Novizenerziehung* (*Kitāb al-Iqtiṣād*)*: Biographiche Studien, Edition und Übersetzung* (Beirut: In Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998). For a more succinct overview of the sources and secondary literature on Ibn Khafīf, see Ahmet Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 56–8, especially n. 2.

17 Al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla al-qushayrīyya*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd (Damascus: Dār al-Khayr, 2003), 119–20.

18 For example, those biographers who give Ibn Khafīf some kind of title: Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmurī, 53 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī), 26:506–10; idem, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʿūṭ and Akram al-Būshī, 25 vols. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1984), 16:342; al-Yāfiʿī, *Mirʾāt al-janān wa-ʿibrat al-yaqẓān*, 4 vols. (Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-Niẓāmiyya, 1337/1918), 2:397; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya al-kubrā*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī and ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥulw, 10 vols. (Cairo: ʿIsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1964–76), 3:149–63; and Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī khabar man dhahab*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Arnāʾūṭ and Maḥmūd al-Arnāʾūṭ, 10 vols. (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1989), 4:386–8. Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Rāzī (father of the famous Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī) calls him *shaykh al-shīrāzīyīn* in his book *Ghāyat al-murām fī ʿilm al-kalām*; quoted by al-Subkī in idem, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya al-kubrā*, 3:159.

19 There clearly remains much work to do on the early history of this title and its transformation into an office.

The first attestation of a formal office tied to the title *shaykh al-shuyūkh* was arguably with the establishment of the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh in Baghdad. However, the origins and function of the office of the Chief Sufi in Baghdad are hazy at best. Louis Massignon argued that the office was inaugurated in 437/1045 by Ibn al-Muslima (d. 450/1058), the vizier to the Abbasid Caliph al-Qā'im (r. 422–67/1031–75) who helped Ṭughril Beg (d. 455/1063) institute the Seljuk regime in Baghdad.[20] Ibn al-Muslima's interest in garnering the support of the Sufis may have been part of a larger attempt to legitimize Seljuk authority by linking the sultans to well known Sufi figures.[21] Massignon, for his part, argued that the office of Chief Sufi was meant to act as the official liaison between the state and the local Sufi population.[22] More recently, Erik Ohlander has called Massignon's account into question, given the highly spotty nature of the sources and Massingon's tendency to conflate disparate pieces of the historical record.[23] Indeed, this becomes quite clear when we turn to the first Chief Sufi in Baghdad. Massignon argued that this was Abū l-Barakāt Ismā'īl b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī (d. 441/1049). This is almost certainly a mistake. Massignon seems to have based his reconstruction on the *Mir'āt al-zamān* of Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, who records an obituary for al-Nīsābūrī in the year 441/1049.[24] However, this obituary relies on Ibn 'Asākir's history of Damascus, which itself

20 Louis Massignon, "Cadis et naqībs baghdadiens," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 51 (1948): 106–15; the account of the "*mashyakhat al-shuyūkh al-ṣūfiyya*" is on 114. On the biography of Abū l-Qāsim Ibn al-Muslima, also known as the *ra'īs al-ru'asā'*, see Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī ta'rīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā' and Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā', 18 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1992), 16:41–3; Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-zamān fī ta'rīkh al-a'yān*, 2 vols. (Hyderabad: Dā'rat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1951–2), 8:403–4; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-ta'rīkh*, ed. Abū l-Fidā 'Abd Allāh al-Qāḍī, 11 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1987), scattered references between 8:271 (when he became the vizier) and 8:344 (where Ibn al-Athīr describes his gruesome death at the hands of the Fatimid-sympathizer al-Basāsīrī); and Claude Cahen, "Ibn al-Muslima," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1954–2004; hereafter *EI*2).

21 On this issue more broadly, see Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Islam: Negotiating Ideology and Religious Inquiry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

22 Massingon, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj*, 2:152. A number of other scholars have described the office in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt in this way. While it may have been *intended* to function as a liaison, as will be seen below, at least in Egypt, it did not work this way.

23 Erik S. Ohlander, *Sufism in an Age of Transition: 'Umar al-Suhrawardī and the Rise of the Islamic Mystical Brotherhoods* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 107–8.

24 Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-zamān fī ta'rīkh al-a'yān*, ed. Janān Jalīl Muḥammad al-Hamūndī (Baghdad: al-Dār al-Waṭaniyya, 1990), 403.

refers to a notice in al-Samʿānī, who records that Ismāʿīl al-Nīsābūrī was born in 465/1073 and died in 541/1146.[25] It seems, then, that Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī mistakenly recorded this obituary for 541 among those for 441. This slip of the pen is confirmed by al-Dhahabī and al-Ṣafadī, who both place al-Nīsābūrī's death in 541, citing the same obituary from Ibn ʿAsākir.[26] Neither is there any evidence to support Massignon's assertion that Ibn al-Muslima instituted the office in 437/1045. This is the year Ibn al-Muslima became vizier, and Massignon may have merely assumed that it was also the year he instituted the office of the Chief Sufi.

It is much more likely that the first Chief Sufi in Baghdad was Abū Saʿd Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī (d. 477 or 479/1084–7).[27] Abū Saʿd was an émigré to Baghdad, a student of the famous Abū Saʿīd Ibn Abī l-Khayr (d. 440/1049), and the person who actually built the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh. I would tentatively submit that Abū Saʿd al-Nīsābūrī came to Baghdad to build his *ribāṭ*, and that he appealed to the vizier Ibn al-Muslima for the funds in exchange for functioning as the "Chief Sufi" of the Sufis of Baghdad.[28] This acceptance of overt state sponsorship must be the reason behind the fact that many of the biographies of Abū Saʿd contain detailed accounts about his motivation to build the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh in Baghdad. Ibn al-Jawzī, for example, contends that before he came to Baghdad Abū Saʿd used to take his Sufi disciples on roaming trips to visit various Arab tribes because the hajj routes had been cut off. On one of these trips, he met a Sufi master who lived in a very small *ribāṭ*. This

25 Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. al-ʿAmrawī, 40 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 8:361–2.

26 Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 37:56–7; and al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* ed. Aḥmad al-Arnāʾūṭ and Tazkī Muṣṭafā, 29 vols. (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ l-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2000), 9:52–3.

27 On Abū l-Saʿd al-Nīsābūrī, see Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 16:235; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 8:450; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dhahabī, *al-ʿIbar fī khabar man ghabar*, ed. Muḥammad Zaghlūl, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1985), 2:340–1; idem, *Siyar*, 18:491–2; and Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī, 21 vols. (Cairo: Dār Hajar, 1997), 16:91. Most of the sources are in agreement that Abū Saʿd died in 479, however both Ibn al-Jawzī and Ibn Kathīr place his death in 477.

28 Massignon, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj*, 2:147–8, records that Ibn al-Muslima funded the *ribāṭ*. However, on 152, Massignon writes that the *waqf* was derived from the ʿAmīd al-ʿIrāq, Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. ʿAlī (d. 450/1058). This ambiguity is due to the medieval sources, which are quite unclear about who, exactly, funded the building and endowment for the *ribāṭ*. For instance, Ibn al-Athīr in *al-Kāmil*, 8:344 [i.e. the year 450 AH], writes that "as for ʿAmīd al-ʿIrāq, he was killed by al-Basāsīrī. He was a brave man and known for his chivalry (*futuwwa*), he is the one who built the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh." Al-Dhahabī mentions the same thing in *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 30:36.

shaykh told Abū Saʿd: "If you ever build a *ribāṭ* for the Sufis, give it a door through which a camel with its rider could fit through."[29] And, of course, years later the same master came and saw that the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh did indeed have a very large door through which a man atop a camel was able to pass through. Al-Dhahabī records another version. While traveling through Nahawand on a trip to visit Niẓām al-Mulk, Abū Saʿd attempted to spend the night at the *khānqāh* of Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Nahawandī. But the disciples of al-Nahawandī whom he met at the door told him, "if you were actually one of the Sufis [you would know] that this is not the time one enters the *khānqāh*. And if you are not one of [the Sufis], then this place is not for you."[30] Abū Saʿd was forced to spend the night outside the door in the cold and the next day swore to himself that "if God allows me to build a *khānqāh*, I will refuse the people of Jabāl entry and it will be a lodging place for foreigners (*ghurabāʾ*) from Khurāsān."[31] These stories strike me as primarily etiological in nature; they attempt to explain why a Sufi of high repute from the East would accept support from the state and function as Chief Sufi in order to build his *ribāṭ* in Baghdad.

At any rate, the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh enjoyed a favorable reputation. The medieval chronicles describe it as an educational site that was, along with the Niẓāmiyya madrasa, a major center of study and instruction in Ashʿari theology.[32] The Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh appears to have been the first time that a state-endowed and supported Sufi hospice was connected to a formal title, "Chief Sufi," a title that was transferrable once the holder of office died. In fact, the office was hereditary and, after the death of Abū Saʿd, it went to his son, Abū l-Barakāt Ismāʿīl (d. 541/1146), the person Massignon mistakenly thought to be the first Chief Sufi.[33] After Ismāʿil died, the office passed to his son, Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, (d. 580/1184).[34] Ṣadr al-Dīn was what I would call a "Sufi-statesman," and represents an important link to the office of the

29 Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 16:235.

30 Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 32:259.

31 Ibid.

32 Massignon describes it thus: "the *ribāṭ* and the Nizāmiyya *madrasa* provided shelter both for monastic life and Ashʿarite theology" (idem, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj*, 2:153).

33 Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 18:50; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 8:361–2; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 9:344–5; Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:188; Abū Shāma, *ʿUyūn al-rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-dawlatayn al-nūriyya wa-l-ṣalāḥiyya*, ed. Ibrāhīm Zaybaq, 5 vols. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1997), 2:178; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 37:56–7; and al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī*, 9:52–3.

34 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 10:129–30; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 40:397–8; Abū l-Fidāʾ, *Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, ed. Muḥammad Zaynhum ʿAzab and Yaḥyā Sayyid Ḥusayn,

Chief Sufi as it developed in the West. Ibn al-Athīr says he "combined leadership in both religion and state" (*jamaʿa bayn riʾāsat al-dīn wa-l-dunyā*), and Abū Shāma mentions him repeatedly in his role as a representative of the Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 575–622/1180–1225), who sent Ṣadr al-Dīn on a number of diplomatic missions to Saladin.[35] Thus it is quite clear that in the wake of the Seljuk bureaucratization of Baghdad, the office of the Chief Sufi developed into a combination of learned scholar and political functionary. While the office probably did not begin as highly institutionalized as Massignon described it, by the time of Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm it was much more so. Indeed, once the formal contours of the office had been established, it was a simple matter to recreate versions of the office in other major cities. This is precisely what Nūr al-Dīn Zengī (d. 569/1174) did in Damascus.

In 563 or 564 (1167–9), Nūr al-Dīn appointed a Khurāsāni Sufi, ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar b. Ḥamuwayh al-Juwaynī (d. 577/1181), to be the first Chief Sufi in Syria.[36] ʿImad al-Dīn was from a well known family of Sufis; his grandfather was Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Juwaynī (d. 530/1135), a student of the famous Imām al-Ḥaramayn, Abū al-Maʿālī al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085), the Ashʿari theologian, Shāfiʿi jurist, and teacher of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111).[37] Abū ʿAbd Allāh was known for his miracles and had a large number of disciples (*murīdīn*) in Khurāsān and Iraq.[38] ʿImad al-Dīn's father, Najm al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī

4 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1998–9), 3:88; Ohlander treats the whole family of Shaykh al-Shuyūkh in more detail in idem, *Sufism in an Age of Transition*, 107–12.

35 Abū Shāma, *al-Rawḍatayn*, 2:178, 3:51–3, 3:60, 3:65–6, 3:69, 3:124, 3:196, 3:198–9, 3:209.

36 Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:272, 308; Abū Shāma, *al-Rawḍatayn*, 2:264; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 40:242–3; al-Yāfiʿī, *Mirʾāt al-janān*, 3:408; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:438; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn, 16 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1992), 6:90–1; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt*, 6:426; Gottschalk, "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ (Banū Ḥamawiya)," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 53 (1956): 57–87, 60; Ghānim, *al-ʿUlamāʾ bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa*, 9–11; and Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VII^e/XIII^e siècle: vie et structures religieuses dans une métropole islamique* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1991), 214–15.

37 On Abū l-Maʿālī al-Juwaynī, see Tilman Nagel, *Die Festung des Glaubens: Triumph und Scheitern des islamischen Rationalismus im 11. Jahrhundert* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1988), and Muhammad Saflo, *al-Juwaynī's Thought and Methodology, with a Translation and Commentary on Lumaʿ al-Adilla* (Berlin: Schwarz, 2000).

38 Al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila li-wafayāt al-naqala*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf, 4 vols. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1984), 3:16. On Abū ʿAbd Allāh see also al-Samʿānī, *Kitāb al-ansāb*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Yamāni, 12 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyya, 1980–1984), 4:230–1, and al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 3:96, where he says that Abū ʿAbd Allāh and his brother were kings who renounced the world to become mendicants. Gottschalk argues this is merely a literary trope, "Die Aulād Šaykh al-Šhuyūḫ," 59.

(d. 539/1144), was also a Sufi who had traveled to Ṭūs to study with al-Ghazālī personally.[39] The family's connection to al-Ghazālī and the Imām al-Ḥaramayn seems to have been an important factor in Nūr al-Dīn's choice of ʿImad al-Dīn for his Chief Sufi. Indeed, an Ashʿari/Shāfiʿi/Ghazāli background would become the *sine qua non* for the office of the Chief Sufi under the Ayyubids and early Mamluks. Najm al-Dīn ʿAlī had two sons, each of whom begat a Sufi lineage, one that remained in the East and one that came West to Syria and Egypt.[40] The latter came West sometime around 564/1169 when ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar became the Chief Sufi in Syria. While Abū Shāma records this investiture in 564, al-Nuʿaymī contends that it was in 563 that Nūr al-Dīn charged ʿImad al-Dīn with "the *ribāṭs, zāwiya*s and endowments in Damascus, Ḥimṣ, Ḥamā, and Aleppo."[41] Either way, the office seems to have been located at the Sumaysāṭī *khānqāh* in Damascus and functioned much the same way it did in Baghdad at the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh.[42] Indeed, the office of the Chief Sufi

39 Al-Samʿānī, *al-Taḥbīr fī l-muʿjam al-kabīr*, ed. Munīra Nājī Sālim, 2 vols. (Baghdad: Riʾāsat Diwān al-Awqāf, 1975), 1:581–2; al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila*, 3:16; and al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 36:511–12.

40 On the eastern lineage, which is also well known and nominally associated with the Kubrawiyya, see Hermann Landolt, "Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥammūʾī (or al-Ḥamūʾī or al-Ḥamawī), Muḥammad b. al-Muʾayyad . . . b. Ḥam(m)ūy(a) (or Ḥamuwayh or Ḥamawiyya) al-Ḏjuwaynī," in *EI2*; and Jamal Elias, "The Sufi Lords of Bahrabad: Saʿd al-Dīn and Sadr al-Dīn Hamuwayī," *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994): 53–75. There is clearly confusion about the correct vocalization of the family name and *nisba*; Gottschalk vocalizes the family name as "Ḥamawiya," Leiser and some printed Arabic sources vocalize it "Ḥammūya," and still others as "Ḥammawīh." The best source of information on the family and the best argument for the correct vocalization of the family name and *nisba* is Elias, "The Sufi Lords of Bahrabad," who vocalizes the family name "Ḥamuwayh," and the subsequent *nisba*, "Ḥamuwayī," based on manuscript evidence.

41 Al-Nuʿaymī, *al-Dāris fī taʾrīkh al-madāris*, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1990), 2:120. Abū Shāma, quoting al-ʿImād al-Kātib, records "[In 564, Nūr al-Dīn] commanded me to write a decree (*manshūr*) giving [ʿImād al-Dīn] charge of the Sufis (*mashyakhat al-ṣūfiyya*) and [Nūr al-Dīn's] desire that he live in Damascus on [Nūr al-Dīn's] beneficence. One of the things he gave him was a turban with gold stripes that Saladin had sent from Egypt" (*al-Rawḍatayn*, 2:264–5). Earlier in his narrative, Abu Shāma tells us that ʿImād al-Dīn did not actually want the turban and had sent it off to Hamadhān, ibid., 1:36. Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, also citing al-ʿImād al-Kātib, says this happened (including the gift of the gold turban) in 563 (*Mirʾāt al-zamān* [Hyderabad], 8:272). On the gift of the turban, see also Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 27:117.

42 Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 40:243. The *khānqāh* was founded in the early fifth/eleventh century by Abū l-Qāsim ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Sumaysāṭī (d. 453/1061). The building was originally the palace of the Umayyad governor of Egypt ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān (d. 86/705), which then passed through a number of hands before al-Sumaysāṭī bought it

in Damascus was hereditary and would stay in ʿImād al-Dīn's family for another three generations. ʿImād al-Dīn had two sons, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 617/1220) and Tāj al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh (d. 642/1244), both of whom became Chief Sufis, the former in Cairo and the latter in Damascus.[43]

The Chief Sufi in Ayyubid Egypt

It is difficult to determine precisely how the office of the Chief Sufi developed in Cairo for two reasons. First, we do not possess the *waqfiyya* for the *khānqāh* in Cairo, nor do we possess any early document of investiture (*taqlīd*) that would aid in reconstructing the history of the office.[44] Alas, we will have to do without them. Second, contemporary Ayyubid and Mamluk sources show almost no interest in the institutional history of the office of the Chief Sufi as such. With few exceptions it is the nature of this historiography—whether it be annalistic history, geography, or biography—that the individual trumps the institutional.[45] As Gary Leiser has shown with the history of the Ayyubid *mudarrisūn*, it is difficult to reconstruct the history and evolution of any particular office for this period precisely because the sources are interested only in individuals of note, not in the organizational settings in which they worked.[46]

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and turned it into a hospice for Sufis; see al-Nuʿaymī, *al-Dāris*, 2:118–26, and Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 12:363.

43 For biographical and bibliographical information on Tāj al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh see Gottschalk, "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ," 63–4. Tāj al-Dīn became the Chief Sufi of Greater Syria (like his father) after Ṣadr al-Dīn ca. 600/1203. For a history of the Chief Sufi in Damascus, albeit brief and somewhat spotty, see al-Nuʿaymī's treatment of the Sumaysāṭī *khānqāh* in *al-Dāris*, 2:118–26; and Louis Pouzet, *Damas au VII^e/XIII^e siècle*, 213–16, along with his sketch of the family tree on 448.

44 The only *taqlīd* for the Chief Sufi from this period is that for Shams al-Dīn al-Aykī, on whom see below. For the text of the *taqlīd*, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa-l-ʿuṣūr fī sīrat al-malik al-manṣūr*, ed. Murād Kāmil (Cairo: al-Jumhūriyya al-ʿArabiyya al-Muttaḥida, 1961), 232–5. The *taqlīd* is discussed by Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 51–2.

45 The few exceptions are, for example, al-Nuʿaymī's study of madrasas in *al-Dāris*, in which he often lists the individuals appointed to teach at a particular madrasa; al-Maqrīzī's *al-Khiṭaṭ*, in which he occasionally lists persons associated with a certain madrasa, *khānqāh*, *ribāṭ*, etc., and apropos this case, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, who discusses the *khānqāh* and offers a list of some of the more famous Chief Sufis. Nevertheless, his list is incomplete and anachronistic; see idem, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara fī taʾrīkh miṣr wa-l-qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 2 vols. (Cairo: ʿĪsā l-Bābī l-Ḥalabī, 1967), 2:260–1.

46 Gary Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt."

What the historians and biographers were interested in were men and women of note, those who contributed in some way to the Muslim *umma*.[47] However, not surprisingly and fortunately for us, most of the men who were given charge of the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ were noteworthy enough to appear in the historical and biographical record, and we can reconstruct a fairly large portion of this history, albeit with a great deal of speculation and digging around through different sources.

The first Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ was without a doubt ʿImad al-Dīn Ibn Ḥamuwayh's son, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 617/1220).[48] Ṣadr al-Dīn was born in 543/1148 into the aforementioned Ḥamuwayh family of Sufis and jurists.[49] Ṣadr al-Dīn spent his childhood in Juwayn and Nishapur, where he

47 Scholarship on the criteria of inclusion in biographical compilations includes, but is not limited to, H.A.R. Gibb, "Islamic Biographical Literature," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 54–8; Donald Little, *Introduction to Mamluk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāʾūn* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1970), 112; George Makdisi, "*Ṭabaqāt*-Biography: Law and Orthodoxy in Classical Islam," *Islamic Studies* 32 (1993): 371–96; Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 186; Chase Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 66; Wadad al-Qadi, "Biographical Dictionaries as the Scholars' Alternative History of the Muslim Community," in *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopaedic Activities in the pre-Eighteenth Century Islamic World*, ed. Gerhard Endress and Abdou Filali-Ansary (Leiden: Brill, 2006): 23–75; Stephan Conerman, "Tankiz ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusāmī al-Nāṣirī (d. 740/1340) as Seen by His Contemporary al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363)," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 12 (2008): 1–24, esp. 21; and Kevin Jacques, "The Contestation and Resolution of Inter- and Intra-School Conflicts Through Biography," in *Diversity and Pluralism in Islam: Historical and Contemporary Discourses amongst Muslims*, ed. Zulfiqar Hirji (London and New York: I.B. Taurus Publishers and the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2010): 107–33.

48 The most important medieval biographical and historical sources for Ṣadr al-Dīn are Ibn Nuqṭa, *Takmilat al-ikmāl*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qaqqūm ʿAbd Rabb al-Nabī and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Murād, 6 vols. (Mecca: Markaz Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1987), 2:20; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 10:425; al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila*, 3:15–16; Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, ed. ʿIzzat al-ʿAṭṭār al-Ḥusaynī (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1974), 125; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb fī akhbār banī ayyūb*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn Shayyāl et al., 5 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Jāmiʿ Fuʾād al-Awwal, 1953–77), 4:91; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 29:69–70; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 16:638 and 17:101; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya*, 8:96–7; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 3:97; and idem, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Yaʿlāwī, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 6:420–2. An overview of Ṣadr al-Dīn's biography and career can be found in Hans Gottschalk, "Awlād al-Shaykh (Banū Ḥamawiya)," in *EI2*, and in idem, "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ."

49 Al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila*, 3:16; and al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 3:96–7.

studied Shāfiʿi *fiqh* and Ashʿari theology. At some point, he moved to Hamadhān where, according to al-Maqrīzī, he had both a madrasa and a *khānqāh*.[50] Around 577/1181, Ṣadr al-Dīn traveled to Damascus to visit his father, perhaps because he had heard he was ill. His father died shortly thereafter and Saladin asked Ṣadr al-Dīn to remain in Damascus as the Chief Sufi in his father's place.[51] Once he became Chief Sufi, Ṣadr al-Dīn did not return to Hamadhān. It seems, furthermore, that originally the office of Chief Sufi covered both Syria and Egypt, for nearly all the historians recount that both ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar and his son Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad were *shaykh al-shuyūkh bi-miṣr wa-shām*, although this is by no means certain.[52]

After taking up his new post in Damascus, Ṣadr al-Dīn married twice, both times to the daughters of influential Shāfiʿi jurists. For the purposes of this overview, the most consequential marriage was in 575/1179 when he married the daughter of the Shāfiʿi Chief Judge in Damascus, Ibn Abī ʿAṣrūn (d. 585/1189).[53] Now it just so happens that this daughter (who remains nameless in the sources) was also the wet-nurse of the future Ayyubid sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil (r. 615–35/1218–38). The four sons she had with Ṣadr al-Dīn thus grew up with and were like brothers to al-Kāmil.[54] Ṣadr al-Dīn was therefore extraordinarily well-positioned within the Zengid/Ayyubid political world and, in addition, had impeccable scholarly credentials. He had studied Shāfiʿi *fiqh* with some of the most prominent scholars of Nishapur, Hamadhān, and Syria; his father was a personal friend of Nūr al-Dīn; his two wives were both daughters of very important jurists; and his second wife was the wet-nurse of the future sultan.

In 587/1191, Ṣadr al-Dīn moved to Cairo with his sons to execute his duties as the Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ. However, this poses an obvious and vexing problem. If Saladin had endowed the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ *khānqāh* in 569/1173, and the Chief Sufi was in Damascus until 1191, who ran the *khānqāh* in Egypt during this nearly twenty year period? And what finally brought Ṣadr al-Dīn to Cairo? It seems to me that the most likely scenario is that while Ṣadr al-Dīn was Chief

50 Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 6:420. Al-Mundhirī does not say that Ṣadr al-Dīn had a madrasa or *khānqāh* in Hamadhān, but he does say that Ṣadr al-Dīn "heard [Hadith] from his father the Chief Sufi in Hamadhān" (idem, *al-Takmila* 3:16). It may thus have been the father who founded the madrasa and *khānqāh* before coming to Damascus.

51 Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 125; and al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 6:420.

52 The earliest such reference is in Ibn Nuqṭa's *Takmila*, 2:20, in which he calls Ṣadr al-Dīn *shaykh al-shuyūkh li-l-ṣūfiyya bi-miṣr wa-shām*.

53 ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Abī ʿAṣrūn: the references are extensive, see the list compiled by ʿUmar Tadmurī in his edition of al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 41:217–20.

54 Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:438.

Sufi in Damascus Saladin appointed the notorious Sufi and Shāfiʿi-Ashʿari agitator Najm al-Dīn al-Khabūshānī (d. 587/1191) as the *nāẓir* (controller) of the *khānqāh* to oversee the daily operations from its founding in 569/1173.[55] Al-Khabūshānī was instrumental in Saladin's project to institute a Sunni regime in Cairo, and it was for him that Saladin built and endowed the Shāfiʿiyya madrasa at al-Shāfiʿī's tomb in the Qarāfa Cemetery in 572/1176–7.[56] When al-Khabūshānī died in 587/1191, there was stiff competition to obtain his teaching post at the madrasa. Ṣadr al-Dīn probably came to Cairo at that point to obtain the position, which he did thanks to his friendship with al-Malik al-ʿĀdil.[57] At the end of 588/1192, al-ʿĀdil gave Ṣadr al-Dīn a number of stipendiary positions, including teaching posts at both the madrasa and the Shrine of al-Ḥusayn and oversight (*al-naẓr*) of the *khānqāh*, in addition to the post of Chief Sufi.[58] However, Ṣadr al-Dīn's stay in Cairo was temporary, for when Saladin died in 589/1193, Ṣadr al-Dīn lost his positions and returned to Damascus for a time.[59] But in 596/1200, his friend al-ʿĀdil, having become the

55 On al-Khabūshānī, see the detailed discussions in Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 233–49, and Yaacov Lev, "Piety and Political Activism in Twelfth Century Egypt," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006): 289–324, esp. 302–9.

56 See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4:631–2, and Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 225–33.

57 Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:414–15; Abū Shāma, *al-Rawḍatayn*, 4:294; and Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 16:638.

58 Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 125. The Shrine of Ḥusyan (*al-mashhad al-ḥusaynī*) was built in 549/1154 after the head of al-Ḥusayn was brought to Egypt in 548/1153 from its previous home in Ashkelon (where it was housed in a shrine built by the Fatimid vizier al-Afḍal [d. 514/1121], the son of the famous Fatimid military vizier Badr al-Jamālī [d. 487/1094]); see especially al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 2:405–11, and Sayyid's detailed notes therein. It was brought to Egypt out of fear that the Crusaders would destroy the shrine in Ashkelon; see Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid, *al-Dawlat al-fāṭimiyya fī Miṣr: tafsīr jadīd* (*The Fatimid State in Egypt: A New Interpretation*) (Cairo: al-Dār al-Miṣriyya al-Lubnāniyya, 1992), 624. Saladin created a teaching position at the shrine, which led Lapidus to argue that the shrine became a madrasa ("Ayyubid Religious Policy," 283) but Leiser demonstrated that he merely appointed a teacher, with a stipend, to teach at the shrine (idem, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 259–62).

59 Abū Shāma, *al-Rawḍatayn*, 4:457. The sources are somewhat confused on this topic, but it seems that after Saladin died in 589/1193 there was a major shake-up in *manṣib*s throughout the Ayyubid realm. Part of this shakeup resulted in Ṣadr al-Dīn being dismissed from his positions until al-ʿĀdil took complete control of the Ayyubid state in 596/1200. For the shakeup see Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), 87–123; see also Leiser "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 249.

sultan of Egypt and Syria, reinstated Ṣadr al-Dīn to all his posts in Egypt, which he then held until his death. Thus, we can say that in the earliest stage, the office of Chief Sufi and that of the controller (*nāẓir*) of the *khānqāh* were held by Ṣadr al-Dīn and al-Khabūshānī, respectively. After 588/1192, Ṣadr al-Dīn held both positions.

It should be clear how and why Ṣadr al-Dīn was chosen to be the Chief Sufi. What seems to have qualified him first and foremost was his family's reputation and position within the Zengid and Ayyubid polities. Had it not been for his father's close relationship with Nūr al-Dīn, it is doubtful that Ṣadr al-Dīn would have had the opportunity to marry into an elite Ayyubid family. He also had impeccable scholarly credentials, an Ashʿari/Shāfiʿi/Ghazāli lineage, and he was from the East. These latter two points seem to be the two most important qualifications Saladin and his successors looked for in making appointments to important religious positions. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), Ibn Abī l-Uṣaybiʿa (d. 669/1270), and Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 804/1401) all mention Ṣadr al-Dīn's name in connection with the *khirqa*—the Sufi garment of investiture. Ibn al-ʿArabī traces the *khirqa* through Ṣadr al-Dīn to the mysterious and prototypical Sufi Khiḍr.[60] Ibn al-Mulaqqin, who took the *khirqa* from a number of Sufi masters, traces one of his lines through Ṣadr al-Dīn and then to al-Junayd (d. 298/910) and al-Sarī al-Saqaṭī (d. 253/867).[61] These two different lines (Khiḍr and Junayd) are combined by Ibn Abī l-Uṣaybiʿa, who records the text that Ṣadr al-Dīn wrote when he passed the *khirqa* to Ibn Abī l-Uṣaybiʿa's uncle Rashīd al-Dīn ʿAlī (d. 616/1219).[62] The text, purported to be in Ṣadr al-Dīn's own hand, says that the *khirqa* was passed to his family through two sources: one through Khiḍr and one through a more mundane transmission stretching back to al-Junayd and eventually to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and the prophet Muḥammad.[63] Ṣadr al-Dīn was thus an ideal candi-

60 Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, 9 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1999), 1:284 (also ed. ʿUthmān Yaḥyā and Ibrāhīm Madkūr, 14 vols. [Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya li-l-Kitāb, 1984], 3:186). On Khiḍr as the archetypical saint and Sufi master see Denis Gril, "La Voie," in *Les voies d'Allah: les ordres mystiques dans l'islam des origines à aujourd'hui*, ed. G. Veinstein and A. Popovic (Paris: Fayard, 1996), and now especially H. Talat Halman, *Where the Two Seas Meet: al-Khidr and Moses—The Qur'anic Story of al-Khidr and Moses in Sufi Commentaries as a Model for Spiritual Guidance* (Louisville, Ky.: Fons Vitae, 2013).

61 Ibn al-Mulaqqin, *Ṭabaqāt al-awliyāʾ*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shurayba (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānijī, 1973), 430–1.

62 Ibn Abī l-Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ*, ed. Nizār Riḍā (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, 1965), 740–1.

63 Ibn Abī l-Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ*, 740–1. Trimingham provides a genealogical chart of the *silsila* of this particular line, arguing that this is the first recorded *silsila* that includes ʿAlī

date for Saladin and his successor al-ʿĀdil to appoint to run the *khānqāh*. He was both a qualified Shāfiʿi jurist, sympathetic to the Ayyubid polity, and a well known Sufi. Furthermore, like the Chief Sufi in Baghdad, Ṣadr al-Dīn was also something of a statesman who served in various diplomatic roles for the Ayyubids. In fact, he died in 617/1220 of dysentery in Mosul on an official mission to seek military assistance from the caliph in Baghdad.[64]

After the death of Ṣadr al-Dīn, the office of Chief Sufi passed to his sons, known as the Awlād al-Shaykh (the sons of the *shaykh al-shuyūkh*).[65] These are the four sons of Ṣadr al-Dīn's marriage to the daughter of Ibn Abī ʿAṣrūn and the "milk brothers" of the Ayyubid sultan al-Kāmil.[66] The sons are, in birth order: Fakhr al-Dīn Yūsuf, ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar, Kamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad, and Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan. They all held important positions in the governments of al-ʿĀdil and al-Kāmil, but of the four, Fakhr al-Dīn Yūsuf (d. 647/1249) was by far the most influential and politically active. It was probably for this reason that he did not hold any religious posts and I will not treat him here.[67] The majority of the sources agree that the three other sons all held the position of Chief Sufi, among many other *manṣib*s, although the order in which they held office is not entirely clear.

It is almost certain that ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar (d. 636/1239) inherited his father's positions when he died.[68] ʿImād al-Dīn took over teaching Shāfiʿi jurisprudence at the Ṣalāḥiyya madrasa, oversight of the al-Ḥusayn shrine, and

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(J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* [New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 (1971)], 261–3).

64 Al-Nuwayrī records an alternate version of Ṣadr al-Dīn's death in which he plotted to kill an Ayyubid prince and was then put to death himself; Nuwayrī gives the story no credit (idem, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 29:69).

65 Among the other sources cited above on the family, see also the short monograph by Ḥāmid Zayyān Ghānim, *al-ʿUlamāʾ bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa*, noted in n. 10 above.

66 On the special relationship of the Awlād al-Shaykh and al-Mālik al-Kāmil because of their mother, see al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl*, 2:215, and Ibn Wāṣil's *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, 5:170.

67 Gottschalk recounts Fakhr al-Dīn's exploits in detail (including all of the relevant bibliographical details) in "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ," 64–78; see also Ghānim, *al-ʿUlamāʾ bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa*, 46–88.

68 ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar b. al-Shaykh: Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:721–4; al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila*, 3:506–7; Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 167–8; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, 5:198–202; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islam*, 46:299–301; idem, *Siyar*, 23:97–9; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya* 8:342; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya,* 17:244; idem, *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Kathīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥafīẓ Manṣūr (Beirut: Dār al-Madār al-Islāmī, 2004), 765; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ* 3:97; Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 253–5; Gottschalk, "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ (Banū Ḥamawiya)," 78–82; and Ghānim, *al-ʿUlamāʾ bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa*, 21–30.

became the Chief Sufi of the *khānqāh*. As a youth he had studied Shāfiʿi *fiqh* with a number of important scholars in Damascus and Cairo and was known to be a partisan of the Ashʿari creed.[69] Because of his relationship with al-Malik al-Kāmil, ʿImād al-Dīn was also an influential political player. The clearest example of his influence is the events surrounding the death of al-Kāmil. When the latter died in 635/1238, a group of princes and soldiers gathered to assure a smooth transition of rule. With ʿImād al-Dīn at their head, they chose al-ʿĀdil II (r. 635–7/1238–40) to reign as sultan in Cairo and, at the behest of ʿImād al-Dīn, they chose a minor Ayyubid prince, al-Jawād Yūnus, for the sultanate of Damascus. This would have disastrous consequences for ʿImād al-Dīn, as al-ʿĀdil II quickly grew tired of al-Jawād's antics and dispatched ʿImād al-Dīn to Damascus to remove him from power. In 636/1239, ʿImād al-Dīn traveled to Damascus where al-Jawād received him with insincere delight while secretly plotting to have him killed. On the morning he was supposed to meet with al-Jawād, ʿImād al-Dīn emerged from his residence when two men appeared from the shadows and stabbed him to death.[70] He was buried the next day at the *zāwiya* of his cousin, Saʿd al-Dīn Ḥamuwayh, at a large funeral attended by "most of the jurists, Sufis, and men of religion" of Damascus.[71]

The two remaining Awlād al-Shaykh, Kamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad (d. 640/1242) and Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan (d. 643/1246), held the office of Chief Sufi after the death of their older brother.[72] It is not clear how or whether they shared their responsibilities. Of the two, we know that Kamāl al-Dīn studied *fiqh* and Hadith with scholars in Egypt, Syria, and Baghdad. Al-Mundhirī pointedly says that

69 Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 168.

70 Humphreys records this disastrous affair in detail in *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 239–50.

71 Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, 5:201. On the burial at the *zāwiya*, see Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:723.

72 Kamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad b. al-Shaykh: Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:739; al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila*, 3:598; Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 172; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 46:427; idem, *Siyar*, 23:99; al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī*, 8:49–50; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ* 3:98; Gottschalk, "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ," 82–3; Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 196–7; and Ghānim, *al-ʿUlamāʾ bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa*, 31–5. Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan b. al-Shaykh: Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān* (Hyderabad), 8:755–6; Abū Shāmā, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 177; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, 5:439; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 29: 203–4; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 47:159–60; idem, *al-ʿIbar*, 3:245; idem, *Siyar*, 23:100; al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī*, 12:153–4; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:277, 279, 286–7; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ* 3:98; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm*, 6:352–3; Gottschalk, "Die Aulad Šaiḫ Aš-Šuyūḫ," 84–7; Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 197–8; and Ghānim, *al-ʿUlamāʾ bayna l-ḥarb wa-l-siyāsa*, 36–45.

Kamāl al-Dīn was in charge of teaching Shāfiʿi jurisprudence at the Nāṣiriyya and Ṣalāḥiyya madrasas in addition to being Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ until he died.[73] Since Kamāl al-Dīn died in 640/1242, and most of the sources insist that Muʿīn al-Dīn was one of the three brothers who inherited the positions of his father, I would suggest that Kamāl al-Dīn held the positions before his brother. However, because Kamāl al-Dīn and Muʿīn al-Dīn held so many religious and political posts they could not possibly have actually fulfilled all of them. They must have had deputies who discharged their duties on their behalf. For example, in addition to his many other posts, Kamāl al-Dīn was the head of the Ṣāliḥiyya regiment and was deeply "involved in the affairs of state."[74] Likewise, Muʿīn al-Dīn was the vizier to the future sultan, al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb (r. 637–47/1240–9), as well as the vice-regent of Damascus at the end of his life. These positions alone should have taken up most of their time. Indeed, Kamāl al-Dīn died in Gaza on the way to battle, and Muʿīn al-Dīn died in Damascus while serving as vice-regent.

The Awlād al-Shaykh are revealing about the office of Chief Sufi in a number of ways. First, it is clear that the Ayyubid sultans treated this position as a hereditary prerogative, just as it was in Baghdad with the family of Saʿd al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī. Second, they were appointed by the sultan himself. Third, while the sons of Ṣadr al-Dīn appear to have been trained as jurists, they were primarily political and military figures and, as such, must have used deputies in their various posts. In this sense, their *manṣib*s in Cairo seem primarily to have been a means of generating income. Only Fakhr al-Dīn Yūsuf was not attached to any religious office, despite being trained as an *ʿālim*. As al-Yūnīnī records, "in the beginning Fakhr al-Dīn wore the turban [of the scholars] but then al-Mālik al-Kāmil required him to don the *sharbūsh* [of the politicians] and the uniform of the army."[75] The three other brothers wore both hats simultaneously, although perhaps not very well, since some questioned their legitimacy as scholars. Al-Yūnīnī records a few poems composed about the family that are worth mentioning in this respect, the first concerning ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar:[76]

> al-Shāfiʿī came to me in a dream
> crying in agony and calling out:
> "By my life, my shrine was built up. But
> they destroyed my *madhhab* with the *fiqh* of al-ʿImād!"

73 Al-Mundhirī, *al-Takmila*, 3:598.

74 This last quotation is from al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 46:427.

75 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān*, 2:215.

76 Ibid., 2:216.

And this one about all four of the brothers:

The sons of the Chief Sufi said
"Our nicknames are impossible!
There is no *fakhr* in us, nor
ʿimād, nor *muʿīn*, nor *kamāl*!"

Al-Yūnīnī, for his part, denies that these poems are accurate and insists that the family deserve their reputations and that their scholarship is solid. Nevertheless, the implication that there was some sentiment among scholars in Egypt and Syria that the Awlād al-Shaykh were not actually scholars, but rather politicians, must have been widespread. After all, how could the head of the Ṣāliḥiyya regiment teach lessons at the madrasa every day *and* run the daily *ḥuḍūr* sessions stipulated by the *waqfiyya* for the *khānqāh*? Finally, in this connection it is worth mentioning that none of the Awlād were known to have been Sufis, despite being given the post of Chief Sufi.

The Chief Sufi in Early Mamluk Egypt

Not long after the death of Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan, the remaining Ayyubid dynasts struggled with their mamluk soldiers for control of Egypt and greater Syria, with the soldiers emerging victorious around 648/1250.[77] It is here that we lose the thread of the Chief Sufi for a brief time. The only clue we have as to the identity of the Chief Sufi during this period is a reference in al-Yūnīnī's *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān*, in which he notes in his description of the Awlād al-Shaykh that their posts "remained in their possession until all of them had died. [Their positions] then passed to the sons of ʿImād al-Dīn and Kamāl al-Dīn for a time. Then [the positions] were taken away from them."[78] As for the identity of these sons of the Awlād, or how longed they served, we have no idea. The last of the Awlād, Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan, died in 643/1246. The years between the death of al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ in 647/1249 and the emergence of a stable polity in 658/1260 under Baybars' command were marked by chaos and instability, and they may have retained their positions through this period. At any rate it is not until the reign of Baybars that we can pick part of the thread back up.

77 See the very useful summaries in Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate, 1250–1382* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 1–36, and Amalia Levanoni, "The Mamluks Ascent to Power in Egypt," *Studia Islamica* 72 (1990): 121–44.

78 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān*, 2:216.

This brings us to the Shāfiʿi Chief Judge, Tāj al-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz (d. 665/1267). Tāj al-Dīn is perhaps most well known for his involvement in Baybars' decision to create four Chief Judgeships in Cairo, one for each of the four Sunni *madhhab*s.[79] The political disarray of this time is evident in Tāj al-Dīn's career, in which he was constantly losing his positions, regaining them, and losing them again as various Mamluks jockeyed for power.[80] At the high point of his career, and owing to the patronage of Baybars, Tāj al-Dīn possessed a staggering number of *manṣib*s, including Chief Judge, the professorship at the Ṣāliḥiyya-Najmiyya madrasa, overseer of the treasury and chanceries, and was even vizier for a time. In Jumāda II, 660/April, 1262, Baybars issued a decree giving Tāj al-Dīn "general oversight over all forms of charitable endowments, the al-Ḥusayn shrine, the madrasa at al-Shāfiʿī's shrine, the *khānqāh*, and the shrines at the Sharīf gate and in all Egypt."[81] Now, it is quite clear that Tāj al-Dīn was not the Chief Sufi because the title is never attributed to him.[82] Rather, he was the *nāẓir* (controller) of the *khānqāh*, a position that was sometimes held by the Chief Sufi, sometimes not, as we saw with al-Khabūshānī. Tāj al-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz oversaw the *khānqāh*'s finances and drew the stipend associated with the position, but he was not the Chief Sufi. It is very possible that the position remained vacant during this time. This uncertainty dissipates with the Ḥanbali Chief Judge in Egypt, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Maqdisī (d. 676/1277).[83]

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79 Joseph Escowitz, "The Establishment of Four Chief Judgeships in the Mamlūk Empire," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 102 (1982): 529–31; idem, *The Office of Qāḍī al-Quḍāt in Cairo under the Baḥrī Mamlūks* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1984), 20–8; Jorgen Nielsen, "Sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars and the Appointment of Four Chief Qāḍīs, 663/1265," *Studia Islamica*, 60 (1984): 167–76; Sherman Jackson, "The Primacy of Domestic Politics: Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz and the Establishment of Four Chief Judgeships in Mamlūk Egypt," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115 (1995): 52–65; and Yossef Rapoport, "Legal Diversity in the Age of Taqlīd: The Four Chief Qāḍīs under the Mamluks," *Islamic Law and Society* (2003): 210–28.

80 al-Nuwayrī has a detailed and concise account of Tāj al-Dīn's professional fortunes and misfortunes, in his *Nihāyat al-arab*, 30:91–4.

81 Ibid., 30:93.

82 I have found no reference to any individual who might have been Chief Sufi during this period. The one exception is al-Isnawī, who claims that Tāj al-Dīn held, in addition to these other positions, that of *mashyakhat al-shuyūkh* (al-Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Isnawī*, ed. Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥūt, 2 vols. [Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1987], 1:77). However, I have found no other evidence to support this claim and al-Isnawī may have been confusing the positions of Tāj al-Dīn with those of his son, Taqī l-Dīn, who did become Chief Sufi later.

83 Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Ibrāhīm al-Maqdisī: al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mirʾāt al-zamān*, 3:279–80; al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī ʿalā kitāb al-rawḍatayn*, ed. ʿUmar Tadmurī, 4 vols. (Beirut

Born in 603/1206 in Damascus, al-Maqdisī began his studies there before moving to Baghdad, where he apparently studied with Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234), among many others.[84] In Baghdad he married, settled down, and had children. Al-Maqrīzī adds that he eventually moved on to continue his studies in Mecca, Ḥarrān, Aleppo, and Mosul until he became known as the best Ḥanbali jurist of his generation.[85] Al-Maqdisī finally settled in Cairo in order to lead the Ḥanbalites there, a move al-Dhahabī claims happened at the beginning of 640/1242.[86] This move paid off, as he eventually became the first Chief Ḥanbali Judge under Baybars' new judicial system as well as the Chief Sufi at the *khānqāh*. The evidence is inconclusive, but if we assume that Baybars appointed Shams al-Dīn to the *khānqāh* at the same time he made him the Chief Ḥanbali Judge, this would have been in 663/1265; but it could have been earlier. Al-Maqdisī continued in his posts as Chief Judge and Chief Sufi until 670/1272, when he was accused of embezzling deposits that should have gone to the families of deceased men.[87] He denied any wrongdoing, but when Baybars sent men to search his house they found the money stashed away and al-Maqdisī was sentenced to two years in prison. After his release he spent the remainder of his days under house arrest, although he was allowed to teach Ḥanbali jurisprudence at the Ṣāliḥiyya madrasa and to convene teaching sessions in his home.[88]

Why did Baybars choose Shams al-Dīn al-Maqdisī for the office of the Chief Sufi? The sources agree about his piety, asceticism, and upright behavior as a

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and Ṣaydā: al-Maktaba al-ʿĀṣriyya, 2006), 1:393; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 50:240–1; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:537–8; Ibn Rajab, *al-Dhayl ʿalā ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 1952), 2:294–5; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 5:103–7; al-ʿAsqalānī, *Rafʿ al-iṣr ʿan quḍāt miṣr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānijī, 1998), 341–2; and Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfī wa-l-mustawfī baʿd al-wāfī*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn et al., 12 vols. (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li-l-Kitāb, 1984–2006), 9:222–3.

84 Ibn Rajab, *al-Dhayl*; this is confirmed by al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 5:104.

85 Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 5:104.

86 Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 50:240.

87 Al-Dhahabī describes the incident in detail in *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 49:63–4. See also ibid., 64 n. 2, where Tadmurī lists the other sources that describe the scandal, as well as Joseph Escovitz, *The Office of Qâḍî al-Quḍât*, 43–4.

88 Al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb built the Ṣāliḥiyya madrasa in 640/1242 in Cairo; it was the first madrasa designed to accommodate all four legal *madhhabs*. Lessons in all four *madhhab*s began in 641/1243–4. See al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4:485–90, and Leiser, "The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt," 352–61.

judge; he supposedly refused to take a stipend (*jāmakiyya*) for his work as a judge. He was from the East, as were all the others, but he was not a Shāfiʿi. Furthermore, as a Ḥanbali he was certainly not an Ashʿari. Given the precedent, he would thus seem an odd choice for Chief Sufi. However, Shams al-Dīn was well regarded as a Sufi. In particular, he was known as a transmitter of information about ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166). Importantly, the Egyptian Sufi ʿAlī al-Shaṭṭanūfī (d. 713/1313), in his large compendium on all things al-Jīlānī, cites much of his material on the authority of Shams al-Dīn al-Maqdisī, whom he met in Cairo in 665/1266–7.[89] This connection to the nascent Qādiriyya makes sense as the movement was popular among Ḥanbalis in general, and al-Maqdisī had lived in Baghdad, the epicenter of Qādiri outreach. Al-Maqdisī was, furthermore, known for his *tarbiya*. Al-Maqrīzi records a boast attributed to al-Maqdisī: "I could place 100 novices in 100 houses and train (*urabbī*) each one of them differently from the other."[90] Al-Dhahabī noted that "he knows the language of the Sufis and is able to discourse about their method, as far as I have heard."[91] Al-Maqdisī thus seems to be a generally excellent choice for Baybars' Chief Sufi. Unlike the Awlād al-Shaykh, al-Maqdisī was actually a Sufi!

After the death of Shams al-Dīn al-Maqdisī in 1277, the office of Chief Sufi passed to Ḥasan al-Rūmī/al-Bukhārī (d. 684/1285). Unfortunately, while medieval sources mention al-Rūmī frequently, I have found no detailed biographical information on him whatsoever.[92] We can only say that there are three different traditions about his name. Al-Dhahabī, al-Fayyūmī, Ibn Kathīr and al-ʿAynī all call him "Ḥasan al-Rūmī," while al-Maqrīzī and al-Suyūṭī call him "Ḥasan al-Bukhārī." Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir calls him Ṣāyin al-Daḥsh al-Bukhārī.[93] The only other information I have been able to find about him is an anecdote in al-Udfuwī's *al-Ṭāliʿ al-saʿīd* in which al-Rūmī attempted to mediate an encounter between one of the rank-and-file Sufis in the *khānqāh* and ʿAlam al-Dīn

89 ʿAlī al-Ṣhaṭṭanūfī, *Bahjat al-asrār wa-maʿdan al-anwār fī baʿḍ manāqib al-quṭb al-rabbānī Muḥyī l-Dīn Abī Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī*, ed. Aḥmad Farīd al-Mazyadī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002), 24, is the first of many citations throughout the text.

90 Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 5:106.

91 Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 50:241.

92 Al-Ḥasan al-Rūmī/al-Bukhārī: al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī*, 2:78; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 51:181; Aḥmad al-Fayyūmī, *Nathr al-jumān fī tarājīm al-aʿyān*, MS Chester Beatty Library (Dublin), Arab 4113, q.v. 684 AH; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:599; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk* 2:190; Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān fī taʾrīkh ahl al-zamān: ʿaṣr salāṭīn al-mamālīk*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, 5 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmiyya, 2010), 2:344; and al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn*, 2:260.

93 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām*, 232.

Sanjār al-Shujāʿī (d. 693/1293–4), a mamluk of the sultan Qalāwūn.[94] While the incident reveals nothing in particular about al-Rūmī, it does illuminate something of the role the Chief Sufi played as a middle man between the Sufis of the *khānqāh* and the military elites who supported them. The elites expected to have access to the Sufis whom they funded, and the Chief Sufi was expected to produce them upon request.

After the death of the mysterious Ḥasan al-Rūmī, we know for certain that Shams al-Dīn al-Aykī (d. 697/1298) was the next Chief Sufi.[95] Al-Aykī was a Shāfiʿi jurist from Rayy who taught in madrasas in Rayy, Qom, Qāshān, and Isfahan before obtaining a post at the Niẓāmiyya in Baghdad. After travelling a great deal, and filling more teaching appointments, including in Konya, al-Aykī moved to Damascus to teach at the Ghazāliyya madrasa and direct the Sumaysāṭī *khānqāh*.[96] He came to Cairo in 684/1285. His arrival in Cairo coincided with the death of the previous Chief Sufi, al-Ḥasan al-Rūmī, and thanks to a burgeoning friendship with the aforementioned al-Shujāʿī, he found himself the new Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadā'. A copy of al-Aykī's *taqlīd* (diploma of investiture) appointing him as Chief Sufi is preserved in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir's history, which spells out in rather vague language some of his duties as the Chief Sufi.[97] Al-Aykī was certainly a Sufi, as will become clear below, but he probably owed his position as Chief Sufi to his friendship with al-Shujāʿī, who was influential with the sultan. Al-Aykī perhaps recognized the impermanence of this position, for he retained his posts in Damascus thanks to a coterie of

94 Al-Udfuwī, *al-Ṭāliʿ al-saʿīd al-jāmiʿ asmā' nujabā' al-ṣaʿīd*, ed. Saʿd Muḥammad Ḥasan (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li-l-Kitāb, 2001), 457–8.

95 Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Bakr al-Aykī: al-Jazarī, *Ta'rīkh ḥawādith al-zamān wa-anbā'ihi wa-wafayāt al-akābir wa-l-aʿyān min abnā'ihi*, ed. ʿUmar Tadmurī, 3 vols. (Beirut and Ṣaydā: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya, 1998), 1:403–4; al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl Mir'āt al-zamān*, ed. Li Guo (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 2:18–20; al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī*, 2:552; al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh al-islām*, 52:339–40; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr wa-aʿwān al-naṣr*, ed. ʿAlī Abū Zayd et al., 6 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1998), 4:351–3; al-Yāfiʿī, *Mir'āt al-janān*, 4:229; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8:114 (al-Subkī does not actually have a biography for al-Aykī here, only his name, but the editors reproduce his biography from al-Subkī's *Ṭabaqāt al-wusṭā*); al-Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:81; *al-Bidāya*, 17:706; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-nabīh fī ayyām Manṣur wa-banīh*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn and Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿĀshūr, 3 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub, 1976), 1:209; Ibn al-Furāṭ, *Ta'rīkh Ibn al-Furāt*, ed. Qusṭanṭīn Zurayq, 3 vols. (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Amīrkāniyya, 1939), 8:123–5; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk* 2:190; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm Khān, 5 vols. (Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniyya, 1978–80), 2:246; and al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān*, 3:377.

96 al-Jazarī, *Ta'rīkh ḥawādith al-zamān*, 1:403.

97 See Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām*, 232–5. The *taqlīd* is also discussed by Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 51–2.

deputies. As for his reputation as a Sufi, al-Dhahabī says of his Sufism that "his reputation exceeded his reality."[98] But al-Dhahabī may have been sour on this subject because al-Aykī was dismissive of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal.

Al-Aykī would not last long as Chief Sufi. In 687/1288, enmity erupted between al-Aykī and the Chief Shāfiʿi Judge, Taqī l-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz (695/1295), the son of the above-mentioned Tāj al-Dīn, and who also happened to be the vizier of Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (r. 678-89/1279–90). According to Ibn al-Furāt, the problem stemmed from a perceived slight when al-Aykī did not stand to greet Taqī l-Dīn properly upon his arrival at the *khānqāh* after the latter had become vizier.[99] This public confrontation created an opportunity for one of the Sufis of the *khānqāh* who disliked al-Aykī to level charges against him, although Ibn al-Furāt does not specify what these were. However, it seems clear from other sources that the accusations were related to al-Aykī's purported embrace of monism, evidenced by his fondness for the poetry of Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235) and his friendship with ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī (d. 690/1291).[100] The disagreement ultimately led to al-Aykī's resignation from the *khānqāh* in 689/1290 and his subsequent return to Damascus. There he resumed his teaching duties at the Ghazāliyya and the Sumaysāṭī *khānqāh*.

After al-Aykī's resignation, his antagonist Taqī l-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz added the Chief Sufi to his already impressive list of posts.[101] Taqī l-Dīn became Chief Shāfiʿi Judge in 685/1286,[102] and then served Qalāwūn briefly as vizier in

98 Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 52:340.

99 Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʾrīkh*, 8:123–5. Ibn al-Furāt records the very valuable information that "it was customary that if a scholar became a vizier, a rug would be spread out for him at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ *khānqāh* and he would be Chief Sufi there in partnership with the [actual] Chief Sufi."

100 Al-ʿAynī, for example, treats this incident as entirely related to the accusation that al-Aykī embraced incarnationism (*al-ḥulūl*), which Taqī l-Dīn disapproved of. There is no mention of the public insult we see in Ibn al-Furāt's telling (al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān*, 3:179–80). See also the valuable analysis of Th. Emil Homerin in *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and His Shrine* (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2001), 39–44, who focuses on the events as they impinge on the legacy of Ibn al-Fāriḍ.

101 Taqī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. Khalaf b. Badr al-ʿAllāmī: Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-fikra fī taʾrīkh al-hijra*, ed. D.S. Richards (Beirut: Dār al-Nashr "al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī" Barlīn, 1998), 312; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 32:189; al-Jazarī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān*, 1:322–3; al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī*, 2:441–2; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 52:261–2; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8:172–4; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:607, 614, 635–6, 664, 684, 690; al-ʿAsqalānī, *Rafʿ al-iṣr*, 222–4; and Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfī*, 7:188–91.

102 Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 31:102; Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʾrīkh*, 8:39.

687/1288,[103] a job that seems to have included the oversight (*al-naẓr*) of the *khānqāh*.[104] Because of his family's reputation and connections, Taqī l-Dīn was an influential figure who held at least seventeen positions at the height of his career. These included vizier, Chief Judge, Chief Sufi, *khaṭīb* of al-Azhar, professor of law at the Sharīfiyya and Ṣalāḥiyya madrasas, as well as the Shrine of al-Ḥusayn, overseer of charitable endowments, and administrator of the state treasury.[105] With such an illustrious career, he was bound to make enemies. Indeed, in 690/1290 he incurred the wrath of Ibn Salʿūs (d. 693/1293), the vizier of al-Malik al-Ashraf (r. 689–93/1290–3). The vizier stripped Taqī l-Dīn of all his positions, confiscated much of his money and property, and convinced the sultan to replace Taqī l-Dīn at the *khānqāh* with his friend, Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamāʿa (d. 733/1332).[106] While at first Taqī l-Dīn lost all his positions, with the help of some high-powered associates he was allowed to keep his position teaching Shāfiʿi *fiqh* at the madrasa next to al-Shāfiʿī's tomb. The reasons for Ibn Salʿūs's actions are not clear, although Mathieu Eychenne argues that it was most likely a political maneuver rooted in an attempt to consolidate his power as a newly minted vizier.[107] After the assassination of al-Malik al-Ashraf and the death of Ibn Salʿūs in 693/1293, Taqī l-Dīn regained his positions with the help of those loyal to him; he kept them until his death two years later.[108]

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103 Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 31:102.

104 Al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān*, 3:179.

105 Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8:173; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:636.

106 Al-Jazarī, *Ḥawādith al-zamān*, 1:57; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 31:138–40; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:635; Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʾrīkh*, 8:123–5; and al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk*, 2:227–9. Th. Emil Homerin also treats this episode in *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint*, 42–4.

107 Mathieu Eychenne, *Liens personnels, clientélisme et réseaux de pouvoir dans le sultanat mamelouk* (*milieu XIII^e–fin XIV^e siècle*) (Beirut: Presses de l'IFPO, 2013), 359–70. Al-Nuwayrī claims that in addition to a personal vendetta, the vizier reminded al-Ashraf that Taqī l-Dīn had favored al-Ashraf's brother, al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ ʿAlī (d. 687/1288), over him after the death of their father Qalāwūn, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 31:138. Al-ʿAsqalānī enumerates a list of trumped up charges Ibn Salʿūs used to get Taqī l-Dīn dismissed, including "adultery, sodomy (*al-liwāṭ*), wine-drinking, and cavorting with Christians" (al-ʿAsqalānī, *Raf^ʿ al-iṣr*, 223). Ibn al-Furāt, for his part, argues that the whole thing was because Shams al-Dīn al-Aykī requested Taqī l-Dīn's dismissal because of the enmity between them enumerated above (Ibn al-Furāt, *Taʾrīkh*, 8:123–5). Al-Maqrīzī's account includes the absurd charge that Ibn Salʿūs accused Taqī l-Dīn of being a crypto-Christian (al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk*, 2:228–9).

108 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 17:664. Al-Subkī records an interesting anecdote about Taqī l-Dīn's return to power. After losing his positions, Taqī l-Dīn performed the pilgrimage and while in Muḥammad's house in Medina sought the prophet's intercession (*istaghātha bi-l-nabī*), swearing "that he would not return to his homeland until he was returned to his positions

Why was Taqī al-Dīn chosen to run the Saʿīd al-Suʿadā'? The sources never describe him as a Sufi, he does not seem to have studied with any Sufis, and he was known primarily for his expertise in Shāfiʿi *fiqh* and his political connections.[109] He most likely nominated himself for the position as he appears to have collected *manṣib*s like box tops. As someone who already held many of the best paying jobs in the Mamluk polity and educational apparatus, and who suddenly found an opportunity for an open position with a lucrative stipend, he may have simply convinced the sultan to give the position to himself. Indeed, as we have seen, being a jurist and a politician with no training as a Sufi did not necessarily disqualify one from the position, as is clear from the case of the Awlād al-Shaykh.

After Taqī l-Dīn's brief tenure, the next Chief Sufi was most likely Karīm al-Dīn al-Āmulī (d. 710/1311).[110] Not much is known about his background or training, other than that he was a Shāfiʿi jurist and a student of the Sufi Saʿd al-Dīn b. Ḥamuwayh. Al-Dhahabī does add that he was known for entering into subjects of deep speculation.[111] Al-Āmulī probably took over the *khānqāh* in 695/1295, when Taqī al-Dīn died, although this is not made explicit in the sources. Ibn Kathīr says that "he had connections with the *amīr*s" (Mamluk princes), which is probably how he procured the position of Chief Sufi.[112] Whether he held any other positions in Egypt is also unknown. The only other biographical information concerning his background I have been able to find is that some people found his speech quite difficult to understand, most likely because Persian was his first language and he was not adept at speaking Arabic extemporaneously.[113] Thus, like all the other Chief Sufis except for Shams

(*manāṣibihi*)." Sure enough before he returned to Cairo, Taqī l-Dīn learned the news that the sultan had been killed along with his vizier (al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8:174).

109 His primary connection to the Sufis seems to me to be that his father, Tāj al-Dīn (d. 665/1267), was the first cousin of the famous Sufi Ṣafī l-Dīn b. Abī l-Manṣūr (d. 682/1283); Denis Gril (ed. and trans.), *La risāla de Ṣafī al-Dīn ibn Abī l-Manṣūr ibn Ẓāfir: biographies des maîtres spirituels connus par un cheikh égyptien du V^iie^/X^iiie^ siècle* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1986), 6.

110 Karīm al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Ḥusayn al-Āmulī: al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl taʾrīkh al-islām*, ed. Māzin Sālim Bā Wazīr (Riyadh: Dār al-Mughnī l-il-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ, 1998), 122; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 3:133–4; idem, *al-Wāfī*, 19:53–4; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:108; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina fī aʿyān al-miʾa al-thāmina*, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1993), 2:397; al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān*, 5:221; and Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfī*, 7:325–6.

111 al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl taʾrīkh al-islām*, 122.

112 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:108.

113 Karīm al-Dīn went to see another *shaykh* and spoke to him at length but the shaykh said nothing: "So when [Karīm al-Dīn] left, the *shaykh* said to those present, 'Did any of you

al-Dīn al-Maqdisī, al-Āmulī was a Shāfiʿi jurist. And like all the others but Taqī l-Dīn, he was from the East.

Karīm al-Dīn's career as the Chief Sufi was quite eventful. According to some accounts, the Sufis of the *khānqāh* accused al-Āmulī of sixteen kinds of depravity (*fisq*), although these are not specified in the sources. These accusations were almost certainly a pretext for the Sufis' actual complaint, which was that al-Āmulī had eliminated the paid witnesses (*al-shuhūd*) employed at the *khānqāh*.[114] The Sufis refused to accept these cutbacks and they complained to the authorities and demanded his removal from office in 708/1308 or 1309. This led to his temporary removal from office, at which point the Chief Judge Badr al-Dīn b. Jamāʿa (d. 733/1332) replaced him.[115] But when al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad returned to Cairo as the sultan for the third and final time in 709/1310, he removed Badr al-Dīn from the position and reinstated Karīm al-Dīn al-Āmulī, who remained in office until his death in 710/1311.[116] But there is another fascinating aspect to these events worth mentioning. Al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr both seem to delight in the accusations of depravity leveled against al-Āmulī. Ibn Kathīr goes so far as to claim that al-Āmulī "was treated in the same fashion in which he used to treat others, especially the way he treated Ibn Taymiyya and the slanderous lies he told about him from his own ignorance and miniscule piety. So God rewarded him justly at the hands of his companions and friends."[117] What was al-Āmulī's connection to Ibn Taymiyya and what does it have to do with the *khānqāh*?

The answer is that al-Āmulī had teamed up with the Shādhili Sufi Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 709/1309) in 707/1307 to lead a protest of 500 Sufis against Ibn Taymiyya. They protested Ibn Taymiyya's defamation of some Sufi masters and his rejection of the possibility of the intercession of saints.[118] The protest led to Ibn Taymiyya being brought before Ibn Jamāʿa where a private disputa-

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understand what he just said (*tarākīb kalāmihi*)? Because the only thing I understood were the individual words (*mufradāt kalāmihi*)!' " (al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 3:133).

114 Al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī*, 3:425; and Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:86.

115 Al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī*, 3:425; al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-fikra*, 413; al-ʿAynī, for his part, records this episode twice in *ʿIqd al-jumān*, 5:67 (in 708) and 5:81 (in 709).

116 al-ʿAynī, *ʿIqd al-jumān*, 5:154.

117 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:86.

118 On the Sufi protest of Ibn Taymiyya in 707/1307, see discussion of sources and analysis of Ḥasan Qāsim Murād, "Miḥan of Ibn Taymiya: A Narrative Account Based on a Comparative Analysis of the Sources" (master's thesis, McGill University, 1968), 97–9; idem, "Ibn Taymiya on Trial: a Narrative Account of his Mihan," *Islamic Studies* 18 (1979): 1–32; Victor Danner, "Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh: A Ṣūfī of Mamlūk Egypt: An Introductory Study of the Origins of the Shādhiliyya and a Translation of the *Kitāb al-Ḥikam*" (Ph diss., Harvard University,

tion was held with al-Iskandarī on the subject of sainthood. Ibn Taymiyya was cleared of any wrongdoing, but clearly the Ḥanbali historians al-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr remembered al-Āmulī's involvement. Furthermore, one of the other major players in Ibn Taymiyya's detention in Cairo was a politically influential Sufi, Naṣr al-Manbijī (d. 719/1319), who had personally intervened with the sultan to have Ibn Taymiyya brought to Cairo in the first place.[119] What is particularly fascinating about this whole episode is that al-Āmulī was, in a very real sense, on the same side of the Ibn Taymiyya issue as al-Manbijī and Ibn Jamāʿa. Thus, it comes as something of a surprise to read al-Maqrīzī's account of the events in 708/1308: "In [708], the men of the *khānqāh* Ṣalāḥiyya Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ insisted on raising the issue (*katharat murāfaʿat*) of their shaykh Karīm al-Dīn . . . al-Āmulī. So Shaykh Naṣr al-Manbijī rose vigorously against him (*qāma ʿalayhi qiyāmᵃⁿ ʿaẓīmᵃⁿ*) until he was removed in favor of the Chief Judge Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Jamāʿa."[120] The very men who had helped al-Āmulī and al-Iskandarī detain and question Ibn Taymiyya now colluded to remove him from office. This episode reveals how treacherous the position of Chief Sufi could be. The Sufis of the *khānqāh* had demonstrated their potential political clout by massing to protest Ibn Taymiyya. Al-Āmulī's former allies turned against him and sided with the Sufis of the *khānqāh*, undoubtedly to appease them and avoid any more problems. Nevertheless, in the end and for reasons not stated, al-Āmulī was allowed to return to office for about a year before he died.

After the death of Karīm al-Dīn al-Āmulī, the office of Chief Sufi was taken up by ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 729/1329).[121] Al-Qūnawī was born in Konya around 668/1269–70, and studied Shāfiʿi *fiqh* before moving to Damascus as a young man to further his studies.[122] He found work there teaching at the

1970), 212–68; and Donald Little, "The Historical and Historiographical Significance of the Detention of Ibn Taymiyya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4 (1973): 311–27.

119 Al-Birzālī, *al-Muqtafī*, 4:372–3; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 32:237–9; al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-durar*, ed. Hans Roemer (Cairo: al-Maʿhad al-Almānī li-l-Āthār, 1960), 9:143–4; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:56, 75, 88, and 97; al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 4:392; and al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 1:460–4.

120 Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk*, 2:427.

121 This succession is made explicit by al-Ṣafadī in *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*, 3:134, and al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 2:397.

122 ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Ibn Ismāʿīl al-Qūnawī al-Shāfiʿī: al-Dhahabī, *al-ʿIbar*, 4:87; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:319; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 10:132–6; al-Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 2:170–2; and al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 3:24–8.

Iqbāliyya madrasa.[123] He eventually made his way to Cairo, where Ibn Kathīr says he taught at a number of madrasas before becoming the Chief Sufi.[124] Al-Subkī adds that upon arriving in Cairo "he lived in abject poverty . . . until he began teaching at the Sharīfiyya [madrasa] and became Chief Sufi."[125] He continued in these posts until 727/1326–7, at which point he moved back to Damascus to take up the positions of Chief Judge and Chief Sufi of greater Syria.[126] He died two years later. Like many others, al-Qūnawī was not particularly well known for being a Sufi; many of his biographers do not mention any connection to Sufism at all, other than his being Chief Sufi. Rather, they focus primarily on his reputation as a Shāfiʿi jurist. However, al-Qūnawī did author a commentary on the well known *Kitāb al-taʿarruf* by Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī (d. 380/990), and al-Qūnawī was briefly a companion of the former Chief Sufi Shams al-Dīn al-Aykī.[127] This must have been during al-Qūnawī's first stay in Damascus, before he left for Cairo, and after al-Aykī had returned there in 689/1290.[128] Al-ʿAsqalānī also reports that al-Qūnawī was sympathetic to Ibn al-ʿArabī, although he nevertheless defended Ibn Taymiyya's denunciation of Ibn al-ʿArabī's teachings.[129]

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123 A servant (*khādim*) of Saladin, Jamāl al-Dīn Iqbāl (d. 603/1207) endowed two of his buildings in Damascus between the Faraj and Farādīs gates for two madrasas, both known as *madrasa Iqbāliyya*, the larger for the Shāfiʿiyya and the smaller for the Ḥanafiyya. See Abū Shāma, *al-Dhayl ʿalā l-rawḍatayn*, 59, and al-Nuʿaymī, *al-Dāris*, 1:118–23.

124 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 18:319. Ibn Kathīr actually says he became Chief Sufi of Egypt and Syria. However, this must be a conflation of two separate appointments. The first was as Chief Sufi in Egypt and the second, after al-Qūnawī returned to Damascus, was as Chief Sufi in Syria.

125 Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 10:134.

126 Al-Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 2:172.

127 The commentary, entitled *Ḥusn al-taṣarruf fī sharḥ al-taʿarruf*, exists in a microfilm copy of the manuscript at the Manuscript Institute of the Arab League in Cairo, #133, *taṣawwuf* 134, which I unfortunately have not yet been able to consult.

128 Al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 3:25.

129 Ibid., 3:26. Al-Qūnawī, or at least al-ʿAsqalānī's representation of him, is quite ambiguous on this topic. He notes that al-Qūnawī was sympathetic to Ibn al-ʿArabī, but that he defended Ibn Taymiyya, while also advising the sultan to leave Ibn Taymiyya in prison in Damascus: "this advice was a reason that Ibn Taymiyya remained in prison until his death." He also notes that at a meeting with Ibn Kathīr, al-Qūnawī is said to have told those present that "there is no doubt that [the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* of Ibn al-ʿArabī] is full of unbelief and misguidance (*kufr wa-ḍalāl*)." When his students asked, "So our master does not interpret the text metaphorically (*yataʾawwaluhu*)?" [al-Qūnawī] responded, "No, [Ibn ʿArabī] reads the words of the prophet metaphorically (*yataʾawwal kalām al-maʿṣūm*)" (ibid., 3:27).

What is perhaps most interesting about al-Qūnawī, however, is that he embodied the end of the office of the Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʾadāʾ. As noted above, after al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad returned to Egypt as sultan in 709/1310, he began construction on a new *khānqāh* outside the city limits of Cairo at Siryāqūs. Construction on the *khānqāh* was completed in 724/1325 and it is clear that al-Nāṣir Muḥammad intended that his *khānqāh* would become the new center of state-sponsored Sufism in Egypt. As part of this plan, he moved the office of the Chief Sufi from the Saʿīd al-Suʿādāʾ to the *khānqāh* at Siryāqūs.[130] In an elaborate investiture ceremony held that year, the sultan himself publicly named Majd al-Dīn Mūsā al-Uqṣurāʾī (d. 740/1339–40) the new Chief Sufi in Egypt, to be housed at the *khānqāh* at Siryāqūs. Al-Qūnawī was actually present for the transmission of authority and participated in the festivities, during which he took the title *shaykh khānqāh saʿīd al-suʿadāʾ*.[131] From this point on, the Chief Sufi was associated with the Nāṣiriyya and not the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ.[132] While the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ would continue to have a *shaykh*, his prerogatives were limited to the *khānqāh* itself.[133]

Finally, we should note that there are a few scattered references in Mamluk historiography to Chief Sufis for whom no certain provenance can be determined. For example, there is a certain Jamāl al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (d. 695/1295), whom a number of historians call the Chief Sufi.[134] Al-Maqrīzī also mentions Shaykh Zādat al-Isfarāʾīnī (d. 701/1301), who was Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ at some point.[135] Finally, we have Shams al-Dīn b. Masʿūd al-Ṣūfī (d. 710/1310). The only information I have been able to find about him is that "al-Malik al-Manṣūr Lājīn thought highly of him and gave him charge of the

130 For a detailed discussion, see Abū Rās, *Shaykh al-shuyūkh*, 63–8.

131 Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4: 768–9; Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution*, 29–30.

132 The title actually moved around a bit as the Mamluk princes jockeyed for power. So, for example, in Shawwāl, 778/1377, the sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Shaʿbān (r. 764–778/1363–77) opened his new madrasa, the Ashrafiyya, and appointed Ibn Qāḍī al-Qaram Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī to direct the madrasa and gave him the title *shaykh al-shuyūkh*, and ordered that it be removed from the *khānqāh* (Abū Rās, *Shaykh al-shuyūkh*, 85–6).

133 Al-Qalqashandī is quite explicit that by his time in the ninth/fifteenth century, the powers of the *shaykh* of the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ were considerably less than those of the Chief Sufi. See al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ al-aʿshāʾ*, 4:37–8.

134 al-Jazarī, *Taʾrīkh ḥawādith al-zamān*, 1:296; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 52:251; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā l-kabīr*, 6:365, and ibid., 7:526. The last entries here seem to be a mistake on al-Maqrīzī's part; they both refer to the same person.

135 Agonizingly, al-Maqrīzī says that al-Isfarāʾīnī "came to Egypt and became the Chief Sufi at the Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ after . . . " at which point there is a lacuna in the manuscript! (idem, *al-Muqaffā*, 7:110).

Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ and the *ribāṭ* of Ibn al-Ṣābūnī."[136] Since Lājīn was only sultan from 696–8/1296–9, Shams al-Dīn must have served as Chief Sufi at this time. This would mean he may have served between Taqī l-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz and Karīm al-Dīn al-Āmulī. Other than these three, I have found no other information on Chief Sufis.

Conclusions

After this all too brief review, we can make a few generalizations about the origins and development of the office of the Chief Sufi in Egypt. The Chief Sufi first appeared in Seljuk Baghdad, where the office was associated with a single family of Shāfiʿi Sufis from Nishapur and located at the Ribāṭ Shaykh al-Shuyūkh, founded in the mid-fifth/eleventh century. The creation of this office was part of the larger Seljuk bureaucratization of knowledge and administration undertaken by the viziers Ibn al-Muslima and Niẓām al-Mulk after him. In the beginning, the Chief Sufi was a hereditary prerogative. That is, the office remained in the same family. By the time Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm became Chief Sufi after 541/1146, the office had become a religio-political position. The Chief Sufi enjoyed prestige as a highly visible public Sufi and Shāfiʿi jurist, as well as an advisor to and ambassador for the Abbasid Caliph. In 563–4/1167–9, the Zengid ruler Nūr al-Dīn instituted the same office in Damascus and followed the same general program: he appointed a well known Shāfiʿi Sufi from Khurāsān, ʿImād al-Dīn b. Ḥamuwayh, gave him charge of the Sufis of *bilād al-shām*, and set him up at the Sumaysāṭī *khānqāh* in Damascus.

Saladin and the Ayyubid dynasts continued the example set by their predecessors. From 569/1173 the office would be tied to a brick-and-mortar hospice, the *khānqāh* Saʿīd al-Suʿadāʾ. Based on the prosopography here, evidence from al-Maqrīzī's description of the *khānqāh*, and the *waqfiyya* for Saladin's *khānqāh* in Jerusalem, Saladin most likely stipulated that each Chief Sufi be a Shāfiʿi-Ashʿari jurist from the East. Like the preceding Seljuk model, the office of the Chief Sufi would be hereditary, remaining with the sons, grandsons, and great-

136 Ibid., 7:236. The Ribāṭ Ibn al-Ṣābūnī seems to be the same structure al-Maqrīzī calls the Ribāṭ al-Āthār in *al-Khiṭaṭ*, which was completed sometime after 707/1307. It was known as the Ribāṭ Ibn al-Ṣābūnī after the man who endowed the *ribāṭ* (on which, see *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 3:527), while it was also known as the Ribāṭ al-Āthār (the relics) because it was said to house items that had belonged to the prophet Muḥammad. See *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4:801–4. Both Ibn Baṭṭūṭa and al-Ṣafadī saw the relics and described them; see Sayyid's notes to *al-Khiṭaṭ*, 4:801 n. 4.

grandsons of ʿImad al-Dīn ʿUmar. As expected, they were all trained in Shāfiʿi jurisprudence and were partisans of Ashʿari theology. Finally, they were, like those before them, scholar-statesmen who spent much more time attending to military campaigns and affairs of state than they did to the *khānqāh* or their duties as Chief Sufi. This means that the directorship of the *khānqāh* must have operated under a series of deputies. This state of affairs came to an end sometime after the death of al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb and the rise of the Baḥri Mamluk sultanate. No more would the office of Chief Sufi remain in the family and it became, in effect, a political favor bestowed by the sultan himself, although typically at the request or machinations of his vizier or Chief Judge. The latter, in fact, sometimes granted the favor upon himself or his close friends. Unlike the Ayyubid years, during the Mamluk period the office was an object of social competition for status and resources among the learned elite. As such, the fortunes of the Chief Sufi were tied to the internal politics and disruptions of the Mamluk state. Nevertheless, there were continuities between the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. With one notable exception (the Ḥanbali Shams al-Dīn al-Maqdisī), the Chief Sufi was always a Shāfiʿi-Ashʿari jurist. Again, with one exception (Taqī l-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz), none of the Chief Sufis were natives of Egypt, but were all from points East. Finally, the Chief Sufi often held other religious posts in Cairo or, as in the case of al-Aykī, in Damascus. These findings align with what we know of Ayyubid patronage of Sunni learning in general. Saladin and the rulers after him assiduously supported and promoted Shāfiʿi-Ashʿari scholarship, funding the careers of scores of scholars they brought in from the East. Likewise, the findings here confirm much recent work in Mamluk studies more broadly. Despite some disjunctures wrought in Egyptian society and politics by the Mamluks' ascent to power, their "military patronage state" was not only an extension of much of the Ayyubid polity, but was itself quite stable.[137]

137 For the clearest statement of the seeming paradox of the Mamluk state as autocratic/oligarchic and the model of the "military patronage state" that resolves the paradox, see most recently Jo Van Steenbergen, "The Mamluk Sultanate as a Military Patronage State: Household Politics and the Case of the Qalāwūnid *bayt* (1279–1382)," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 56 (2013): 189–217. On the stability of the Mamluk state, see now the very important study of W.W. Clifford, *State Formation and the Structure of Politics in Mamlku Syro-Egpyt, 648–741 A.H./1250–1340 C.E.* (Bonn: Bonn University Press at V&R unipress, 2013). Anne Broadbridge has argued that the early Mamluks continued many of their Ayyubid predecessors' practices and policies as a way to legitimize their own rule by linking themselves to the Ayyubid family (idem, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 12).

The preceding discussion has also underscored the difficulty of the office—both in executing it and retaining it. The Chief Sufi was expected to mediate between the rank-and-file Sufis of the *khānqāh* and the military elites and their representatives. This was not an easy task. The rank-and-file Sufis could be quite harsh in their judgments of their Chief Sufi and did not hesitate to complain about him if they found blame, whether moral, theological, or fiscal, as evidenced in the cases of al-Aykī and al-Āmulī. But the Chief Sufi was in just as much danger, if not more, from other elites like the Chief Judge or the vizier. As a political appointment that carried a generous stipend and enjoyed prestige with other ulama and large numbers of Sufis (assuming they were not angry with him), the Chief Sufi was an important post in the civilian bureaucracy. Thus, when Ibn Salʿūs became vizier in 690/1290, he attempted to consolidate his power by, among other mechanisms at his disposal, dismissing the Chief Sufi Taqī l-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz and appointing one of his own friends in his place.

However, the power and authority of the Chief Sufi should not be overstated. Many have cursorily noted that the Chief Sufi was meant to direct *all* the Sufis of the Ayyubid and Mamluk realms or that he was the head of the Sufi orders, functioning perhaps in much the same way as the Chief Judge of a particular *madhhab*.[138] Whether or not such sweeping authority was the original intent of Saladin and the sultans after him, there is no evidence that the Chief Sufi enjoyed any special privilege with the local non-*khānqāh*-dwelling Sufi population. To the contrary, for most Sufi masters and their disciples in Ayyubid and early Mamluk Egypt, the Chief Sufi was of no more consequence than any of the other state functionaries. It is certainly the case that some came to the *khānqāh* to study with particular Chief Sufis, Shams al-Dīn al-Maqdisī being a case in point. But these instances were for quite specific reasons; al-Maqdisī transmitted sayings about ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. In fact, most of the Chief Sufis were far better known as jurists than as Sufis. It is not surprising to find, then, that of all the Chief Sufis examined here none of them warrant a biography in the Mamluk Sufi *Ṭabaqāt* literature, although they appear throughout

138 Louis Pouzet, for example, argued that the Chief Sufi in Damascus stood at the head of a kind of Sufi "syndicat (*niqāba*) dont la fonction principale consistait à défendre les droits et intérêts des membres de la corporation, et à vérifier les qualitiés et les titres de ceux qui désiraient y entrer officiellement, qu'ils soient résidents à Damas ou qui'ils veuillent s'y fixer" (idem, *Damas au VII^e^/XIII^e^ siècle*, 213). I have found no evidence for such a "corporation" in either Cairo or Damascus. Pouzet's description seems to be based primarily on the supposition that the Chief Sufi must have been at the head of some kind of Sufi organization, rather than simply a political functionary and local leader.

the Ayyubid and Mamluk ulamology, as we would expect of such eminent jurists and state officials.[139]

Appendix—List of the Chief Sufis of Egypt from 969–724/1173–1325 with approximate dates of office

In Office	Name
564–77 / 1169–81	ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar (d. 577/1181) (in Damascus)
577–617 / 1181–1220	Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 617/1220) (in Damascus and Cairo)
617–36 / 1220–39	ʿImād al-Dīn ʿUmar (d. 636/1239)
636–40 / 1239–42	Kamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf (d. 640/1242)
640–3 / 1242–6	Muʿīn al-Dīn Ḥasan (d. 643/1246)
643–? / 1246–?	Sons of the Awlād al-Shaykh (d. ?)
663?–70 / 1265?–72	Shams al-Dīn al-Maqdisī (d. 676/1277)
670?–84 / 1272?–85	Ḥasan al-Rūmī (d. 684/1285)
684–9 / 1285–90	Shams al-Dīn al-Aykī (d. 697/1298)
689–90 and 693–5 / 1290–1 and 1293–5	Taqī l-Dīn Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz (d.695/1295)
696?–8? / 1296?–9?	Shams al-Dīn b. Masʿūd al-Ṣūfī (d. 710/1310)
698?–710 / 1299?–1310	Karīm al-Dīn al-Āmulī (d. 710/1311)
708–9 / 1308–9	Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamāʿa (d. 733/1332)
710–24 / 1310–25	ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 729/1329)

139 They do not appear in Ṣafī l-Dīn Ibn Abī l-Manṣūr's *Risāla*; Ibn al-Mulaqqin's *Ṭabaqāt al-awliyā*'; Munāwī's *al-Kawākib al-durriyya*; or Shaʿrānī's *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*. There are two exceptions. The first is that Ṣafī l-Dīn does mention Ṣadr al-Dīn b. Ḥamuwayh, but it is in a quite negative light and the reference occurs within the biography of another Sufi. The second is the above mentioned *silsilat al-khirqa* in which Ibn al-Mulaqqin mentions Ṣadr al-Dīn b. Ḥamuwayh's name. Note, however, that he does not devote a biography to Ṣadr al-Dīn either.