

## Sa'd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh's sealer of the saints – Part I<sup>1</sup>

### O selador dos santos de Sa'd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh – Parte I

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#### Abstract

This paper intends to provide a first depiction of the question of the seal of sainthood in the thought of Sa'd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh (587-649/1191-1252) a prolific Sufi master who met with ibn 'Arabī in Damascus. His understanding of this notion starts most probably from his meetings with ibn 'Arabī. However, Ḥamūyeh tried to think it anew by articulating it with the prophetic narratives rather than the prophetic figures. The paper argues that the fundamental ground for thinking the seal of sainthood for Ḥamūyeh is time. This is why the seal is understood and named sealer-of-the-saints (*khātim al-awliyā'*) instead of seal of sainthood. The paper tries to show ultimately that the sealer-of-the-saints, whose name is Yas'ā according to Ḥamūyeh, is no other than the prophet who achieves his prophethood in his own sainthood.

**Keywords:** Ḥamūyeh. Letters. Prophethood. Sainthood's seal. Sufism. Time.

#### Resumo

Este artigo tem como objetivo fornecer uma primeira descrição da questão do selo da santidade no pensamento de Sa'd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh (587-649/1191-1252), um prolífico mestre sufi que se encontrou com ibn 'Arabī em Damasco. Sua compreensão dessa noção começa, muito provavelmente, a partir de seus encontros com ibn 'Arabī. No entanto, Ḥamūyeh tentou repensá-la, articulando-a com as narrativas proféticas em vez de com as figuras proféticas. O artigo argumenta que a base fundamental para pensar o selo da santidade para Ḥamūyeh é o tempo. É por isso que o selo é entendido e chamado de selador dos santos (*khātim al-awliyā'*) em vez de selo da santidade. O artigo tenta mostrar, em última análise, que o selador dos santos, cujo nome é Yas'ā de acordo com Ḥamūyeh, não é outro senão o profeta que alcança sua profecia em sua própria santidade.

**Palavras-chave:** Ḥamūyeh. Cartas. Profetismo. Selo da santidade. Sufismo. Tempo.

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## Introduction

The whole thinking of Saʿd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh, or Ḥamawī, is, as such, the development of the figure of the sealer-of-the-saints, *khātim al-awliyāʾ*, as he calls him so as to stress immediately on its belonging to the end of time, and thus on its essential relation to time, which is the condition of both existence and thinking. In the first page of his *Kitāb al-maḥbūb* he immediately writes quoting several koranic verses: “I am near I respond to the call of the beloved calling caller: “*victory from God*” God’s mercy is near “*is God’s victory not near?*” “*and conquest is near*” and opening is near, God is the near and near is the case of the Hour”<sup>2</sup>. There is no possibility to wrap thinking within itself without including within it a process of sealing, as its fundament. Any thinking stands only from its being sealed and Sufism as a thinking:acting<sup>3</sup> project can be sustained only if it sets its process on the promise of achieving an end, even if this end is not actually ending. The sealer does not close thinking but rather opens the infinite unfolding that constitutes the seal. It seems that Ḥamūyeh’s (587-649/1191-1252) thesis on the sealer of sainthood (*khātim al-wilāya*) has been thought to be controversial and discussed along with ibn ʿArabī’s thesis in Sufi circles after their death while both theses played a major role in the construction and installation of the notion of sainthood in posterior Sufism<sup>4</sup>. However, like ibn ʿArabī’s thinking, Ḥamūyeh’s perspective has been the object of many misunderstandings, even among his disciples like ʿAzīz al-dīn Nasafī, as his statements show. Because Ḥamūyeh thinks the sealer in its essential relation to time, his conception has opened the way to many speculations concerning the date of his timing.

The theme of the seal fulfils at least three essential and necessary goals. The basis of it and the first is that it ends, without shutting it down, the prophetic

<sup>2</sup> *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 1b.

<sup>3</sup> I use the “:” to indicate the essential unity of two notions, which consists in articulated difference of a co-belonging and mutual mutation in one another. When it is necessary to stress rather on the irreducible dialectic difference, in Plato’s sense, I use “-”. For instance, while in metaphysics thinking will be dialectically opposed to acting constituting a conflictual unity thinking-acting, the sealer-of-the-saints resumes thinking into acting so that he becomes an essential unity of thinking:acting in which is the other though they can still be dialectically separated and opposed.

<sup>4</sup> Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (795-869/1392-1464), in his *Risāla al-hudā*, still mentions Ḥamūyeh and ibn ʿArabī together as a justification of his mission as the *mahdī* and the seal of sainthood, M. Molé. “Les Kubrawiyya entre sunnisme et shīʿisme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l’hégire,” *REI* (1961), p. 131. Many treatises of Ḥamūyeh have been copied under the name of ibn ʿArabī, like those edited under the name *Rasāʾil ibn ʿArabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998; The older manuscript of the *Kitāb al-maḥbūb* warns at the beginning: “The author of this book is ibn Ḥamawī, it does not belong to *al-shaykh al-akbar*”, ms. Chester Beatty 4159.

narrative that constitutes the meaning of time, history as prophetic history. The prophetic history is the meaningfulness, the sense, of time, because it ends and thus orientates time towards an end, while time as a recurrent structure constitutes the possibility of such sense because it is the coincidence, the essential unity of ending:starting, of disappearing;appearing, that is revealed through the numerical values of the letters that are always effective when speaking and narrating and constitute, therefore, the effectivity of any prophetic history. Hence, the seal is what brings together time, as counted number, and history, as narrative, and is required to achieve the understanding and knowledge of manifestation:hiddenness, briefly said of human being. The second function, that extends from the latter, is to make the world, and that is the world:human-being, a totality in its two folds, the close-world and the ultimate, the seal being sealing both at the same time. Thus, it brings together manifestation as a totality that can finally be established in its fundamental relation with the non-manifested. It sets in the clarity of the sense the fundamental unifying separation between the secret in its unbroken secrecy and the manifestation in its infinite disclosure, this separation being revealed ultimately as justice. Justice, thus, requires the seal of sainthood as the one through which justice is achieved. The third comes out of the necessity to think thoroughly sainthood, not simply as a general notion, but in its details without which the notion remains blurry and finally non-operating, since sainthood is the essence of the modes of thinking that stand in sense. The seal of sainthood is what gathers as a whole the different modes of sainthood and articulates them with one another so as to achieve the understanding of thinking as such, which is the general system of the levels and types of saints and their mutual substitutions. In this regard the system of sainthood, since it is a permanent count that requires substitution, appears to be the inner timing of prophetic narrative. Ḥamūyeh, while being aware of ibn 'Arabī's elaboration of the notion of the seal of sainthood, does not go in the way of building a typology of the saints. The types of saints are not to be found in his very profuse treatises, as it is in many Sufi treatises since the twelfth century. Hence, he does not address this question for the purpose of building a system of sainthood that would allow both to sustain the prophetic narrative and to place the saints into their respective levels so as to achieve ones' own sealing position. A further meaning of the seal of sainthood concerns the meaning of knowledge that is set with the separation of

the two sealers, of the prophets and of the saints, who open and distinguish the two opposite sides, the close-world and the ultimate through which knowledge is developed. The seal Ḥamūyeh tries to think is entirely thought in its relation with the prophetic narrative. It is not thought as a seal but as a sealer, in other terms in its timing effectivity with prophetic narrative. The sealer-of-the-saints is to be understood with the sealer-of-the-prophets. The question thus is less that of the function, which is already set when using the word seal, than that of the one who is actually achieving the time prophetic narrative in his own spiritual experience. This is why the construction of the sealer is itself a narrative in which Ḥamūyeh's own personal sealing achievement is that of the sealer. This is also why his thinking led to many misunderstandings, mostly among his disciples who interpreted his thoughts in apocalyptic and messianic terms, that is to say arch-politically.

Nasafī is the origin of wrong informations concerning Ḥamūyeh. He seems to be the origin of the most important and still remaining mistake about Ḥamūyeh's conception of sainthood. He claims that Ḥamūyeh considered sainthood restricted to twelve persons chosen by God after the prophet to be his delegates (*nā'ib*), the twelfth being the sealer-of-the saints and the timelord (*ṣāhib-i zamān*)<sup>5</sup>. Nothing in the large amount of Ḥamūyeh's remaining works confirms Nasafī's statement and even makes it unsustainable. However, his claim, though completely wrong, was repeated by several sources after Ḥamūyeh's death, like N. M. Herawī recalls. Nasafī claimed also that Ḥamūyeh calculated the exact time of the sealer-of-the-saints' rise, which does not correspond exactly to Ḥamūyeh's speculation though there are indeed different datings that do not fit Nasafī's expectations. Ḥamūyeh's conception is actually quite sophisticated, difficult, resisting to Nasafī's reduction to this simplified ideological framework he wishes. Ḥamūyeh was trained in the circle of Najm al-dīn Kubrā (d. 1221) but he considered this training secondary to his affiliation to Sufism through his family. It seems that he met ibn 'Arabī in Damascus when he went there from Baghdad on the indication of 'Umar al-Suhrawardī<sup>6</sup> and that this

<sup>5</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, int. N. M. Herawī, p. 32-35; Nasafī, *Maqṣad-i aqṣā*, India, 1333, p. 160; *Kitāb al-insān al-kāmil*, Tehran, 1360, p. 316-7; Ma'sūm 'Alishāh argues that these twelve saints are actually merely Najm al-dīn Kubrā's twelve main disciples, *Tarā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, Tehran, 1339, vol. 3, p. 341.

<sup>6</sup> Several stories are narrated concerning ibn 'Arabī and Ṣadr al-dīn Qunawī's meetings with Ḥamūyeh in Ghiyāth al-dīn Ḥabbatu'llāh, *Murād al-murīdīn*, Tehran, 1389, p. 27-30,

meeting had a strong effect on his conceptions and writings, typically his speculations on letters. He lived in Damascus two years in the mount al-Ṣalāḥiyya when he met ibn 'Arabī who was already old and it is in 635-636, during this stay, that he wrote the series of treatises dealing the most with the sealer-of-the-saints. It is related that they were visiting each other. However, his construction of sainthood and of the figure of the sealer is different from ibn 'Arabī's understanding and thus deserves to start being questioned.

After and perhaps during Ḥamūyeh's life it was claimed that he calculated the time of the apparition of the Sealer of sainthood. 'Azīz al-dīn Nasafī, a late disciple of Ḥamūyeh, gives several accounts about Ḥamūyeh's understanding of the seal of sainthood and states that Ḥamūyeh had given such a date. Much later Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (795-869/1392-1464), in his *Risāla al-hudā*, claims that his own apparition as the timelord (*ṣāḥib al-zamān*) has been calculated by Ḥamūyeh as 826/1423<sup>7</sup>: “The achieved one al-Juwaynī Sa'd al-dīn al-Ḥamawī said: When time reaches the end of fasting and of *Bismillāh* the *mahdī* rises, that is in the year 826/1423 of Muḥammad's Hijra because the mīm at the end of fasting (*al-ṣawm*) and the letters constituting *Bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* give this account through a total calculation” and he adds a summary of some points included in Ḥamūyeh's *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*<sup>8</sup>. But Nūrbakhsh gives immediately another date out of Aḥmad al-Qurashī's statement according to which he saw Ḥamūyeh in 856h. who told him: “The promised imām will come out from occultation this year but his affair will not succeed, so he will return to being concealed and will come out a second time and his affair will succeed”. However, Nūrbakhsh, after these, states that Najm-i Dāyeh Rāzī, another disciple of Kubrā, said that “the promised pole would appear after seven hundred years and before eight hundred after the Hijra, [...] which fits what said al-Ḥamawī”<sup>9</sup>. These statements show, on one hand, the great confusion in these circles about the

<sup>7</sup> M. Molé. “Les Kubrawīya entre sunnisme et shī'isme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l'hégire,” *REI* (1961), p. 131; the interpretation of the Seal of sainthood as being the *mahdī* or the *ṣāḥib al-zamān* starts probably from Nasafī who uses the assertion that Ḥamūyeh calculated the date of the sealer's apparition to translate it immediately as being the timelord. Nūrbakhsh also attributes to ibn 'Arabī a saying according to which the Seal of sainthood is an Arab:non-Arab (*min al-'arab al-'ajama*), Arab from one side and non-Arab from the other being thus “either Turkish or Persian or whatsoever”, *Risāla al-hudā*, ms. Fatih 5367, fol. 103b. This saying belongs probably to Ḥamūyeh who states this several times in his treatises, for instance, *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 77a-b; his *Mafātīḥ al-asrār* mentions “Muḥammad al-'arabī and Yas'ā al-'ajamī”, ms. H.S.A. 491, fol. 34a, 102a.

<sup>8</sup> *Risāla al-hudā*, ms. Fatih 5367, fol. 104a.

<sup>9</sup> *Risāla al-hudā*, ms. Fatih 5367, fol. 104a; it is confirmed in Ḥamūyeh's *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

notions composing the notion of sainthood that ibn ‘Arabī and Ḥamūyeh, along with other important thinkers, had carefully distinguished, and on the other hand, the continuous adjustments and imprecision of these calculations of a precise date that, nevertheless, seem for them being a fundamental part of the essence of the mahdī:timelord:pole:seal. It shows thus that, as Ḥamūyeh has indeed stressed upon, time, both as lasting-time and event-date, plays a fundamental role in their understanding of sainthood. M. Molé’s discussion<sup>10</sup> about the shiite influence or Shiism affiliation of the kubrawī lineage finally prevents from entering the question of the constitution of the notion of sainthood in these times because of the perspective of a confessional religious perspective it sets.

Nasafī, in his *Kashf al-ḥaqā’iq*, mentions a dream he had in which he saw the prophet, ibn Khafīf and Ḥamūyeh in the mosque of Abarqūh inviting him to join them. There the prophet tells him his master, Ḥamūyeh is worrying about him because of his writings since the ten treatises of the *Kashf al-ḥaqā’iq* reveal what Ḥamūyeh himself tried to conceal in four hundred of his books. The prophet gives him his protection but asks him not to reveal his writings before 700 years after Hijra<sup>11</sup>. Somehow Nasafī depicts an opposition between him and his master. Ḥamūyeh seems annoyed that Nasafī would reveal what he concealed. Indeed why the disciple would reveal what the master tried to hide in a great number of his books? Somehow Nasafī confesses that he betrays the secrets of his master and annoys him at least. The prophet takes him under his protection and it is as if he is giving his consent to the betrayal under the condition that he would not publicise his texts before a certain time, seven hundred years after the Hijra while the speculations about the rise of the timelord in Ḥamūyeh’s circle supposes he should be born precisely in 751/1351, according to Landolt<sup>12</sup>. However, I didn’t find a clear confirmation of Landolt’s statement in Ḥamūyeh’s treatises except that a small treatise of his entitled *Risāla fī zuhūr khātim al-wilāya* at the end of

<sup>10</sup> M. Molé, “Les Kubrawīya entre sunnisme et shī’isme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l’hégire,” *REI* (1961), p. 61-138.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Azīz-i Dīn Nasafī, *Kitāb al-insān al-kāmil*, M. Molé. Tehran/Paris, Bibliothèque Iranienne, 1962, introd. p. 8-9 ; see Landolt’s important discussion in “Le paradoxe de la ‘Face de Dieu’: ‘Azīz-e Nasafī (VIIe/XIIIe siècle) et le ‘monisme ésotérique’ de l’islam,” *Studia Iranica* (1996) 25, p. 172-3, also M. Molé, “Les Kubrawīya entre sunnisme et shī’isme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l’hégire,” *REI* (1961), p. 74ss.

<sup>12</sup> Landolt’s important discussion in “Le paradoxe de la ‘Face de Dieu’: ‘Azīz-e Nasafī (VIIe/XIIIe siècle) et le ‘monisme ésotérique’ de l’islam,” *Studia Iranica* (1996) 25, p. 172. Landolt actually misread the date which is written 757 and not 751 as he reports.



his *Kitāb al-maḥbūb* was copied in 741/1341. This treatise mentions that the beloved saint (*al-walī al-maḥbūb*), the sealer-of-the-saints will rise during the seventh century counting from Muḥammad's birth because, he says, the poles are seven in number substituting to one another each century so that the seal will be the eighth during the eighth century<sup>13</sup>. Landolt's statement is based on a page of a manuscript that contains Ḥamūyeh's *Kitāb sakīnat al-sālikīn* and that summarises the lineage of al-Ṭāwūsī, a disciple of Ḥamūyeh, and quotes a saying of his master related to the apparition of the timelord, which is obviously linked with the *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, but gives additional statements. The text is worth being quoted: "(In Arabic:) Al-shaykh Sa'd al-dīn al-Ḥamawī talked about the apparition of the timelord (*ṣāḥib al-zamān*) and his advent during the eight hundreds after the seven hundreds has passed under the condition that the date is counted starting from the birth and not the Hegira. (In Persian:) To the subtle points of Shaykh Sa'd al-dīn there is also that he extracts the date of birth of the timelord from the written letters of the word *thawrān* (catastrophe) because *thawrān* is the expression raising from *th* (500) *w* (6) *r* (200) *a* (1) *n* (50) the total sum being 757, and this the date of birth of the *mahdī*"<sup>14</sup>. It would be hazardous to conclude, like Landolt does, from this short statement that we know now that Ḥamūyeh was calculating the date of birth of the timelord. The part in Arabic corresponds indeed to Ḥamūyeh's above mentioned treatise, written in Arabic, though the time of his appearing is mentioned only once at the beginning in a treatise that is dealing with the signs of the Seal of the saints and not with the birth of the Mahdī. The Persian part does not correspond to anything in Ḥamūyeh's treatises first of all because Ḥamūyeh almost never uses *abjad* speculations. His speculations on letters are always strictly speculative. He does not mediate the meanings with numbers like ibn 'Arabī does but rather with sounds or tones. In other terms, he is less interested in rhythm than in tonalities. Tones are constituted by assonances between the words and by the inversion of their letters. Moving from one signification to another, some kind of synthesis, is given by the tonalities and not by the rhythm, which is based upon the function

<sup>13</sup> *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

<sup>14</sup> BNF Ancien fonds persan ms. 286, fol. 75b; the text is followed by a saying attributed to ibn 'Arabī : « Me and the Mahdī are brothers, he is the saint of the sword and I am the saint of the Koran ».

of disappearing:appearing<sup>15</sup>. There is also no evidence of such speculations in Ḥamūyeh's treatises and the word *thawrān* is not a key-word in general and more particularly related to Ḥamūyeh's messianism. However, *thawrān*, insurrection, eruption, catastrophe appears several times in one of Ḥamūyeh's treatises, *Kitāb al-ḥurūf*, written in Persian like Paris manuscript's quote. It is linked with 'Azrā'īl, fire, death, and nafs and ultimately to both God's essence<sup>16</sup> all themes that precisely are beyond any possibility of counting. However, the first indication stating that the timelord must come out during eighth century gives at least the indication that Ḥamūyeh wouldn't be alive at that time and places thus this appearing after death and therefore as a consequence of this *thawrān* quoted in the text. In other terms, starting with Muḥammad's birth and ending with the pole beyond the seven poles, who is the sealer-of-the-saints, allows to a meaning of the seal which consists in gathering a totality which summarises the whole process prophetic history. It requires thus for the witness of it, the one who describes it, Ḥamūyeh, to be dead so as to stand in the place of the essence to be able to consider the totality of the development of sainthood, since sainthood is an entangled intrigue of time. However, some texts linked with Ḥamūyeh calculated indeed the date of the apparition of the seal of sainthood. A treatise of Ṭāwūsī, a disciple of Ḥamūyeh, written in 658/1260, states that the seal of prophethood (*khatm al-nubuwwa*) descends in the time of Muḥammad, after six thousand years, warranting the "going-to-God" and always starting after thousand years, through Adam, Noah, Ismā'īl, Jesus and Muḥammad with whom prophecy is sealed. He adds: "The seal of sainthood is the end of annihilation (*maḥw*), the summit of direction (*naḥw*), so God revealed down annihilation, then going-to, then the seal and then the seal of sainthood 600 years after the prophet's death" so that both seals, prophethood and sainthood, are joined in him<sup>17</sup>. Actually, Ḥamūyeh, in his *Risālat al-mizān fī ma'rifa al-awzān*, confirms

<sup>15</sup> I am thinking here precisely of ibn 'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, chapter of Salomon, Muhyiddin ibnū'l-Arabi, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikem*, Istanbul, 2018, pp. 139-47; P. Ballanfat, *Le livre des châteaux des sages*, Paris, 2020, p. 32 ss, 201-14.

<sup>16</sup> I differentiate essence and essence on the basis of the developments of the *melāmi* pole Olanlar Şeyh İbrāhīm (1000-1065/1592-1655), nicknamed the second ibn 'Arabī. He translates *dhāt* with *öz* that he links with the verb *özlemek*, which means to miss and which I decided to translate essence. The essence is absolute indetermination and unconditionality. It is what is missed or longed for through any thing that is determined as the development of its essence. The essence is what is hidden and never determined though it is somehow thought and looked for in any essence which must be thought as a development rather than a being appearing identical to itself, which would be Plato's *eidōs*. The aim is to put a distance between Plato's ontological essences legacy and the necessity to find the freedom to think anew these notions. For more explanations, see my book *Poésie en ruines*, Paris, 2020, p. 5 n. 1 and the chapter "essences et essences" p. 22-27.

<sup>17</sup> İbrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Ṭāwūsī al-Qazwīnī, *Sharḥ al-ḥurūf bayna al-'arīf wa-l-ma'rūf*, Cambridge ms. Browne Y. 4, fol. 45a.



this statement since he indicates that “the seal of prophethood came down” to Muḥammad after six thousand years, and that each thousand years of these six thousand years the seal passed to another prophet who was given also power (*salṭana*). He adds then that the saint-sealer arrives six hundred years after the prophet's death and that each hundred years, during this period, there is a passage of the seal, first to Khidr, then to Jesus, to the veridic ones, to the righteous ones, to the martyrs, and finally the “to the last of the martyrs, the saints' sealer who is the happy among the happy ones and the witness towards the saints”<sup>18</sup>.

Ṭāwūsī also mentions Yas'ā as the sealer of sainthood who is the achievement of the orient, of which the mīm of Jabrā'īl is the inward, that passes outwardly from Adam to Muḥammad and the Occident, of which the inward is the mīm of Mīkā'īl, which passes outwardly from Muḥammad to Aḥmad<sup>19</sup>. He calls him later: “his saint handling justice the yearned (*murād*) the beloved Yas'ā the non-arabic-speaking (*Yas'ā al-'ajamī*) the sealer of sainthood who is where returns the prophet, the Occident of the totality of the lights spread in the high and the low, in the spiritual and angelic, the fierce and gentle, the prophetic and saint stands”<sup>20</sup>. He is the name for “the rise of the sun of certainty from the Occident”<sup>21</sup>. However, at the end of the text, Ṭāwūsī states that “there is no name for the sealer of the saints”<sup>22</sup>, which leads to reconsider “Yas'ā” not as an identification of a person and not as a name but as some generic term. An anonymous Persian treatise without title<sup>23</sup>, claiming the authority of ibn 'Arabī and Ḥamūyeh<sup>24</sup>, speculating with the numeric values of the letters deals at length with the dates related to the seal of sainthood. The author uses Ḥamūyeh's terminology and identification of the seal, sealer-of-sainthood (*khātim-i wilāyat*) Yas'ā<sup>25</sup>. His calculations are somewhat confused but it comes to conclude that “the *tā* that has been placed between the *alif* and the *yā*' indicates that date of his birth is 720/1321 after the Hijra of the prophet”<sup>26</sup>, 777/1376 from the prophet's

<sup>18</sup> Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 118b-119a.

<sup>19</sup> Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 46b.

<sup>20</sup> Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 46b.

<sup>21</sup> Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 47a.

<sup>22</sup> Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 56a.

<sup>23</sup> Ayasofia 4795, fol. 197b-200a; the manuscript is dated 855h.

<sup>24</sup> Ayasofia 4795, fol. 198a.

<sup>25</sup> Ayasofia 4795, fol. 198a.

<sup>26</sup> Ayasofia 4795, fol. 197b.

death and 840/1437 from the prophet's birth<sup>27</sup>, the date of his advent is 810/1408 after the Hijra<sup>28</sup>.

As a result, Nasafī hides his complex betrayal under a tricky dream in which he plays the prophet against Ḥamūyeh with the significant witnessing of ibn Khafīf Shīrāzī. His betrayal is complex since at the same time he says he disapproves openly Ḥamūyeh's speculations over the datation of the rise of the seal of sainthood, in the eighth century, which provoked, he says, Ḥamūyeh's anger against him, but confirms somehow this date, 700 years after the Hijra, for publishing his own texts about the timelord and his identification to the Imām. In chapter V of the *Maqṣad-i aqṣā*, he considers it to be the timelord, *ṣāhib al-zamān*, about whom he says Ḥamūyeh has written a lot, while the latter hardly mentions it. He states that Ḥamūyeh had said that he would appear during the time he was living and that many people, in Khurāsān, Kirmān and Pārs, believed him, claimed to be the timelord and fell into despair, which confirms the strong influence of Ḥamūyeh's teaching about the seal of sainthood on many circles far from his location. However, Nasafī says that he believes the time of his coming is unknown though he is sure he will appear<sup>29</sup>. Nasafī's dream, his critics about the rise of the seal of sainthood, and below the episode with Isfarāyinī might an indication that Nasafī was himself among those of whom he says they claimed to be themselves the seal of sainthood. He will manifest the truth of sainthood when he comes so that the inner truths will become apparent and the apparent ones, belonging to prophethood, will be concealed. When they are revealed, it will be the end of time, the resurrection and the apparition of God. Most probably, Nasafī has used the claim that Ḥamūyeh gave a date for the manifestation of the sealer of sainthood as a hidden rhetorical argument to justify his will to interpret it as being the timelord supposed to appear at the end of time and he confirms it in the same way when stating that many people living in his time claimed to be this timelord, thus interpreting Ḥamūyeh's sealer as the mahdī like he does. In his *Maqṣad-i aqṣā*, Nasafī explains that sainthood happens only in the religion of Muḥammad, that the saints who are the heirs of the prophet, *warīth* and *nā'ib*,

<sup>27</sup> Ayasofia 4795, fol. 198b.

<sup>28</sup> Ayasofia 4795, fol. 198a.

<sup>29</sup> 'Azīz-i Dīn Nasafī, *Kitāb al-Insān al-Kāmil*, M. Molé. Tehran/Paris, Bibliothèque Iranienne, 1962, introd. p. 16-17.

are twelve persons<sup>30</sup>, of which the last is the seal of the saints and bears the names of *mahdī* and *ṣāhib al-zamān*. This account comes after a description of the 356 saints constituting 6 classes, about which Ḥamūyeh is supposed to have said that they are not saints (*walī*) but substitutes (*abdāl*)<sup>31</sup>. Nasafī concludes that these twelve saints are the shiite imāms<sup>32</sup>, while Ḥamūyeh is always referring to the four first caliphs giving them an important spiritual role. However, Ḥamūyeh does mention substitutes but as the seven parts of the prophet-sealer and the saint-sealer: “The substitutes are named substitutes because God placed them as substitutes to the members of the prostration of the sealer-of-the-prophets and the sealer-of-the-saints and they are seven souls; when the sealer-of-the-saints appears, they are to him like the body, the two feet, the face and the two knees”<sup>33</sup>. They are seven because they correspond to the seven centuries that precede the saint-sealer’s coming out<sup>34</sup>. Isfarāyīnī reports that he heard in Baḥrābād, the place in Khurāsān where Ḥamūyeh lived ultimately, an important former disciple of Ḥamūyeh reporting that Ḥamūyeh would have said: “The point where the saints begin is the final point of the prophets” which is the opposite of the common Sufi assertion<sup>35</sup>, as I shall discuss later. However, since Nasafī mentions the same saying in his *Kashf al-ṣirāt*, it might be that the former disciple mentioned by Isfarāyīnī is Nasafī himself<sup>36</sup>.

### Timing the sealer-of-the-saints

Ḥamūyeh’s perspective regarding the sealer-of-the-saints depends entirely on his construction of time through prophetic figures. Time is a narrative and not a structure. In other terms, it stands only as history and history is the prophetic narrative unfolded in the *Koran* that requires to be seized in its essence by embodying it in the personal acknowledgement of *tawḥīd*, witnessing unity by performing it. The accomplishment of *tawḥīd* is the history that leads from Adam to the sealer-of-the-saints, who, thus, cannot be a seal but has to be a sealer,

<sup>30</sup> According to Ma’sūm ‘Alīshāh, these twelve saints were actually meant for the twelve successors of Najm al-dīn Kubrā, *Tarā’iq al-ḥaqā’iq*, Tehran, vol. 3, p. 341.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Azīz-i Dīn Nasafī, *Kitāb al-insān al-kāmil*, M. Molé. Tehran/Paris, Bibliothèque Iranienne, 1962, p. 317, 320-322.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 19-20.

<sup>33</sup> *Kitāb al-ḥāqir ma’a’l-khātir*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 133b.

<sup>34</sup> *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

<sup>35</sup> H. Landolt, *Isfarāyīnī: Le révélateur des mystères*, Persian text p. 54 French text, p. 75ss., 177s.; “Le paradoxe de la ‘Face de Dieu’: ‘Azīz-e Nasafī (VIIe/XIIIe siècle) et le ‘monisme ésotérique’ de l’islam,” *Studia Iranica* (1996) 25, p. 171.

<sup>36</sup> *Kashf al-ṣirāt*, ms. Veliyuddin 1767, 235a, quoted in “Le paradoxe de la ‘Face de Dieu’: ‘Azīz-e Nasafī (VIIe/XIIIe siècle) et le ‘monisme ésotérique’ de l’islam,” *Studia Iranica* (1996) 25, p. 171.

someone and not a function or a structure. The text called “*Chapter unfolding the Flood*” in the *majmū‘a* wrongly attributed to ibn ‘Arabī, because apparently ibn ‘Arabī’s texts were read with Ḥamūyeh’s texts in the posterity of Ḥamūyeh’s circle, shows one essential aspect of the sealer-of-the-saints. “Know that the beginning of the Flood happens from the breath and the wind, then the water, then the light and then the pen. The indication pointing to some degrees of the wisdom of the gathering between Noah and Yas‘ā, the sealer-of-the-saints, is in the (letters) *ḥā’* and *yā’* and within it descends “the Living” (*al-Ḥayy*)”. There is thus an essential unity between Noah and the sealer-of-the-saints which stands in the letters *ḥā’* and *yā’* that compose the word “the Living” (*al-Ḥayy*) that governs the whole prophetic history of the essence. This unity is unfolded as a mere indication (*ishāra*) which means that it unfolds what it keeps hidden. It is an unfolding or a guise of truth that does not jeopardise the secrecy (*sarīra*) of what has to be unfolded as a secret. The link between Noah and the sealer-of-the-saints is mysterious but is unfolding secretly through the Flood. It is mysterious because the fundamental relation that configures the sealer-of-the-saints is his relation with Adam and Muḥammad in which he is the narrative of the end or the end as narrative and thus as an experience, which is the condition for it to be an acknowledgement. The end is what gives a stand to the beginning, as it is only in a posterior narrative that we learn about the name of the beginner, Adam. If time is a narrative, it is precisely because it is the only way beginning finds its starting point and can be acknowledged as a beginning and the beginning it is. The prophetic narrative, the scripture thus, is the condition of the beginning. Noah is the other beginning after the first, which is thus a kind of failure, so that the beginning is restarted. Therefore, the notion of beginning would not be achieved if these two beginnings were not acknowledged. Given that the acknowledgement is necessarily achieved by the sealer-of-the-saints, he is the one who gathers the beginnings. He is the final part, the missing part of the beginning that brings the whole as a whole, the part that achieves the whole by being merely a part, like in ibn ‘Arabī’s vision of the double brick in the wall of prophecy. The Living (*al-Ḥayy*) gives the date of the Flood through a strange dialogue. The Living has descended within the wisdom gathering Noah and Yas‘ā through their letters, *ḥā’* and *yā’*, and thus has come to its being unfolded within the narrative that takes

place between its own letters. Noah and Yas'ā are the two essential determinations of the Living in their being the second beginning and the end. The Living is addressing someone who is not named, but who apparently is Ḥamūyeh himself, the narrator. Suddenly thus, we move from a general narrative, biblical and koranic, to the personal experience of Ḥamūyeh who has become part of the narrative. This insertion of the author in the narrative, subtle economy between the general and the individual narratives descending like the Living in the secrecy of Noah:Yas'ā's gathering, is the condition for the Living to give a date for the Flood. Giving a date is the way for the individual to enter as part of the event. It is the way time is a narrative, and thus time is mastered by the individual who is dated himself through the narrative dating. The datation given by the Living is the way the guidance is manifested orienting the prophetic process towards the saint-sealer because it articulates within itself prophethood and sainthood: "The absolute Living is God; when he appeared self-evident with his original life to his prophet the loved one who is descending from the *yā'* of the Living (*ḥayy*) and ascending to his *ḥā'* and to his saint who is descending from the *ḥā'* of the Living and ascending to the *yā'* came out the name the opener from the *ḥā'* of the Living and the name the guide (*ḥādī*) from the *yā'* of the Living"<sup>37</sup>

The Living speaking to the author who reports its talk reminds him that: "The beginning of the Flood occurred during the last sixth part of the night of Wednesday four hundred and eighty two years (482) after Adam's death; the apparition of the Flood happened at the end of the Sunday when remained of it the quantum that was remaining of the Wednesday night in which stood the beginning of the Flood and between its beginning and its apparition were eighteen years (18); the beginning of the Flood belongs to the wisdom of the land of Canaan and its apparition is in Kūfā; it started upon the wisdom of negating and appeared upon the wisdom of affirming, that is being and non-being [...] and as much as *boiled the furnace* (*Kor.* 11:40, 23:27) in the land of Canaan and land of Kūfā God let flow the springs, opened the doors of heaven and opened the door of the doors in the core of heaven with a water streaming"<sup>38</sup>. The springs play a major role later on in the transmission by Noah of the letters to the sealer-of-the-

<sup>37</sup> *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 80a.

<sup>38</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ mubtadā' al-tūfān*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 156a-b; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, p. 235.

saints and Ḥamūyeh.

The dating goes along with the distinction between the beginning and the effectivity of the Flood. The Flood remains a long time hidden, eighteen years, before being unfolded. It appears finally 500 years after Adam's death. When coming to Muḥammad, there are two possible dating reference, either Hijra or his death, as we saw with Ḥamūyeh's disciples. In the case of Adam, only his death can be given as a starting point for a dating. Time is divided between duration and the dates that fix the duration as well as the duration gives the date. Duration is the tempo of the narrative and the dates its rhythm. Rhythm and tempo constitute the prophetic history. The first duration is the time in which the Flood is covert-unexpected and expand 482 years from death to the covert beginning of the Flood, which lasts 18 years. The beginning is not a single point but a duration of 18 years (6x3). The 18 years are the years in which the Flood still didn't appear and yet has started. Its apparition thus requires a long covert preparation until it is revealed. Its apparition is the end of the beginning so that the beginning begins nothing else than its own end, without any mediation in between, though this beginning is itself the process that goes through four degrees: breath, wind, water, light and the pen. The beginning gathered with its end constitutes the wisdom, i.e. the acknowledgment of the performing decision (*ḥukm*), in which Noah and Yas'ā, the *ḥā'* of Nūḥ and the *yā'* of Yas'ā are gathered. The beginning is what appears as such in its end like the *ḥā'* in the *yā'* of Noah in Yas'ā. Noah is the essential character of the beginning because he manifests "erasing" or "deleting" as such and thus negation. To him belongs a guidance (*hidāya*) that is given to the sealer-of-the-saints. The essence of deleting (*maḥw*) that can be revealed only late, since it requires something to be deleted, while it is absolutely early, or rather originary since it belongs to the essence of God in its originary state, the hidden treasure. This delaying of time constitutes the very possibility of sealing because it is the structure of time-narrative. Moreover, Noah achieves the secrecy of the secret, which is constituted by its "being loving covering (*kufr*) and its people" through his prayer to erase them from the "earth of the secret" that frees manifestation from the wish of the essence to cover itself with impiety, and thus



frees the possibility of manifesting truth<sup>39</sup>. In other terms, Noah is somehow the prophet of the necessary failure processing knowledge, since he is revealing and achieving through his prayer both the deleting of the first start, that is still the essence's remorse of being manifested, and the start-over of a new beginning that, thus, is already processing its achievement with the two sealers. The date of the apparition, 500 years after Adam's death, is extremely precise and strange at the same time. The beginning stands a Wednesday (4th day) during the last sixth of the night and its apparition picks up right at the same time but the Sunday (1st day). The beginning lasted therefore between the 4th and the 1st days which could as well be between the 1st and the 4th. Ḥamūyeh is obviously playing with the numbers, like he will do later with Noah's fingers, to emphasise the gathered unity between the beginning and the end that is achieved in the sealer-of-the-saints. Same time but different day, as if the same time (6th) would stand for the unity of beginning and end, the beginning's end that is Yas'ā, and the different days as the disjunction between the end and the beginning, in which Noah is finally late in regard to the sealer, like in the ritual where the same ritual is always performed different days and is thus a kind of suspension indefinitely repeated through the narrative of time.

The Flood is the condition for Yas'ā to become the sealer he is. Noah is the one out of which the springs flow into the world. His fingers are the spring of the 10 springs, and are gathered in the letter *yā'* he transmits to Yas'ā. "Indication: *And we let flow the earth as springs*" (Kor. 54:12) The springs were 10, 4 of them in the Easts, 4 in the Wests and 2 between those two; 4 of them flowed out of the secret of Noah's fingers, his left fingers, and 6 out of his right fingers; then Noah gathered the secret of his fingers in the (letter) *yā'*; he transmitted the *yā'* to Yas'ā<sup>40</sup> and the springs gushed according to the wisdom of the self-evident and the secrets of his concealed calls and they are 10 perfect; the *yā'* is the last of the letters transmitted to me by the prophets, I mean Muḥammad, Abraham and Noah; the prophet Muḥammad transmitted me 3 (letters) *rā'*, in Khurāsān in a hamlet called Abadqān in the surroundings of Jurpad, and 3 *ḥā'* in a place called Mustahadd at the limit of Baṣra belonging to the district of Baghdad, Abraham,

<sup>39</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 180a.

<sup>40</sup> This has been described earlier in the text, *Sharḥ muḥtadā' al-tūfān*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 158a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 237.

the friend of God, transmitted me 3 *mīm* at his tomb and Noah transmitted me 3 *yā'*; the totality of the letters is *Ḥaramī* and *Raḥmī* in which stand the Living and the Life-giver"<sup>41</sup>; the first appears as the soul of human being in Jesus (*ʿĪsā*) and the latter, as the soul of the angels, “comes out of it and appear in *Yasʿā*, the sealer-of-the-saints” so that with the descent of the breath of authority (*naḥas al-rubūbiyya*) they enter in one another “the night of *ʿāshūrā*” and are gathered “the day of “*ʿāshūrā*” “for the essential-essantial life (*al-ḥayāt al-ʿayniyya al-dhātiyya*)” to become “like a single soul in which has appeared being the breath of God and being his essence”<sup>42</sup>. The letter *yā'* is actually the letter proper to the sealer-of-the-saints *Yasʿā* as the *nūn* is that of the prophet: “God unveiled to his weak servant that the beginning of divinity and prophethood is the unveiling of the *alif* and the *nūn* from which is composed “*ana*” and the *alif* is Allāh and the *nūn* the prophet owner of the light”. When the prophet descended and stood “the *alif* of *ilah* appeared and the letters of “*anā*” were completed and it is the expression of the rise of “*innī*” because the *alif* is Allāh, the *nūn* his prophet and the *yā'* *Yasʿā* his saint who is living (*ḥayy*) and does not die”<sup>43</sup>. It is linked with the hand (*yad*) through Noah’s fingers and the little finger will be the location of the seal itself, as I shall explain later. Ḥamūyeh receives thus four sets of letters, like the word *innī* mentioned above, which include the *yā'* given to *Yasʿā*, indicating that he is himself also *Yasʿā*, the sealer-of-the-saints. Actually, Noah is the key figure in this transmission because his name links the two letters *yā'* and *nūn* through a common mistake. The *nūn* of Noah (*Nūḥ*) is changed into *yā'* so that it becomes *Yūḥ* for designating the sun (*shams*), which is a mistake. However, the language mistake hides the fact that, indeed, Noah is the one that allows the *yā'* of I-ness (*anāniyya*) to move and include the *nūn* of the general “we” (*naḥnu*) because the *nūn* in his name comes from the *nūn* of the light of the sun linked with prophethood<sup>44</sup>. In the same way the spirit is changed into Noah by the substitution of the *rā'* into *nūn*. God changed the *rā'* of his wind and of his

<sup>41</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ muḥtadā' al-tūfān*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 157b; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 238-9. The three *yā'* may correspond to the three modes of *ḥayāt*, in the following pages: water, river and sea. “The *hā'* of the word of Allāh descends to the *fā'* of creator (*fāṭir*) of the heavens and the earth and appears from it *fahu* from the mouths and it is a word (*kalām*) from divine expulsion (*ḥiram*) and womb (*riḥm*) that God forbid to the aliens; the *hā'* of the womb is the spirit (*rūḥ*) its *mīm* is the face of the spirit and its *rā'* is the semblance of the face; the one who understands (*ya-faham*) something of the expulsion and the womb is *ḥaramī raḥmī rūḥī wajhī sūrī*”, treatise without title, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 66b.

<sup>42</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ muḥtadā' al-tūfān*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 157b-158b; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 239-241.

<sup>43</sup> *Ḥaqq al-waqt wa'l-sā'a*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 142b.

<sup>44</sup> *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 41b.

spirit into *nūn* so that the spirit becomes Noah “who grieves (*yanūḥu*) through the influence of the spirit on him”<sup>45</sup>. Muḥammad transmits two sets in two different places, Khurāsān and Irak, Abraham one in Shām, and Noah one with no location indicated though we understand that it must be Kūfā when the Flood appears after having started in Canaan. It is thus twelve letters that appear in Yas‘ā that unify his soul by being unified a single day, the day of ‘āshūrā. The letter *yā’* is what gathers all the others since it is the letter of sainthood proper to Yas‘ā, thus achieving the process of existence through the letters. The four sets of letters point to the totality of the process that constitutes the sealer and is summarised in the word *innī* revealed to Ḥamūyeh in as he mentions in his *Ḥaqq al-waqt*, completed in 636/1236 during a period of two years of intense writing<sup>46</sup>, Friday night of the month of *Ṣafar*. The beginning is the unity of God and the prophet through the two letters *alif* and *nūn*, concealment and manifestation since the prophet owns light, i.e. the essential structure of truth, and is completed by the *yā’* of Yas‘ā who manifests the inward of the word *ana* as being *innī*. The prophet, when manifesting himself, causes the *alif* of divinity to appear with its ambivalence, which appears through the pen and its two opposite points, since “the pen is the semblance of deleting and confirming (*maḥw-ithbāt*)”<sup>47</sup>, and constitutes the prophetic narrative history. With this process appears the word *anā*, ‘I’, which seems to stand as being already fixed while it is the expression of a hidden process of which the truth is manifested by the sealer-of-the-saints. What is hidden in the word *ana* is the first beginning that leads to its manifestation as a standing fixed essence. The sealer-of-the-saints reveals it by receiving the letter *yā’* in which the *alif* of the beginning:concealing is completely revealed without anymore take-back, or essential retraction, in the essence, so that the sealer is ultimately ever-lasting living. The four letters of *innī*, revealed by the sealer-of-the-saints, are thus the hidden process within the three letters of *ana*, manifested by the sealer-of-the prophets. The three prophets, Muḥammad,

<sup>45</sup> *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 42a.

<sup>46</sup> As a matter of fact, Ḥamūyeh felt the necessity to give the date of the composition of some treatises, typically dealing with the saint-sealer. Thus, the years when he used to meet with ibn ‘Arabi in Damascus appear to be a period of intense writing about these topics. In 635/ he writes in order *Khurūj al-shukhūṣ ‘an burūj al-khuṣūṣ*, *Kitāb ‘ayn al-a ‘yān*, *Kashf sirr al-wa ‘d*, *Risālat al-radd ‘alā l-yahūd wa-ṭarḥ al-juhūd bi-waḍ ‘ al-iqrār fī l-shuhūd wa-l-jumūd*, *Bahr al-shukr fī nahr al-nukr* and *Khātimat al-radd ‘alā l-yahūd*; in 636/ he writes: *al-Faṣl fī mubtada ‘ al-tūfān*, *Risālat al-miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, *Khātimat nuzūl al-jabbār ilā l-bayt wa-l-wādī wa-l-ka ‘ba wa-l-dār*, *Kitāb nashr al-bayyāḍ wa-rawḍat al-riyāḍ wa-ḥashr al-rawḍatayn fī dhū l-bayḍ*, *Baqiyat khātimat al-radd ‘alā l-yahūd*, *Kitāb Marātib al-qurra fī ‘uyūn al-quḍra*, *al-Khātima bi-faḍl raḥmatihī wa-sa ‘at maghfirati-h*.

<sup>47</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Bahr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 148a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabi*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 212.

Abraham, and Noah reveal four sets of three letters each as if they were themselves three letters, like *ana*. However, Muḥammad reveals these letters twice, repeating thus or duplicating, like the *nūn* of *innī*, which is repeated. In other terms, on one hand Muḥammad is the duplicating one and the sealer-of-the-saints is his double, so that it is only through Muḥammad that the sealer-of-the-saints comes to appear as such, though by the mediation of Noah's letters, and the two sealers belong to one other. On the other hand, Muḥammad, because he opens the history of the conflict between deleting, or taking-back, and confirming by concealing its secret truth, is the one who delays the coming of the sealer-of-the-saints. And at the same time, by delaying it, he warrants his manifestation, since delaying always includes the promise and the date of the coming<sup>48</sup>. Muḥammad announces the coming Hour, which is an essential koranic point of faith and, for Ḥamūyeh, the coming of the sealer-of-the-saints. Muḥammad, by giving two sets of letters, includes the distinction of the two sealers which is a series of delaying – two beginnings, two ends and two sealing which gives six – the timing of their relation, which lasts six days like the six letters given. However, the essential unity of the sealers is achieved the seventh day which is Tuesday: “From the sainthood of God to his prophethood there is one day and from his prophethood to his sainthood one day, from the sainthood of God's right to his prophethood one day and from his prophethood to his sainthood one day, and from the sainthood of God's spirit, his word and his hand, which is the sainthood for God (*li-llāh*) to his prophethood one day and from his sainthood to his prophethood one day; this is six days for God and the seventh day is complete from the sainthoods to the tongue, the exposure and the vision; and it belongs to the two sealers who speak with the two words of God, Arabic and non-Arabic (*a'jamī*) [...] A group claimed this day is Friday but according to the truth it is Tuesday”<sup>49</sup>. The delay of time is linked with the division of language between the prophet-sealer and the saint-sealer<sup>50</sup>, that will be discussed at the

<sup>48</sup> Another essential delaying is that of encountering with Khidr who is “the semblance of the totality of the saints and their prince”, Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa'd*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 194a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, p. 331.

<sup>49</sup> *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 77a-b; the difference between the prophet and the sealer-of-the-saints is also indicated through the difference between their graves, i.e. what they spread out of concealment: The truth of the sepulchre of the prophet and his minister (*wazīr*) Abū Bakr and 'Umar is in the secret of “I was” (*kuntu*), and the sepulchre of the sealer-of-the-saints stands in the last dignity (*sha'n*) of science and knowledge standing within the general healing”, Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sukkān al-irtibāṭ*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 142b; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, p. 197.

<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, Ḥamūyeh indicates that the prophet and the saint have one single language that is “the language of the king of the kingdom”, *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 53b.

end. The secret that carries the saint-sealer is the supreme name of God because there are three coming out: “coming out of God in his names, of Muhammad in the Koran and his names and of his saint, the beloved, in the supreme name through the names of God and the names of the Koran”<sup>51</sup>. It is because “the supreme name descends from the names of God and his Koran upon the sealer-of-the-saints in the third form” that “to him returns the case all of it”<sup>52</sup> in its absoluteness that consists in being pure action, or thinking at the fingertips. The descent of the supreme name that allows freeing the case in its purity happens in the night of sainthood that is the *yā’* standing in front of the Living and concealing;preserving it<sup>53</sup>. The supreme name already descended in sainthood but is delayed because it can appear only in proper time. The way it is concealed constitutes the language difference between the prophet-sealer and saint-sealer since “The supreme name descended” from the lord of the worlds “upon some non-Arabs and he covered and hid it because it was not the proper time for it”<sup>54</sup>. The non-Arab saints, because their language is precisely not Arab, are the effective concealing night that delays the coming of the saint-sealer who carries the supreme name and achieves existence by disclosing the Living he is.

Through the letters *yā’*, Noah transmitted to Yas‘ā the wisdom of the springs pouring out of the prophets’ fingers, in other terms the essential relation between the Flood and prophethood and the fundamental unity of the beginning to the end. The Flood is thus the revelation of the position of the sealer-of-the-saints at the end that is the revelation of the truth of prophethood in its relation with sainthood. It gathers together the beginning and the end in the end and gives the wisdom of the Flood, of annihilation, in the hands of the sealer through the fingers distributed asymmetrically in Noah’s hands. The transmission of the letters *yā’* follows the transmission of the previous three groups of three letters. Ḥamūyeh moves abruptly from Yas‘ā to himself stating he received letters from 4 prophets, the same number as the 4 steps of the Flood. Like Yas‘ā he has received the three letters *yā’*, the last he received, from Noah, following the ones he received from Muḥammad, *rā’* and *ḥā’*, and Abraham, *mīm*. The transmission of

<sup>51</sup> *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 57b.

<sup>52</sup> *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 58b.

<sup>53</sup> *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 61a.

<sup>54</sup> *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 58b.

the letters by Muḥammad and Abraham occurred in definite places, Khurāsān, Irak (linked with Kūfā above) and Shām (linked with Ḥīrā), while the last he received from Noah is not linked with a specific place though we can infer that it follows Noah's itinerary that leads his boat to Jūdī, the Flood reaching Ḥīrā "of which a part is in Khurāsān and a part in Shām"<sup>55</sup>. The location of the transmission both ties spaces with time, or rather organises time through its spacing, and sets the timing of the sealer within Ḥamūyeh's personal sealing process<sup>56</sup>. The beginning is the relation between the *ḥā'* of Noah and *yā'* of Yas'ā, both composing the name *al-Ḥayy*, the Living, but the Living ultimately appears in Jesus (*Īsā*) belonging to human soul, and is linked with the word *ḥaramī* derived from the letters transmitted to Ḥamūyeh through the relation between Noah and Yas'ā. But this word corresponds to an order of the transmission that is not that of the transmission to Ḥamūyeh but perhaps to Yas'ā by Noah. The letters composed according to the order of transmission to Ḥamūyeh form the word *Raḥmī* which appears in Yas'ā and corresponds to the name *muḥyī*, *ḥayy* and *muḥyī* being ultimately united in one single soul, that of the end or the sealer-of-the-saints, who is achieved or sealed by and in Ḥamūyeh himself. Ḥamūyeh describes incidentally the process through which the encounter with what is promised leads the one who encounters to become the same as what he encounters. It deals with Khidr, "the semblance of the totality of the saints and their prince" with whom the encounter is promised. The promise process can be achieved only through three determinations, repealing, substituting and causing to forget, that are the condition of delaying without which time cannot be achieved and cannot bring about what is promised. The essence of time is the promise (*wa'd*), which governs prophetic history as a whole. The substitution of the person who becomes what he encounters, for instance the saint-sealer Yas'ā, supposes that he is not anymore who he used to be. Hence, Ḥamūyeh cannot, as the person he is, claim to be the seal of sainthood since becoming the sealer erases, substitutes and makes forget the one he is, because "he comes back from his outward to his inward and becomes the servant of God (*'abdullāh*), expression

<sup>55</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ mubtada' al-tūfān*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 157a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 236-7.

<sup>56</sup> Ḥamūyeh describes the whole process of becoming the sealer-of-the-saints who is the acknowledger (*'arīf*) achieving his own sainthood, which is the maturation of the pearl of the beginning, as a the steps of the Sufi training, *Maḥātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 90a-92a.



of the totality of the saints and of the semblance of the totality of the saints I mean *Khidr*<sup>57</sup>. Moreover, Ḥamūyeh indicates one among the saint-sealer's signs is that he does not even claim sainthood<sup>58</sup>. *Yas'ā* is the name for this self-substitution which is the apparition of the saint-sealer in the saint that gathers all the ways of sainthood.

Ḥamūyeh gives also a personal account about Ḥīrā as a complement to his mentioning Moses recovering after the mount of evidence (*tajallī*) has been divided into six mounts like the milk and learnt his being composed of earth, clay and yeast: “I learnt during this that my earth comes from Ḥīrā and that the composition of my clay is in the room called the room of the companions (*maqṣūrat al-ṣaḥāba*) built in the mosque of Damascus protected by God from all calamities, and that my yeast is in a place we built on mount Qāsyūn; and I saw in my composition that God composed me as being of a strong vigour and great help to people<sup>59</sup> with the name gathering the case (*amr*) and the spirit, which is the compassionate (*al-rāḥim*) and it is the name of the encompassing spirit, which is the spirit of Muḥammad” and “when the all-merciful appears to the one to whom the very-merciful (*raḥmān*) the all-merciful (*raḥīm*) becomes the compassionate (*rāḥim*)”<sup>60</sup>. It is worth noting that these mentions belong to his *Risālat al-miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār* achieved Sunday 22 of *Ṣafar* 636/1236. Some places of the letters' revelation belong to the very inner constitution of Ḥamūyeh's body out of a group of three things, earth, clay and yeast, like the groups of three letters. It is thus originally and from the very beginning that Ḥamūyeh is linked with the revelation of the sealer-of-the-saints and the revelation is the coming out of its own constitution. Ḥamūyeh indicates that “as long as the servant is in the name (*ism*), he travels and when he is in the word (*kalima*) he becomes up-straight (*muqīm*) permanent” indicating that the process that leads to the rise of the sealer-of-the-saints is the personal process of

<sup>57</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa'd*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 194b-195a ; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 331-2. Let's mention that ibn al-Karbālā'ī claims that Ḥamūyeh is the seal of sainthood, *Rawḍāt al-janān wa-jannāt al-janān*, Tehran, 1349, I, p. 415.

<sup>58</sup> *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

<sup>59</sup> These two qualities are those of the iron (*ḥadīd*) which is “the name to accomplish the secret of the hand and the spirit in the scripture and prophethood, the accomplishment of the scripture and prophethood in Abraham and Noah, the accomplishment of the scripture and prophethood in the prophet and the messenger Muḥammad and Aḥmad, the descent of what was in Muḥammad and Aḥmad to Jesus and God's messengers and the extraction of what was in Jesus and the messengers of God in *Yas'ā*, the sealer-of-the-saints”, Ḥamūyeh, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 171b ; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 273.

<sup>60</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 171a ; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 272-3.

the servant and not a global messianic process. It is the personal achievement of the sainthood of the saint that involves the world becoming a totality through this process since the world is actually the world of the saint-sealer. Immediately after this precision he states: “Adam and David are like one single semblance in the word “the lieutenant” and I already mentioned that the root of the name Adam that supports the root is *dāw* meaning the two hands for unification (*ittihād*)” and that “the *dāl* is the indication of (the prophet’s) lengthening to Jesus the son of Mary and to the sealer-of-the-saints Yas‘ā and to their encounter in Damascus in the room of Damascus mosque after their descent; [...] and our prophet Muḥammad rises from between them in his lasting wealth [...]; meanwhile, he enters the celebration (*‘ayd*) of the reunion of the *‘ayn* of Jesus (*‘Īsā*) the *yā’* of Yas‘ā and the *dāl* of Muḥammad”<sup>61</sup>.

The letter *dāl* plays a major role in the rise and achievement of the saint-sealer. It comes from rejection (*radd*) of what precedes, becoming estranged to it, so as move ahead to find the abode: “He gave him the *dāl* of the Jews (*yahūd*) and it is the *dāl* of the house (*dār*) of the existing possessing the generosity in existence”<sup>62</sup>. It brings together Adam, David and Muḥammad with Damascus. The *dāl* goes back to the question of the hand, since the secret of the hands belongs to the saint-sealer because the *yā’* is both sainthood and the hand as such, so that sainthood consists in being a hand, and the *dāl* is the prophetic extension of time until the manifestation of the hand. The extension of time is a delaying until Jesus and Yas‘ā appear and come together with Muḥammad in a celebrating encounter (*‘ayd*). Coming together at the end, gathering the sealers, is the revelation of the saint-sealer who achieves the name *al-Ḥayy* and thus *confirms* definitely God’s manifesting himself, not fully as in a theology of *parousia*, but as an *everlasting*, and not eternal, spread of *existence* of which the essence is *life* and not being. The meeting between Jesus and Yas‘ā is the meeting of the name *al-‘Alī*, the High, belonging to Jesus and the name *al-Ḥayy*, the Living, belonging to Yas‘ā<sup>63</sup>. The place of the celebration is a room in the mosque of Damascus, and not an open and public place that would require a messianic arch-politics. It is in

<sup>61</sup> *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 70b; also *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

<sup>62</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *al-Radd ‘alā al-yahūd*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 188a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 313.

<sup>63</sup> *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206b.

the intimacy of a small and hidden room that the saint-sealer is revealed. Somehow, thus, if the identity of the saint-sealer remains discreet and cannot be told publicly, it is precisely because secret is his essence, or rather because the saint-sealer is the one who is buried in knowledge as mentioned before, or in which knowledge is such because it belongs to secret, truth being the justice of concealing and exposing. It is precisely this small room of celebration to which belongs Ḥamūyeh's clay. In other terms, the celebration of Jesus, Yas'ā and Muḥammad coming together, is what witnesses Ḥamūyeh who, through his own bodily constitution, is the room of the mosque of Damascus, the place of the celebration, or what gives room to the celebration which is the achievement of the time of deleting and confirming<sup>64</sup>. “During the reunion of Jesus and Yas'ā, through the secret of Muḥammad's religion in the close-world, descends grief (*walah*)<sup>65</sup> and the intelligence departs from the beloved ones who are overturned within the grasp of God (*ḥaqq*) into the shape of the scripture and the Sunna and in the shape of Jesus and Yas'ā”<sup>66</sup>. Ḥamūyeh gives a timing for this celebration. During “the descent of the sheet, which is the semblance of the palm, the rank and the wrapping in which stands the truth of the attribute of life by which the letters and the sounds are opened to the sealer-of-the-saints the saint stands firm in his judgement in his people, himself and his existence with his perspicacity and his mastering being complete; and this case occurs during the conquest of Homs; and in it there is an indication also to the reunion between Jesus and Yas'ā with Muḥammad in the realm of the close-world and his rise between both in the secret of his law”. He also indicates that the celebration day happens during the eighteenth century after the seventeenth has finished if it is counted from the birth of the prophet and not his hegira “because the poles are seven” and that the eighth is the saint-sealer<sup>67</sup>. In other terms it must happen during the eighteenth century seven hundred years since Muḥammad's birth and before seven hundred years since the date of the hegira, between 1250 and 1301, while Ḥamūyeh died in 649/1251 when he achieved his *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*. However, the reunion of the

<sup>64</sup> *Risāla fī zuhūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

<sup>65</sup> “God drove crazy with grief (*awlaha*) for his face the hearts with the secret of his illeity (*huwiyya*)” since *huwa* is “the black of *hā'* and *wāw* surround the white of *wāw* and *hā'*”, so that “grief is the effectivity of the reunion of the name *Allāh* and the name *al-wāḥid* of which the name *huwa* announces the reunion” and is what is required in human being as contradiction and predominance, *Marātīb al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 72a.

<sup>66</sup> *Marātīb al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 72a.

<sup>67</sup> *Risāla fī zuhūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

‘*ayn*, *yā*’ and *dāl* lasts several years, probably from 605/1208 to 618/1221, time within an instant: “The laps (of the reunion) goes from the time of Nishāpūr’s earthquake to the time when the unfaithful Tatars arouse against the faithful ones; but the end of their reunion happens when Jesus and Yas‘ā, the sealer-of-the-saints, gather in the city of Damascus”<sup>68</sup>. This celebration that ends the reunion organises time since “the place of coming out of what he is promised is Damascus and all the months and places follow upon this”<sup>69</sup>. The celebration in which the saint-sealer comes to himself as such happens in a specific place that organises the complete complex of time:space, which is the palm of the hand as it will be exposed later. The Mongol invasion plays a decisive role in this process since “when the secret of the palm was transferred to the sealer-of the Tatars God destroyed and cursed them [...] the secret of the palm reached the sealer-of-the-saints”<sup>70</sup>. The success of the mongol invasion is their self-destruction, the accomplishment of deleting by which confirming occurs through the transmission of the secret of the palm to the saint-sealer. It is after that God put his palm over the back of the prophet and of Adam that the “language of the sense (*ḥaqq*)” is transmitted to the saint-sealer “so that he brings the sense:due-right of the palm and the hand to appear”<sup>71</sup>. The transmission has to do with the economy of strength and domination that is the first guise of the case (*amr*) and that is achieved through the violence of the Tatars who end the deleting and open the way for confirming, as suggests Ḥamūyeh: “Know that the breath of the strength and the breath of domination (*ghalab*) cause the secret of the seal to descend over the pearl from the extremity of the secret of the creation of India and the end of the secret of the creation of the Turks’ land because the extremity of the secret of the creation of India stands in the Tatars - may God curse them - and the end of the secret of the creation of *sin* (sic) stands in the creatures of India”<sup>72</sup>. The conversion of violent domination to victory is achieved with “the sealer-of-the-saints who is the strength of moving-forward, the strength of preceding and the strength of the lineage (*qabliyya*) and is contained in” the *sūrat al-ikhhlās*<sup>73</sup>. Commenting the koranic verse (30:1-5) Ḥamūyeh says: “These two victories

<sup>68</sup> *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 74b; this encounter between the saint-sealer and Jesus is also reported in his *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Ayasofia 1673, fol. 104b.

<sup>69</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa‘d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 195a ; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 332.

<sup>70</sup> *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 60b.

<sup>71</sup> *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Ayasofia 1673, fol. 105b.

<sup>72</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *‘Ayn al-a‘yān*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 112b.

<sup>73</sup> *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 61a.

happen in the existence of any traveller who seeks into the wisdom of self-abasement and prudence [...]; the achievement of his word “*they’ll vanquish*” happens after the conquest of the sublime Constantinople with the apparition of the sealer-of-the-saints”<sup>74</sup>. The conquest of Constantinople is the sign of the saint-sealer’s apparition since this city covers the truth of Jesus that appears in the meeting with Yas‘ā in the mosque of Damascus through the truth of Muḥammad. “The sealer-of-the-saints is the one by which was conquered the sublime Constantinople built in the *jabarūt*-like bodies in the Hārūt-like and Mārūt-like circles; and it is the circle of the darkneses and the denials of which the way is blocked for mankind until comes out the sealer-of-the-saints by whom the narratives are completely narrated and the assignments are perfectly fulfilled [...] God opened one of the two circles with our prophet al-Muṣṭafā Muḥammad and he will open the other with the sealer-of-sainthood who is the complete semblance and the perfection of the sura”<sup>75</sup>. The truth of Jesus is kept hidden in Constantinople in the two magic circles of darkneses that correspond to prophethood and sainthood, that must be opened by Muḥammad and Yas‘ā to be united in the celebration with Jesus. The darkneses are actually three, since one corresponds to Jesus who is hidden within the two circles: « The darkness of creation is illuminated by the light of our prophet al-Muṣṭafā Muḥammad, the darkness of returning by the light of the sealer-of-the-saints and the darkness of exiting by the light of Jesus the son of Mary”<sup>76</sup>. The celebration bringing together Jesus, Yas‘ā and Muḥammad is the illumination of all the darkneses that allows the rise of pure life. They bring about three specificities: Muḥammad is linked with creation and has thus a privileged link with Adam and with the whole prophetic project, Jesus is linked with exiting and the saint-sealer with returning, which is actually the return of Muḥammad, as it will be shown later.

The events, contemporary to Ḥamūyeh’s life, and their places, organise a general messianic geography of which the center is Damascus. Ḥamūyeh somehow minimises his training in Khwārazm with Najm al-dīn Kubrā and stresses on his receiving his affiliation from his Syrian family, since he received

<sup>74</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Maḥāṭib al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 91b.

<sup>75</sup> *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 74b.

<sup>76</sup> *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 85b.

the Sufi mantle in the *Masjid al-aqṣā* in Jerusalem from the masters' master of Shām, the son of his paternal uncle, Ṣadr al-dīn Abū l-Ḥasan b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamūyeh, in 616/1219, the same year he received his *ijāza* from Najm al-dīn Kubrā<sup>77</sup>. His affiliation to sufism in Jerusalem is directly linked with his acknowledgement of the seal. His minimising Najm al-dīn Kubrā has to do with the status he gives to Khwārazm, that he links with the Tatars invasion, and that of Egypt, which ruled over Syria.

“Khwārazm is fixed upon the circle of deleting and was placed as a location for the spirit's descent<sup>78</sup>; upon this signification its sultan died in the sea and the sea is the semblance coming from the semblance of cleared deleting; the land of Egypt is fixed upon the circle of confirming and was placed as a location for the beginning of the spirit's rising; upon this signification its sultan died in Damascus' castle, which belongs to the semblances of pure confirming; the start is the wisdom of repelling until knowledge repels what is stripped of the divine action and repels the case to the tablet existing in the world standing by the expanded existence proper to the sealer-of-the-saints; God has placed Egypt's sultan as a root in his abiding (*maḥalliyya*) for gathering the parts of human being's body (*wujūd*) and he has placed the case of the sultan of Khwārazm as a root in his abiding for gathering the parts of the angel's body; when they were both decreed the fullness angel's body joined the perfection of human being's body upon the truth of confirming and deleting, receiving and giving, repelling and accepting and they both became visible and hidden to the expanded body belonging to the sealer-of-the-saints; he disposed Damascus as the place of manifestation of both bodies and the significations and indications we mentioned were put between the Oxus and the Nile and it is in truth God and his light and its veil is '*lan*'; the one whom God make him pass over the Oxus and the Nile it is as if the veil of '*lan*' has been lifted of him; the place of gathering both sides is Damascus and it is the place of clearing the pearl and the particle and of unveiling

<sup>77</sup> Faṣīḥ Aḥmad Khwāfī, *Mujmal-i faṣīḥī*, éd. Maḥmūd Farrukh, Mashhad, 1339, p. 290-291; Ghiyāth al-dīn gives the precision that he received his mantle from his paternal uncle's son before he received it from Najm al-dīn Kubrā and he states: “the *shaykh al-shuyūkh* Ṣadr al-dīn Abū l-Ḥasan was the master for his mantle's affiliation (*shaykh al-khirqa*), al-shaykh Najm al-dīn the master for his retreat and education and al-shaykh Shihāb al-dīn al-Suhrawardī the master for his recollection”, *Murād al-murīdīn*, Tehran, 1389, p. 7, 11, 37; the same affiliation is given by his disciple Fakhr al-dīn al-Jandarānī at the beginning of Ḥamūyeh's *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Yeni Cami 726, fol. 1a; Ḥamūyeh's *Faṣl fī ma'rīfat al-sirr* gives a moving description of the way Ṣadr al-dīn treated badly when he came to visit him, ms. Bursa Ulucami, 1622, fol. 26b-28a.

<sup>78</sup> Var.: “so that the spirit ceases”.



the veils of them”<sup>79</sup>.

Concealing his Khwārazm affiliation and affirming his Syrian one acknowledges the conflict between deleting and confirming. Khwārazm is the place of deleting and therefore the place that must be repealed, substituted and forgotten. From it comes deleting that is manifested through the violent and catastrophic mongol invasion that ends with their being absorbed with their conversion. The saint-sealer is converting the violence of the case that appears through deleting into the strength of confirming that is given to him<sup>80</sup>. The saint-sealer is the reunion of deleting:confirming that gathers the two modes of existence, angelic, that is achieved with him, and human, that is achieved with Jesus. When doing so he sets in the place right in between deleting and confirming, which is Damascus, like he will be invested with the hand, which stands at the middle of the body, as it will be explained later. “At the end of the year 635/1237 the prophet and the saint come out from deleting (*maḥw*) and confirming (*ithbāt*) and the circles of hearing, seeing and knowing split out of the saint in the *dāl* of Damascus. And the secret of deleting and asserting descended at the beginning of the year 635 in the castle of Damascus and it was the beginning of the death of the kings and the transfer of the kingdom from one to the other”<sup>81</sup>. We now have three dates for the apparition of the saint-sealer: 605/1208 to 618/1221 for the reunion and 635/1237 for the celebration that gathers the two seals, which is also the time when the series of these texts about the saint-sealer were written. The split of the three circles are the steps that lead to the full emergence of the saint-sealer through the descent of the pure gentleness after “the fierceness (*qahr*) has disappeared from the semblance of delete and confirmation”. With the split of the circle of sight “the hand of God appears in the saints above the hands, and it is the hand of gathering and scattering in which are the *yā'* of adding and the *dāl* of all the countries and the religions; the mountains *replace one another* and the saint is granted victory”, because the seal is “the seal of victory” as it will be explained later. The *dāl*, which is the letter of delaying time until the apparition of the saint-sealer, is also that of repelling (*radd*) which is

<sup>79</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *al-Radd 'alā l-yahūd*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 186b-187a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 309.

<sup>80</sup> Ḥamūyeh's *Risālat al-muqābala*, about the five tempers of life, describes how the five negative powers, from the djinns to Iblis, are the necessary “mediation between the call and the close-world life”, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 16b-21a.

<sup>81</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Bahr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 149a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 215.

required for setting the protected place of the celebration: “God said: “Take from them the *dāl* of repelling (*radd*) and helping and place them ascent for the servant and add the *dāl* to the name Yas‘ā until he becomes with it a rampart of the servant and a fortunate to whom God returns the celebration of the festival; My lord I took the *dāl* from them upon your command and your judgement and I received this from you and you are the lord of the worlds”<sup>82</sup>. Ḥamūyeh is himself the one in which the saint-sealer is manifested as he says: “He opened to me the treasures of the two seals (*khatm*) with the key that is in the hand of the opener who does not move”<sup>83</sup>.

As it appears through the preceding quotes, the main event, the celebration is the meeting of Jesus (‘Īsā) and Yas‘ā within the law of Muḥammad. With this meeting the lieutenant of God, of which the truth is constituted by the *dāl* of Adam and David achieved in the *dāl* of the hand of the saint-sealer, is realised by becoming the saint-sealer when both grief (*walah*) descends on the beloved (*al-maḥbūb*), overturning him in the hand of God into Jesus and Yas‘ā and when Muḥammad rises between them. The manifestation of the seal, that is the seal of victory, happens with the encounter of Jesus and Yas‘ā through the celebration. The relation between them is Muḥammad, or rather Muḥammad, by being the prophet-sealer, is the one who makes possible the relation between ‘Īsā and Yas‘ā. These two are obviously the specular and anagrammatic reflection of one another. Ḥamūyeh makes a systematic use of anagrammatic overturning of the names based on the fact that any name is constituted by the repealing-susbtituting-causing-to-forget structure of the deleting:confirming essence of time. The simultaneous affirmation of the anagrammatic aspects of a name is the way the name is achieved by standing in its truth, and it is a prophetic knowledge belonging to Muḥammad<sup>84</sup>. Jesus is the prophetic figure that points to the end of time and does so by being opposed to his negative duplication, the antichrist. As well, the case is manifested through the ambivalence of might that appears first as a constrain and ends in the total violence of annihilation. When this violence reaches its maximum, it is deleted and opens the way to confirmation. In other

<sup>82</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *al-Radd ‘alā l-yahūd*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 188a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 312.

<sup>83</sup> Treatise without title, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 72a.

<sup>84</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Kitāb baḥr al-ma’ānī*, Fazl Ahmed Pasa 706, fol. 28a.

terms it is overturned. Yas'ā is the figure that is substituted to the negative reflect of 'Īsā that is the antichrist, like the seal moves from the Tatars to the saint-sealer through their annihilation and curse. Yas'ā reverts the violence of might and thus reveals the case (*amr*) in its purity that is freed from the regret and take-back that belong to the essence. “When the time for (the light) rejoining (the saint-sealer) occurred he caused to come out a people, for supporting this situation, that destroys the religions and revert consent into rebellion, while one of the two hands of the Very-merciful is veiled by the hand of the deceiving messiah whose semblance is the thoughtless unfaithfulness, named Tatar that kills the creatures so that their spirits meet the spirit of the sealer-of-the-saints who is the place that gathers divinity and prophethood”<sup>85</sup>. Yas'ā is the one who achieves specular inversion because the seal is possible provided that it is always displaced, never at home where it stands, and because it reveals the general law of displacement or substitution that governs truth. The seal sets the process of reversion, inversion, substitution, the specular mirror structure of appearing:seeing:knowing by which action comes to its purity: “Your face is the mirror of your truth and your truth is the mirror of your face [...] one of the sides of your mirror is Gabriel your trustee and the other side is Yas'ā who is reverted in sainthood by your right side; he is the carrier of your face in the mirror (*sajanjil*) of existence”<sup>86</sup>.

The celebration, which brings together in mirror Jesus and Yas'ā, allows to establish their respective position. As it has already been quoted, the *Maḥfātīḥ al-asrār* (25b) indicates that when “Jesus’s relief” comes at the end of time “the divine opening” causes the hidden treasure and the concealed secret to descend. The sealer is the one who is carrying the secret in secret, himself concealed as the little finger, the weakest, the most useless and the inconspicuous. Jesus is bringing existence as light and the sealer is bringing the hand. The sealer is the secret descending with the hidden treasure not in order to make it known but to achieve it through pure action, which manifests it as the secret of any manifestation. This is why Ḥamūyeh states: “The truth of the sepulchre of the prophet and his minister (*wazīr*) Abū Bakr and 'Umar is in the secret of “I was”

<sup>85</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Maḥfātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 59a.

<sup>86</sup> *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 100a.

(*kuntu*), and the sepulchre of the sealer-of-the-saints stands in the last dignity (*sha'n*) of science and knowledge standing within the general healing”<sup>87</sup>. And this is why the saint-sealer is the saint of “the-unique-the-one” (*al-wāḥid al-aḥad*). “Jesus does not stop coming out and ‘Azrā’īl entering until Gabriel the firm comes out of the ‘Azrā’īliyyāt visible over the rock of the sacred abode (*al-bayt al-maqdis*) [...] and Yas‘ā the sealer-of-the-saints does not stop to come out of the ‘Īsawiyyāt until he comes out visible in his antique abode (*al-bayt al-‘atīq*) over the saints standing with God’s command, receiving secretly from the firm and loyal Gabriel the law and the religion; he gathers the two mosques, the two stations, the two words and the two totalities until the totalities become a single totality, which is its substance, and the ends a single end, which is its extremity in the sense that the *kāf* and the *nūn* do not recur as recurred the sisters of both”<sup>88</sup>. Jesus must be understood in his relation with the angel of death, ‘Azrā’īl. Their mutual difference lies in the opposition between coming-out and entering-back. Jesus reveals by his coming out the permanent movement of expanding and retracting manifestation, which was mentioned earlier. There is an hesitation constitutive of manifestation and belonging to the essence, by which the case is at the same time bringing-out manifestation and taking it back. This initial hesitation led to the Flood that opened the way to the delayed coming-out of the saint-sealer through Noah’s fingers. The initial hesitation corresponds to the expectation of the essence wishing to be manifested to witness what has already known and planned. In other terms, because the initial condition of manifestation is that only what is already known happens when the things are not what they were expected to be that are annihilated by the Flood. The initial condition of manifestation is the wish for a manifestation that would end secrecy by bringing to knowledge all that is already known. Annihilation opens thinking that had never happened since everything was supposed to be already always known. The second beginning leaves manifestation to happen in its pure unexpected and unknown determination that allows knowledge to be acknowledgement, that is following what is happening and not preceding it. This is why acknowledgement is not anymore speculation but the acting; thinking proper to the saint-sealer. The condition for proper thinking thus consists in its keeping the secrecy of the secret

<sup>87</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sukkān al-irtibāt*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 142b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 197.

<sup>88</sup> *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 226a.

that prevents any knowledge that would be definitive by preemption. The secret cannot be opened and, thus, it is always bringing back any manifestation. The wish to be known is not a wish for the secret to be opened and spread but a wish to be known as being secret. There is an inner limit within the wish to be known that is constitutive of knowledge as such. What constitutes the very possibility of knowledge, the sense that gives sense to any truth that is offered to knowledge, cannot but remain secret. For Ḥamūyeh it is the case. The case, thus must be revealed in such a way that it keeps being secret while it fulfils the wish to be known. The coming-out is christic and the entering-back, death or moving back to nothingness, belongs to sainthood.

At first sight, it seems that the opposite of Jesus is 'Azrā'īl, the angel of death or retraction into nothingness, so that Jesus seems to stand alone as being the one who opposes death as negativity and achieves affirmation. However, ('Azrā'īl), because he is retraction, is the name of the saints' retraction, or the saint's concealment. Death is precisely what veils the saints since it is the way the secret is kept and protected. "The prophets are the Gabriel-ones and the saints are the 'Azrā'īlī-ones; the sealer-of-the-prophets is characterised by the loyal spirit (*rūḥī amīnī*) and the sealer-of-the-saints is angelic, that is with the angel of death [...]; the angel of death is the mirror of the loyal spirit and the loyal spirit is the mirror of the angel of death and they are both two faces appearing as semblances in one another [...]; the divinity is in the mirror of the face of the angel of death and the truth (*ḥaqqiyya*) in the mirror of the face of the loyal spirit"<sup>89</sup>. The encounter between Jesus and Yas'ā is the specular confrontation in mirror of prophethood and sainthood. The saints are 'Azrā'īlī because to them belong the secret, that is the hesitation of the essence and the retraction of the treasure to its concealment. Death belongs to God because it is the way the essence is retracting within itself with all the violence that belongs to the case bringing about manifestation. This is why only the saint, who possesses the secret of the hand at the tip of the fingers that separate manifestation from concealment, can revert violence into the victory of existence through his being the Living who keeps together the unique with the one<sup>90</sup>. The difference between prophethood

<sup>89</sup> *Risālat kashf al- 'ālīm al-subḥānī*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 42a-b.

<sup>90</sup> "The Living is the living one, the light visible in himself and making visible any other and it is in truth God, the Living the Upright; the dead is the darkened dead one and it is in truth the achieved human being (*al-insān al-kāmil*) who died

and sainthood appears with Jesus being overcome by the prophet-sealer, Muḥammad. Muḥammad appears from within sainthood since Gabriel, the loyal spirit, comes out of the ‘Azrā’īlyyāt, the saint’s retraction, in Jerusalem over the rock where Ḥamūyeh received the Sufi mantle. This is why “the prophet is the first saint”<sup>91</sup>, both in rank and in time. Muḥammad opens sainthood by being the saint of all sainthood and it is upon Muḥammad that the saint-sealer appears as such. Indeed “the seal of prophethood is lifted and the prophet is sent from the inward of the seal standing between serenity (*sakīna*) testifying, questioning and intercession”<sup>92</sup>. The truth of Jesus is achieved in Jerusalem with Gabriel appearing for Muḥammad and the truth of Muḥammad is achieved in Mecca with the apparition of the saint-sealer out of the ‘Īsawīyyāt. It is Muḥammad, and not Jesus who stands in his own limit against death, achieves thus the permanent retraction, sainthood, that keeps existence within the repetition of being, by opening the way to the saint-sealer. The saint-sealer achieves manifestation by overcoming Jesus, in which manifestation is limited by death and remains a wish. It is with two deaths that the saint-sealer comes to himself: “He is the one in whom descends the secret of the beheading of the Commander of the faithful ones al-Ḥusayn ibn Abī Ṭālib and gather upon this secret seventy thousand heads “this day the faithful ones rejoice with God’s victory he gives to whom he wants” (*Kor.* 30:4-5) and this, because he appointed our prophet al-Muṣṭafā Muḥammad as portending (*bashīr*) and herald (*nadhīr*) and gave him the appearance of omen and herald; he cut out from him the appearance of herald with the death of his son, Ibrāhīm, and the appearance of portending with the death of his son’s son al-Ḥusayn ibn Abī Ṭālib after the prophet returned back from externally transmitting and entered into the veil so that his spirit be qualified by the might sufficiently encompassing what he portended and announced”<sup>93</sup>. Strangely enough, Yas‘ā achieves prophethood and Muḥammad achieves sainthood, though they are respectively the saint-sealer and the prophet-sealer, announcing that the saint-sealer is none other than the prophet-sealer. The relation between Gabriel, the spirit, and ‘Azrā’īl, the angel because he is ultimately the essence of

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to the relation to creation [...] and when he died he perceived the Living Surviving descending from his inward name to his outward name”, *Maḥāṣin al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 93b.

<sup>91</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *Maḥāṣin al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 116b.

<sup>92</sup> *Kitāb al-mahbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 50a and later the seal of both prophethood and sainthood is lifted, *ibid.* 84b.

<sup>93</sup> Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 172a ; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 275.



the angelic as pure force, is specular. Their specularity is that of the prophet-sealer and the saint-sealer, of the divinity and the truth, because the prophet is spiritual and the saint is angelic, or rather the spirit is revealed through the prophet and the pure act, angelic, is revealed by the saint-sealer. Though Muḥammad overcomes Jesus by opening sainthood, it is the saint-sealer who unites the two sanctuaries of Jerusalem and Mecca so as to allow one single abode, in which life is complete.

The relation between Yas'ā and Jesus reveals the hidden structure of the prophet with the saint: “Covering (*ghishyān*) is the expression of the prophet's living with the saint, the saint's living with the prophet and their living together with God (*ḥaqq*); covering comes from his hiddenness (*ghayb*) over his eye (*'ayn*) and his cloud (*ghayn*) [...]; his sight “did not deviate” with his living and their both living “and did not exceed” what he saw with the intelligence's teaching “when covered the lotus” with Yas'ā “what covers” with Jesus; “the sight did not deviate” with Yas'ā “and did not exceed” with Jesus; when he reached the destinies (*maqādīr*) the destinies entered in existenciating and he saw Yas'ā; and when he descended to existenciating, existenciating entered in succession and figuration and he saw Jesus; then he saw the greatest signs of his lord in both of them; when he came back and sat for professing (*tashahhud*) with Yas'ā and Jesus the angels lightened them, serenity (*sakīna*) descended upon them and mercy covered them”<sup>94</sup>. The relation between the prophet, the saint and God is covered with the lotus. This covering is also that of the celebration. Yas'ā and Jesus are the essential form of the covering that is at the same time, through the koranic reference, the structure of achieved revelation. This structure is a covering because it is secret and at the same time it is oriented towards what has to be achieved. Covering something is at the same time covering from being seen by anything else and covering anything else so that it does not interfere in what is covered. It supposes to draw a limit (*ḥadd*). The limit consists in not deviating and not exceeding. Jesus is the one who keeps knowledge from exceeding and thus uncovering the secret that must be kept, because he is on the side of the spirit. Yas'ā is the one who does not allow deviation so that the case is oriented

<sup>94</sup> *Risālat al-'aynayn fī'l-'aynayn*, ms. Hüseyin çelebi 442, fol. 5b.

towards its achievement without take-back. The limit of knowledge and the straight-fulness of action are the two elements by which existence stands within mercy and thus achieves it as life.

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