



Sa'd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh's sealer of the saints – Part II¹

O selador dos santos de Sa'd al-dīn Ḥamūyeh – Part II

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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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The seal: form and location

Since the revelation of the sealer-of-the-saints comes out of Noah's fingers the seal is linked with the hand and the fingers. The saint-sealer receives the secret of Noah's fingers so as to achieve the secret of the hand, which is the time as lasting, with the name *al-ḥadīd*, "the iron that is softened for David" and "that is the immune violence (*al-shidda al-qudsiyya*)"², that gathers the two qualities of Ḥamūyeh himself. The theme of the sealer thus requires to consider together the hand, the fingers and the seal. The hand must be considered in its entirety, hand as such, palm and fingers, and the two hands. The hand of Noah that seeks its achievement by pouring its secret gathered in the letter *yā'* into *Yas'ā* is itself a messianic process. This process is achieved with the union of God and its spirit as knowledge where the sealer-saint stands. The hand is what achieves knowledge and knowledge is the achievement of the hand (*yad*), which is the *yā'* of sainthood and the *dāl* of lasting time until its end. The hand is thinking, or rather the hand that acts and the spirit that thinks belong to one another in an enigmatic way, which is sainthood, that is revealed only at the end by the apparition of the concluding saint-sealer. The saint-sealer thinks with the hand and it is from Noah's fingers that wisdom is transmitted with the secrecy that constitutes thinking as such. The hand summarises sainthood as a sanctified time-process, which can be revealed only in and with the saint-sealer. Thus, "the sealer-of-the-secret is the sealer-of-the-saints: he is the strongest of God's creatures and the most reverential after the messenger of God; with this secret the lover becomes the beloved (*maḥbūb*) and the beloved the lover and the name of the lover ends when being composed with the beloved and the lover"³. The saint-sealer, possessing the secret of the hand is the one who acts, or rather who achieves thinking through action, and thus he is the one whose thinking is acting and acting thinking, since "acting is the inward of knowing" and it is by "bringing knowledge to action that one returns from the outward to the inward"⁴, moving from the throne to the footstool⁵. He is the hand as unified thinking:acting ending

² Ḥamūyeh, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 50a.

³ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Radd 'alā al-yahūd*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 190b; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 319.

⁴ Ḥamūyeh states that: « The prophets go from the outward to the inward and the saints from the inward to the outward », *Kitāb al-mizān*, ms. Ayasofia 1663, fol. 119b.

⁵ Ḥamūyeh, *Risāla fī bayān inbisāt al-wujūd al-muṭlaq 'alā maẓāhir al-kā'ināt*, ms. H.S.A. 491, fol 3a.

with the separation between acting and speculating.

The mystery of the hand, which is the mystery of the saint-sealer, starts with Adam, its creation with the two hands of God and God’s spreading light “upon the creatures from the two hands of the might and the fingers”⁶ of the very-merciful. God creates Adam with his two hands and then by passing the hand on the back of Adam that the “meaningful son (*al-walad al-ma’ nawī*)” appears⁷. The hand, thus, gathers creation and meaning through two different actions, producing and touching. The hand is separated into two hands in producing but becomes one when touching, a double opposition, two hands and producing vs touching and a trio, the hand articulating thus four and three. “Know that God stretched one of his hands from the truth of the East to the extremity of the West [...] and makes descend with it the means (*rizq*) of knowledges and spirits and he stretches the other from the truth of the West to the extremity of the East [...] and he makes descend with it the means of the actions and the armies; then he gathers the secret of his two hands in the sacred abode (*al-bayt al-maqdis*) until the sealer stands upon his case and the secret of his two hands passes to him; then a group of the saints visible upon God’s case stand with him and they manifest upon his command his religion over all the religions”⁸. “The world of the two hands unfolded from the guiding Living one” stands in the letter *yā’*, which contains the complete blessed coveted goal (*murād maḥmūd*)⁹. The difference of the two hands is the difference between thinking and acting. This difference organises space with an orientation that comes from the direction of the hands’ movements from the West to the East and the East to the West. This orientation of space is what spaces time as a lasting since “God places for the predestined event in each one of the months a place known in the wisdom of the promise” so that with the encounter of Yas‘ā and Jesus in Damascus all the months and the places are reorganised according to it¹⁰. The union of the hands with the saint-sealer, thus, unites also space and time, which become space:time. As much as the hands are stretched that much lasts time until the hands gather in the secret of the hand that is transmitted to the saint-sealer in Jerusalem. It is in Jerusalem that

⁶ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Radd ‘alā al-yahūd*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 187b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 310.

⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *Aḥwāl al-murīd ma’ a’l-shaykh*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 139a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 186.

⁸ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Radd ‘alā al-yahūd*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 187b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 311.

⁹ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb*, Ayasofia 1673, fol. 114a.

¹⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 195a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 333.

Ḥamūyeh is supposed to have received the Sufi mantle from the son of his paternal uncle, Ṣadr al-dīn, in 616/1238 the same year he received his *ijāza* from Najm al-dīn Kubrā, as mentioned earlier. It is also in Jerusalem that Ḥamūyeh is supposed to have received the knowledge of the letters¹¹. The saint-sealer is the one who gathers the two sanctuaries, Jerusalem and Mecca, achieving the extension of the messianic space:time, when he is manifested: “Jesus does not stop coming out and ‘Azrā’īl entering until Gabriel the firm comes out of the ‘Azrā’īliyāt 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 ‘Īsawiyāt until he comes out visible in his ‘antique abode’ over the saints standing upon 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”¹². The saint-sealer is the one brings together, who unifies everything through his acting hand, and, by bringing the end ends with the end, which consists in ending the recurrence of being, or being as repetition. While he is unifying, he is himself unification as such, the realisation of the unity that ends duality, conflict, because he is the gathering in himself of the angel and the human being joined with one another through the wisdom of the two hands¹³ which belongs to him. He brings together the two sanctuaries to bring to appear the immune valley that he is himself. He joins in the room of Damascus Mosque with Jesus, achieving his being the sealer, and he receives the allegiance of three hundred and thirteen saints “according to the number of the messengers”, and whose forms are the birds of Abābīl¹⁴, by which he gathers all the saints, in the sacred mosque¹⁵. By doing so he brings sainthood to its truth because “the letters of the saint (*al-walī*) are three: *wāw*, *yā’*, and *alif* that joined with the *yā’* and became *lām*; *alif* is the indication to the beginning,

¹¹ It is related that, when Ḥamūyeh went to Jerusalem with his disciples the first time he came to Shām, he went to the Dome of the Rock and remained absorbed upon the rock; when he came back to himself he saw the rock covered with letters and carving, which opened to him the knowledge of the letters and led him to start writing books, Ghiyāth al-dīn, *Murād al-murādīn*, Tehran, 1389, p. 44. The episode Ḥamūyeh mentions in *Kitāb baḥr al-ma‘ānī* might be related to this, ms Fazl Ahmed Pasa 706, fol. 27a. In his *Faṣl fī zuḥūr rūḥ al-quḍs*, written in 634, Ḥamūyeh indicates that God has covered the black stone with letters and words, fol. 77a.

¹² *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 226a.

¹³ *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 23b.

¹⁴ *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 207b.

¹⁵ *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

yā' to the end and *wāw* to the coveted gathering the beginning and the end so that the saint, with the strength of his sainthood, learnt what stands in the beginning and the end and what is coveted from the beginning and the end; thus the *wāw* is the *wāw* of the face all-gathering for the beginning and the end¹⁶.

Since the saint-sealer is unifying the hands in the secret of the hand “he possesses the elevation from the palm to the fingers of the very-merciful and from the fingers to the bared case upon which is the one-unique-impenetrable”¹⁷. The hand becomes as such the place for the elevation of the sealer-saint. It is not merely an appendix of the body by which thinking is achieved as acting:thinking. It is itself the location of the process of achievement, which is a returning back to the ordinary and thus completes the circle of the letter *hā'*, which is where manifestation occurs. The *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, completed in 649/1251 Saturday night 12 of Dhū'l-ḥijja when Ḥamūyeh died, starts indicating that there is a single circle, which is the circle of “the chosen loved one (*ḥabīb*) and the beloved (*maḥbūb*) who is the pivot”¹⁸, and which contains *huwa* in his *ha'*. This circle has fifteen circles that are the places of its ascending and descending. These circles are composed along a line of five circles: star-like, moon-like, sun-like, substance-like and pearl-like shining. The fifteen circles correspond respectively to these letters: *nūn*, *qāf*, *fā'*, *rā'*, *zay*, *wāw*, *dāl*, *dhāl*, *ṣād*, *ḍād*, *sīn*, *shīn*, *ʿayn*, *ghayn* and *hā'*. The circle of the *hā'* encompasses all the others, and it is the circle of David¹⁹, whose figure is important in the lasting process of time until the sealer appears. The unique global circle, that of the *hā'*, encompasses the beginning and the end²⁰. “The lover coveting chosen in it is the side of the beginning and the existence and the beloved coveted chosen is the side of the end and the contemplation” and the prophet is the side of the beginning while the saint is the side of the end²¹. The circle is thus divided in two halves, the first related to the sealer-of-the-prophets and the second to the sealer-of-the-saints. The hand is the palm which is the extension of the circle in which the process of beginning and

¹⁶ Ḥamūyeh, *Maḥfūṭ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 57b.

¹⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ rutba al-shuyūkh*, Hūdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 122a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, p. 147.

¹⁸ Ḥamūyeh in his *Maḥfūṭ al-asrār* says: “O God praise your loved one (*ḥabīb*) Muḥammad the Arabian and your beloved (*maḥbūb*) Yas'ā the non-Arab (*al-'ajamī*), ms. H.S.A. 491, fol. 34a; he mentions again Yas'ā the non-Arab later, *ibid.* 102a.

¹⁹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 9b.

²⁰ In the *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Ḥamūyeh mentions twelve circles that are contained in the letter *ḥā'* of *huwa*, Aya Sofía 2058, fol. 207b.

²¹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 10b.

ending takes place. It is provided that the extension of the palm is achieved and gathers all things through the letter *wāw* that is “the name in which God gathered all the things and that gathers the letter, the face, the pure act and the pure case and that is the occurrence of divine witnessing” that attests that he is “he” (*huwa*) and “that is the most proper (*akhaṣṣ*) of the names of sainthood”²². The hand as a palm is thus the timed place organised with its own geography where the significant events take place. The *Kitāb al-istimsāk* states that God established the world out of his knowledge and gathered it within his palm²³. But it is also, as such, the ground from which a moving-forward-upward occurs, since it is itself oriented towards the fingers which are its extremity. In other terms, going back and down to the ground, the palm, projects in return to the extremity, the fingers, with enough strength to overcome and overstep the fingers to the pure case, out of which comes the spirit in the koranic verse, where the impenetrable unity of the-unique-the-one is witnessed, which is proper to the saint-sealer. This process starts thus from Adam and end with the sealer-saint. “When Adam repented from what he did he ranged in his truth, out of the truth of the tree, the heart present and hospitable (*qābil*), I mean by it the heart of the two sealers, the sealer-of-the-prophets and the sealer-of-the-saints [...]; the word to-him (*la-hu*) is an indication to Adam and to the two sealers, and it is three letters: two letters written and it is the *lām* and the *hā’* and one letter pronounced-not written and it is existing in the science of God and witnessed in the existence, and it is the *wāw*; God placed the indication to Adam in the *lām*, the indication to the prophet-sealer in the *hā’* and the indication to the saint-sealer in the *wāw*; “the angels bowed down before” Adam, “all of them” (*kullu-hum*) before the prophet-sealer and “in totality” (*ajma’ūn*) (*Kor.* 15:29) before the saint-sealer”. Because the letters go through an overturning, the *alif* into *wāw*, the *bā’* into *hā’* and the *yā’* into *lām*, [...] the secret of the-unique-the-one (*al-wāḥid al-aḥad*) gathered in the saint-sealer, [...] the secret of the beginner the guide (*al-bādī al-hādī*) in the prophet-sealer [...] and the secret of the hand and the language in Adam”²⁴.

²² Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 196b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, p. 336. The *wāw* is the not-written letter indicating the saint-sealer that “Nūh discovers at the beginning of the deleting” as being “the *wāw* of the face (*wajh*) and the revelation (*wahī*)”, Ḥamūyeh, *Baḥr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 150a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 218.

²³ *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Ayasofia fol. 106a.

²⁴ Ḥamūyeh, *Baḥr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 146b-147a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 208-9.

The saint-sealer’s ascent completes the circle of the *hā’* because it starts with the descent of the palm between the shoulders of the prophet, that is opening its location with a split between the sealers, which corresponds to the difference between the unique and the one, and which is the sense of all differences based on the opposition between deleting and confirming. “The secret of the unique (*al-wāḥid*) is with the spirit and the secret of the one (*al-aḥad*) is with God alone and the unique is with the beings while the one is before the beings; according to this secret the lord put his palm between the shoulder blades of the prophet upon the sense of deleting and confirming from which occurs the reunion between God and his spirit and between his divulging and his secret; and under the palm descended the essence of the reunion and the achievement of unity, which is the true speaking”²⁵ which consists in the saint-sealer speaking with performative letters²⁶. The manifestation of the saint-sealer happens with the opening of the messianic space:time of the palm through actual events that can be only understood by it. “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”²⁷. The invasion of the Mongols, that ended Persian middle-ages and gave the start to a new era in Sufism, ends with their destruction and their being cursed and deleted, and starts the process of confirming with the secret of the palm being revealed to the saint-sealer. In other terms, the end of deleting, that started with Noah, occurs with the start of the revelation of the unique-one through the saint-sealer moving from the palm to the fingers and beyond. These events are a precious indication to understand that the moving back to the palm consists in ruling the world, which belongs to the saint-sealer. The saint-sealer is given to rule the world “in the East and the West” “like Dhū’l-qarnayn and Solomon”²⁸. The saint-sealer, as said before, is the one who reverts the violence of might into life, and, thus, reverts the tyrannical kingdom into the harmonious kingdom, which is “the realisation of the coveted (*murād*) in the kingdom of the coveting (*murīd*)”. The two kingdoms of Dhū’l-qarnayn and Solomon are paired to give the kingdom of Muḥammad and the saint-sealer. He

²⁵ *Kitāb al-hāḍir ma’al-khāṭir*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 118b.

²⁶ *Risāla fī zuhūr khāṭim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

²⁷ *Marātīb al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 60b.

²⁸ *Risāla fī zuhūr khāṭim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206b.

achieves it by annihilating the Tatars, Franks and Georgians²⁹.

The move-forward-upward is also the move up-straight (*qiyām*) and it is the way deleting:confirming is achieved. It has the appearance of the pen since it is a straight move upward. Actually, “The pen is the semblance of deleting and confirming”³⁰, in other terms, the pen divides and organises through this division the conflict that leads to the rise of the saint-sealer. This is why “the *alif* is the pen and the *yā’* is the hand”³¹. Both letters are gathered in the ordinary letter of the call (*ḥarf al-nidā’*) that finds its achievement in the saint-sealer and that governs the promise, which is the essence of time. The hand, with the palm and the fingers, of which the letter is *yā’*, is what holds the *alif*:pen, when they are gathered with the saint-sealer. The pen is the difference occurring in the palm between the two sealers. “The sealer-of the-saints is the one who turns (*dā’ir*) within the right of the rights like the sealer-of-the-prophets is turning within the destiny of the destinies”³². The saint-sealer is the one who achieves the right:sense (*ḥaqq*) with the pen in his hand while the prophet is the one in which possible destinies develop. The rights have six faces: the right of trusting him, of his surviving, of his might, of God, of the pen and of the ordinary³³ and “the rights of the pen and of the letter appear in the saint-sealer in the semblance of the spirit and the case and the right of the pen is a signification that goes back to the truth of the divine might, aspiration and will”³⁴. The pen is the inner signification of the staff. The staff of Moses divides by writing on the sea and the pen divides the staff by writing on it. The staff is ultimately a pen since it acts, as a splitting upon deleting and confirming, by writing. It deletes by writing confirming letters, like when deleting takes place through Noah, his fingers pour out the letters *yā’* confirming the new start that belongs to the saint-sealer. “As well as Moses went to Pharaoh while he was living until he stripped him of life [...] the sealer-of-the-saints goes to Pharaoh after his death” [...] so that he lives like on the trace” of his pen by which Yas‘ā hits and splits Moses’ staff. As Moses wrote on the sea, Yas‘ā writes on the staff³⁵. It is upon the trace of the pen, the letters, like the letters

²⁹ *Risāla fī zuhūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206b.

³⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *Bahr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 148a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 212.

³¹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 29a.

³² Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 198b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 342.

³³ *Risāla al-ḥurūf*, ms. Sehit Ali 1342, fol. 264b-265a.

³⁴ *Risāla fī zuhūr khātīm al-wilāya*, ms. Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

³⁵ Ḥamūyeh, *Bahr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 150b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 219-20.

Ḥamūyeh is supposed to have seen over the rock of Jerusalem, that a new life, a confirmed one, is possible after deleting death. “The (letters) *yā’* of the adds are in the *yā’* of his hand and his hand is expanded in the right and the right (*yamīn*) is in the certainty (*yaqīn*)”³⁶. The letters written by the pen in the hand of the saint-sealer finally, which are the three *yā’* revealed by Noah, are adds to the previous process of deleting:confirming, and gather together the hands as one single hand, which is the right hand of God. The letters *yā’* come out of Noah’s fingers because God’s light places two eyes for itself, prophethood and sainthood, and because the eyes have a tongue that is prophethood, and the tongue is a finger³⁷.

The pen is thus a movement forward-upward and moving is a walking that requires feet. Ḥamūyeh gives the detail of Adam’s walking, of his steps, which are the steps of the different prayers, daily and annually. The palm is where the events occur and where walking takes place. The pen in the hand contains the foot. “The pen is what gathers the secret of the foot, the leg and the shank and the end of the pen is the foot (*qadam*) and the end of the foot is nothingness (*‘adam*)”³⁸ and “nothingness is that in which the things are naught”³⁹. The *alif*:pen is the unity of the walking man from his feet to his hand. It contains thus as a secret the whole question of the walk, the journey, destiny, in other terms the essence of what is being a human being, his Adamic original constitution. It unites thus the both aspects of human being: the prophetic one that consists in the destiny’s journey and the saint one that orientates this destiny towards giving justice to its right achieved with its being sealed. The pen is ultimately a walking:writing foot of which the truth stands in the letter belonging to the saint-sealer. Beyond the foot, the end of the foot is nothingness since the foot walks over nothingness like the pen writes on the void openness. What reveals the saint-sealer is the nothingness upon which and in direction of which something happens, the essential development of existence, and that nothingness is not to be considered from non-beingness, which belongs still to deleting:confirming, but to the very act of existing:living.

³⁶ Ḥamūyeh, *Bahr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 150b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 220.

³⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa’d*, üdayi Efendi 425, fol. 198b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 341.

³⁸ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ muḥtadā’ al-ṭūfān*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 155b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 232.

³⁹ Ḥamūyeh, *Mafāṭih al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 95b.

The relation between the pen and the foot leads to the question of the foot and where the foot walks⁴⁰. The one “who masters the informing (*ikhbār*) and the promise, his fate comes from the-unique-the-one”, which is the characteristic of the sealer-of-the-saints who is given the guidances of both Noah and Abraham, the first achieving deleting and wiping-out (*dafʿ*) and the second the elevation (*rafʿ*), by transmitting him their letters. With the first is revealed the essential belonging of deleting, negating and covering to the essence, as the originary hidden treasure that is the *essential* move of inward-retraction, that leads to the first deleting or take-back of manifestation. With the second, the manifestation is timing the truth towards the rise of the sealer after God “made descend faith and its people and has transported covering (*kufʿ*) and its people to the land of the treasure”. This timing guidance includes “the due estrangement” (*al-budd al-lāzim*) that Ḥamūyeh finds in a rare tradition present in the shiite corpus: “O Moses I am your due estrangement so hold on to your estrangement”⁴¹, linking thus Abraham and Moses. “The due estrangement stands under the foot in the right foot stole; and (God) disposed the Scriptures to be a veil over the treasure from the pen to the right foot and the cauterising (*kayy*) to be a veil over the due estrangement from the left foot sole to the pen; and under the scriptures and the cauterising, there is my secret”⁴². The foot is like a treasure box since it has a cavity, the sole, where estrangement is placed as the secret that leads to the revelation of the saint-sealer. Estrangement gathers the two feet that are distinguished by two different veils. The veils make the difference between the feet that hide the same treasure, estrangement. The scriptures revealed with prophethood are the veil over the pen descending to the right foot and the cauterisation over the going back from the left foot to the pen and beyond, both being the general process and descent and ascent. Both the treasure, revealed through Noah, and the due estrangement, revealed through Abraham, constitute the process of knowledge towards the known, in such a way that “the pen writes over itself with the foot and cauterises itself with knowledge (*ʿilm*)” and “the pen reaches the foot and the foot reaches the pen”⁴³. In other terms, the sealer-of-the-saints and Adam reach one another because the pen is the saint-sealer’s belonging

⁴⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *Nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 180a-b.

⁴¹ Mollā Şadrā, *al-Ḥikma al-mutāʿaliya*, vol. 2, p. 159; Ḥajj Hādī Sabzawārī, *Sharḥ al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā*, vol. 1, p. 163.

⁴² Ḥamūyeh, *Nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 180b.

⁴³ Ḥamūyeh, *Nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 180b.

by which he splits up Moses staff and Adam organises the structure of time, that becomes meaningful with the saint-sealer, through the steps of his feet which are the steps of the different prayers of the day, the week, the months and the year⁴⁴.

The transmission of the secret of the hand pours out of the fingers, not the palm, and it is out of this back-flow from the fingers to the hand that the palm is witnessed to give room to the messianic geography of the saint-sealer. This occurs in time and the time of revelation is an ultimate one. Time is the condition of revelation providing that time is ending. The end of time is what makes time meaningful so that the essence of time can be grasped only from its being sealed and the seal is what has been sealed at first in the pearl and is promised to be revealed at the end. Revelation happens in due time and due time is the end when the secret is manifested as the secret that was already always hidden, since “the christic relief (*farja*) will appear in the end of time at the time of the total manifestation and the rise of the light:existence [...] and it is the divine relief from which descends the concealed secret and the hidden treasure”⁴⁵. The due time is the end that is starting anew. It belongs necessarily to Noah who reveals to the saint-sealer his being sealing with the letters *yā’*. The saint-sealer occurs as “the hour”: “He becomes such that he is named with the name ‘the hour’ I mean the hour extending between the last hours of the close-world and the first hours of the hour extending between the last hours of the close-world and the first hours of the last-world and it is the hour in which are all the hours [...]; and at the same time the divine expansion descends over the hour”⁴⁶. It is according to the hour that the extension of the location occurs. Time opens space as a timed:space. The secret of the hand pours out as water from the fingers of Noah, and Noah is called elsewhere “the human being of the fingers”⁴⁷. But the repartition of Noah’s fingers is enigmatic: four springs out of the left hand and six out of the right hand. It is ten fingers because they are the “ten adds included within the fold (*ṭayy*) of (the name) the Living (*al-Ḥayy*)”⁴⁸ that is achieved as the saint-sealer. This asymmetry obeys the difference between the right and the left and the assumption that ultimately only the right hand remains that gathers all the things through the

⁴⁴ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 174a-175b.

⁴⁵ Ḥamūyeh, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 25b.

⁴⁶ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 197b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 339.

⁴⁷ *Kitāb al-hāqīr ma’a l-khātīr*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 127b.

⁴⁸ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 198b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 341.

letter *wāw*, the letter proper to sainthood. It is from the fingers, the extremity of the hand, that the seal is revealed. The fingers are this limit from which the saint-sealer goes beyond to the case before the things and can therefore gather all the things as a whole in the palm of the right hand. The saint-sealer stands at the limit, in between, like the hour stands in the laps between the last hours of the close(d)-world and the first hours of the last one, in other terms between the first and the last and the outward and the inward, since he owns proper to him the *wāw* that “adds-to”. The fingers cover the palm of the hand and gathers it back within itself. While ibn ‘Arabī in the chapters of Adam and Shu’ayb of his *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* thinks the seal essentially in its own stricture, the gem and the bezel, Ḥamūyeh thinks the seal in relation with the fingers because of the determination of the seal through time. The finger is what carries the seal. The location of the seal is linked with the sura of the Koran and the fingers⁴⁹. The seal is what gathers the secret that is the order deposited in the pearl at the beginning of creation. This secret is parted between light and darkness because God spread his light over darkness at the beginning. It is from there that the difference between the spirit and the hand that governs the totality of meaningful time, prophetic history, is set.

The difference between the spirit, linked with the letter *ḥā’*, and the hand, formed of the letters *yā’* and *dāl*, is the possibility of creation, that is of the beginning. “God created the creation by the wisdom of the hand and the hand is *yā’* and *dāl*” and the part coming from the *yā’* “followed the call of the soul” and the part coming from the *dāl* “followed the call of its prince and lord”⁵⁰. The creation of Adam happens through the two hands (*yad*), and it is by passing the hand on the back of Adam that the “meaningful son” appears⁵¹. The letter *dāl*, which is the *dāl* of *al-wāḥid* and *al-aḥad*, forms the semblance out of which the face appears. It points to the hand (*yad*) and is thus proper to the sealer-of-the-saints like the-unique-the-one is proper to him. Ḥamūyeh describes the process of the apparition of the sealer-of-the-saints out of the three darknesses in these terms: “When the divine case (*amr*) reached the spirit and the hand these darknesses brightened, the spirit started to raise and the hand to expand, the case

⁴⁹ *Kalima dar bayān-i sūre Yāsīn*, ms. Esat efendi, fol. 41b.

⁵⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 167a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 264.

⁵¹ Ḥamūyeh, *Aḥwāl al-murīd ma’a’l-shaykh*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 139a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 186.

watched the *dāl*, on the semblance of which the face was created, God and his messenger embraced it, the hand strengthened it for hosting God and the spirit gave it life so as to host the messenger and his prophecy; to the extent of that the case reaches the *dāl*; to the extent of the case reaching it, the *dāl* becomes the coveted (*murād*) of God amongst the creatures, and to the extent of its becoming the coveted appears its bearer and its semblance amongst the servants of God and the servants of the very-merciful, and it is the sealer-of-the-saints Yas‘ā; and he is the one to whom God and his messenger gives victory in secret (*ghayb*) and to him belongs the seal of victory (*khātam al-naṣr*) and the seal of victory is the sealer of the states and the tables of which the bezel (*faṣṣ*) is the truth (*haqīqa*) and the circle the spirit, the hand and the case”⁵². The sealer is the bearer and the semblance of the coveted or intended one by God, which is the achievement of the *dāl* and which thus cannot appear as such except as the sealer-of-the-saints. The case descends to the spirit and the hand and ultimately prepares the *dāl*, that is the expending time to its end, to become the coveted (*murād*), or the face, and finally the saint-sealer who bears, with his finger, the seal of victory that is contained in a bezel, that is truth, and surrounded by a circle, the spirit, the hand and the case. However, the seal is itself the saint-sealer who is therefore carrying himself carried by nothing. The structure of the hand that carries the seal by surrounding it is itself the saint-sealer who, by being the unity of the hand and the spirit, achieves the case by giving it its right:sense (*haqq*). The same process is described later on while determining the exact location of the seal.

“Know that the descent of the case to the coveted (*murād*) is between the spirit and the hand, in the human being: his head and his two testicles (*khisyā*), because the beginning of light in human being comes from the head and the beginning of the apparition of darkness is from his two testicles. And Moses’s collapse-wind (*al-khurūr al-musawī*) was between the secret of the head and the secret of the two testicles and the location that gathers the secret stands between the little finger opposite to the index finger and it is the location of the true seal

⁵² Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 172a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 274-5; in *Mafātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 98b : “The seal (*khātam*) is the surrounding of the heart by the mould and its bezel (*faṣṣ*) is God’s surrounding with the heart and the intelligence is the semblance of the surrounding”; and in *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 28a-b: “God is one to him belong the creation in the case and the case in the creation; his semblance is a sheath within the two hands of the truth called the perfumed wrapping grip (*al-qabḍa al-kāfūriyya*) on which stand the feet of the angels of revelation”.

(*khātam*) and the ring finger is its substitute”⁵³. The descent of the case (*amr*) between the spirit and the hand separates them, like it separates darkness and light, and the two sealers, the prophet and the saint. It is the action of the secret to separate and process the reunion through a hidden promise that is disclosed with prophecy. Human being is the one in which the separation takes place because it is through human being that separation becomes prophetic time since the promise is addressed to human being. The secret, or the place of separation, that needs to be cauterised through estrangement, as indicated before, stands between the head, the spirit, start of light and life, and the two testicles that correspond to what is double or goes by pair, beingness spread with repetition, but also the two feet: the right one that is the bottom of the descent and the left one that is the ground for ascending. Right in between the head and the testicles, between light and darkness stands the two hands with their secrecy, the right hand. It is worth noting that the order of the feet is the opposite of that of the hands because the location of the seal makes use of opposite vis-à-vis, like with mirrors as mentioned before in relation with ibn ‘Arabī. Ḥamūyeh does not mention that the seal is in the hand. It is not grasped in a palm like it would be for a concept (*Begriff*) that is grasped. The seal cannot be grasped, owned in a hand that would be use it as it pleases. It is placed upon what bears it, like God is set upon harmoniously since harmoniously dwells God (*istiwā’*). Because the seal cannot be seized it requires a relation of giving and receiving, placing and bearing, offering and accepting, which is the recurrent rhetoric of Ḥamūyeh as it is articulated in the major part of Shīth chapter of ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. The true seal (*khātam*), says Ḥamūyeh, suggesting that there would be a non-true one, stands in the middle of the little finger opposite to the index finger. Hence, we can suppose that Ḥamūyeh here limits the number of the fingers to four, since what should be opposed to the little finger is the thumb. The four fingers correspond to the four springs:fingers of Noah’s left hand. The seal is located right in the middle and at the same time on the last and weakest finger, which is usually not used and neglected, in other terms a supererogatory finger that is hardly noticed and remains somehow hidden. It is in the middle and at the end, like the sealer is the one who completes at the end by being a part, the completing hidden

⁵³ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 172a-173b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 275-7.

part and thus the part and the whole as it seems in ibn ‘Arabī’s vision of the double brick in the whole of prophethood. The location of the seal has also a vis-à-vis which means that it can be noticed from a point of view facing it, or there is perspective that has a view over the seal that nevertheless remains secret since this perspective is from outside and opposite to it. The seal is separated from any perspective over it and sets the opposition by which it is concealed while witnessed as a secret. Finally, it does not stay in its proper place, the little finger, but is placed on a substitute finger, the ring finger. The relation between the seal and the bezel depends on the conflict between faith and unfaithfulness that is led with intelligence. “The one for whom the angel of his intelligence becomes a messenger with wings becomes lieutenant in the land of his own existence [...] and God gives him a seal and a bezel from the seal of Adam because the seal (*khātām*) comes from the *khā’* of lieutenant (*khalīfa*) and the bezel (*faṣṣ*) from the *fā’* of the lieutenant of God [...]; his seal manifests that his heart encompasses his mould and the world of his mould and his heart; the bezel manifests that God encompasses [...] his heart”⁵⁴. However, the seal and the bezel make these determinations reversible. If the body and the soul encompass the intelligence it is limited by the seal and the bezel is God’s encompassing him with wrath⁵⁵. The seal and the bezel are therefore essentially ambivalent and it is this ambivalence that allows the saint-sealer to achieve life as such. This is why the relation between the seal and the bezel is provisional. Ultimately, since the seal appears to be no other than the sealer, it becomes itself the bezel. The seal is not to be set in a ring that would require a bezel or it cannot be thought as a ring that would be exhibited on the finger devoted to it. But we can also suppose that the seal cannot appear in its right place except for the saint-sealer who is the seal itself. In other terms it is not placed in the right place because it remains hidden and it is known only through its substitute place, never where it really stands because it stands surrounded by the spirit, the hand and the case and it is the saint-sealer himself carrying himself over nothingness, as mentioned before.

The saint-sealer, Yas‘ā is ultimately, when the letter *dāl* has been delayed to its proper time, the one who carries the seal and its semblance. The possibility

⁵⁴ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 85b-86a.

⁵⁵ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 86a.

of his being the sealer is the case becoming coveted as such, or rather that the case as such is *what is coveted*. It is delayed as long as the case aims at bringing something to appear, and what appears belongs to Being of which the essence is self-repetition. The loneliness of the sealer, specific amongst all creatures, i.e. *beings*, stands precisely in its happening once for all, hence not being repeated. He possesses the uniqueness of the case. Hence, he is the apparition of the case, which is the secret or the seal, in the guise of the coveted and the beloved (*maḥbūb*), which is the necessary substitute for the secret to appear as secrecy. The sealer carries the seal of bestowed victory (*naṣr*) which seals “the states and the tables”, which means the souls for Ḥamūyeh. Hence the souls stand within a double circle, like the double loop of the letter *hā'*, which governs the whole prophetic time, the bezel, which is truth and the circle, which is the spirit. The spirit surrounds the truth in which the soul stands. Both the spirit and the truth are locations, circles, the schemes of all the graphics found in Ḥamūyeh's treatises. They give room to the souls, i.e. the development of the essence since the soul is “*‘Azrā'īlī*”, experiences death and achieves sainthood. It is in the light of the spirit that truth can spread while written through scriptures over the tree of the letters. Hence, the sealer is victorious because he is the one who sets the soul, all the souls, within its truth in the open of the spirit, because he brings to appear the seal, the promise's end. He brings the soul that is the mode of the hand and the preserved tablet⁵⁶ within spirit by setting the truth of truths. The sense is the structure of truth and this structure is precisely the constitution of the seal, its form and location.

The seal is the possibility of substitution because it is already always located-somewhere-else or estranged. The seal does not belong to someone in proper, but it migrates from one to another. Ḥamūyeh enters further in the details of this grammar of substitution. “This is why the ring finger has been specified *in the world* for carrying the seal (*takhattum*) and to pour water between the toes of one of human being's legs. The left ring finger is the substitute to the right one and the thumb is the substitute to the index finger. This is why it has been specified for gathering between it and the ring finger for pouring water between

⁵⁶ “The soul is the semblance of the divine uprightness (*fawḥḥiyat*) and the uprightness is the side belonging to the hand”, *Risāla fī bayān inbīsāt al-wujūd al-muṭlaq*, ms. H.S.A. 491, fol 2b-3a.

the toes of the left leg. According to this, the left thumb must be added to the left ring finger for pouring water between the toes of the left leg. The little finger is what carries the secret of bearing the seal (*takhattum*) and pouring-water-between is the wisdom coming from bearing the seal because bearing the seal is the semblance of gathering and pouring-water-between is the semblance of separating the gathering. The index finger is what carries the semblance of deleting and confirming in the hidden (*ghayb*), testifying (*shahāda*), might (*qudra*) and wisdom and their being moved when expressing the two sentences of the testimony. The indication to the little finger is a wisdom coming from the semblance of deleting and confirming. The location of deleting and confirming in human being is the spirit and the hand and the location of deleting and confirming in it is the index finger. The secret of this gathering is related to the secret of gathering proper to the little finger”⁵⁷. The location of the seal depends on the function of the seal. It is not the seal that is fulfilling a function but rather carrying the seal. The seal by itself stands in its secrecy and the substitutions between the fingers are there first to build the secrecy of the secret that cannot be known as such, but found displaced. The substitution or displacement mechanism ensure both the permanence of the secret and at the same time some experience of it. The knowledge of the secret is a knowledge through substitution. In other terms, the secrecy of the secret could end with the acknowledgement of the impossibility of knowledge, like in Abū Bakr’s famous saying “the inability to perceive is perceiving”, which sustains the Baghdadian logic of *ṣiddīqiyya*, or with a theological *via negativa*, which depends on ontology. But the grammar of the seal opens another possibility. When summarising the whole process of the promise, that is history, he reminds again of the fingers because the fingers, whose secret comes from Noah, are the possibility of locating and manifesting the seal. The promise processes through the triple determinations of deleting and confirming: repealing, substituting and causing to forget (*naskh-tabdīl-insā’*), that are achieved with the fingers: “The root of repealing, substituting and causing to forget stands in the wisdom of leavening: when God leavened Adam’s clay he repealed the secret of one of his fingers with another, he substituted one of his fingers in the place of another and caused to forget one of his fingers,

⁵⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 172a-173b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 275-7.

delayed it until it cannot be noticed, be used and tested, and he let go its station to another [...]; he illuminated the darkneses of the fingers laid down in the truth of the body's extremity in the darkneses of repealing, substituting and causing to forget [...]; with this rises the mark of the unique in his act, his essence and his attributes within the finder who finds the promise written in the act and finds the promising existing in the promise and witnessed in the call (*nidā'*)⁵⁸. History, i.e. sealing history, can be unveiled as such only if there is a seal who gathers the whole of time by achieving the promise that is finally discovered as the act itself. This is why the saint-sealer is acting and possesses the secret of the hand given through Noah's fingers. It starts with Adam already through the fingers that spread revelation because the fingers are tongues, speaking and silent. The clay is leavened with the fingers and therefore is already engaged in a meaningful process since the body is already oriented by its structure and is the ground perspective of any knowledge thus giving rituals their truth. But the way of leavening the clay is a process of repealing, substituting and causing to forget.

These three are the modes of the opposition between deleting: confirming that governs the promise. It is the game of substituting fingers that engages the historical promise because the fingers are what uncover the secret. But this game is itself hidden though not secret. Its hiddenness is the dispositive keeping the secret within the body moved by the three modes of deleting: confirming. When the spirit brings light to it, it uncovers the inscription, or let's say the signature, that is in the extremity of the body, the fingers, and in the one who finds it, the saint-sealer. The process is thus achieved with the sealer himself who is the finder (*wājid*). The finder is not properly existing since he finds the promising one in the promise, in the prophetic process, but existing in such a way that it is witnessed. In other terms, he acknowledges the existence as the unity of act, essence and attributes in the act of being actually finding, that is in his being pure act. This act does not consist in knowing something about something, knowing something about God for instance, but in simply acknowledging by being pure act or the secret as such. It unveils the structure of truth, which is a general substitution where what is found to be true is acknowledged as such because it is always found where it does not belong, the seal never being witnessed in its secret

⁵⁸ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa'd*, Hūdayi Efendi 425, fol. 201a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 348-9.

place. The seal can be disclosed because the place of the seal is secret and requires to be de-located, which supposes de-leting. The seal is never acknowledged in its *proper* place, which is secret, so its *true* place is always necessary somewhere else. Hence, substitution is the essence of truth. But substitution follows a rule, which consists in the face-to-face of the locations. The face-to-face is the mirror specular structure of any seeing, in which what is looked at looks back to whom is looking, and seeing oneself in the guise of the looking-looked-back loop of the letter *hā’* is precisely the promised of the promise. His act actually consists in carrying the seal, or the secret, in secret. The possibility of a secret that governs the promise stands in its being able to be carried. The game between the fingers makes sure that the secret is carried, but carried in secret, since the secret can remain secret only if its location remains secret. He finds what is existing, the promising, in the promise that is precisely the development of the finder, by carrying what is migrating from one finger to another. The finder does not properly exist except by finding what exists, or by sustaining that existence that never belongs to him. He simply gives a ground to existence that is linked to him through his finding in the middle of his last finger, the smallest, thinnest and weakest. The secrecy is thus constitutive of the seal:sealer notion. It is constituting also the secrecy of sainthood, which makes it essentially different from prophethood while it belongs to it. While commenting the *hadīth*: “My saints are under my domes no one knows them except me” Ḥamūyeh indicates that “The dome of the saint-sealer” which “is the full-moon of the full-moons”⁵⁹ contains the seal of sainthood and that it is “in the guise of the moon-crescent, the moon, the full-moon, the fathers, the mothers and the children”⁶⁰. The dome itself is composed of two series of three things: the process of the moon, which is the time process of sainthood which is the timing of light, and the family time-space structure of denying, forgetting and acknowledging, as it is explained later on.

The substitutions at the same time keep the secret and disclose the very fact that there is a secret. The saint-sealer is the little finger that carries the secret by letting itself being substituted by the index finger. It is like the hidden throne that carries the secret of the promise. The little finger is the axis of all the

⁵⁹ Ḥamūyeh, *Maḥāṭib al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 28b.

⁶⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *Maḥāṭib al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 28a and 28b.

organisation of the fingers and thus of the whole hand. This axis position depends on the fact that it faces the fingers. It sets and organises any face-to-face, which constitutes the face as such, and allows speaking-to and witnessing. The whole organisation of the fingers facing one another as a speculative mirror is the scheme that carries the nothingness of the secret. The little finger joined to the index finger and the ring finger joined to the thumb form two circles that form the letter *hā'* which is the circle of all circles, or the totality of the promise history. The seal is no other than the sealer who carries it in the form of the letter *ha'* with its two circles, that of prophethood and that of sainthood. The seal, thus, has the form of an egg as Ḥamūyeh suggests and as such gathers the both seals of sainthood and prophethood. The sealer unveils to Ḥamūyeh that “the egg of the seal of prophethood and sainthood until the intuition’s bird (*tā’ir al-himma*) is perfected and nests over it”⁶¹. But the seal is also linked with the tree that opens the process of the promise: “The root of the trees is God’s fitting upon the case of his I-ness (*anāniyya*) [...] and it is the trees of Adam, Noah and Moses out of which grow twenty-five sorts of fruits, and it is, in wisdom, one single tree out of which God extracts one (fruit) from another: the first is the berry and the last the plum and the apricot comes out from the berry and the plum, and these three are the semblance of the seal”⁶². As an egg, the seal is the promise of a future, a development and a rise, as a fruit constituted of three fruits substituting to one another, from the tree, which is the tree of the letters starting with *alif*, it is what is looked for, and therefore what is coveted in the promise. The sealer-of-the-saints brings together the two seals as one when being *rāḥim*: “The *alif* and the *yā'* in *al-rāḥim* and *al-raḥīm* are an indication to the end of the accomplishment (*taḥqīq*) of the spirit in the hand, of the hand in the spirit and of the case in the spirit and the hand”⁶³. The saint-sealer, thus, brings together in his being-sealer, the case, the spirit and the hand. The unveiling of the structure of the hand, which is the processing promise, bring together in the seal the spirit and the act that were already separated though the opposition between deleting and confirming. Since the two seals are respectively the “stripped case” and the “stripped act” the process ends with the harmonious standing (*istiwā'*) of the Living (*al-Ḥayy*) that

⁶¹ Ḥamūyeh, *Kashf sirr al-wa'd*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 191a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 321.

⁶² Ḥamūyeh, *Bahr al-shukr*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 151a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 221.

⁶³ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 171a; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 272-3.

is encompassing his case:act⁶⁴, gathering Noah and Yas‘ā and, further on, the sealer-of-the prophets and the sealer-of the saints, Muḥammad and Yas‘ā.

The prophet and the saint

A passage of Ḥamūyeh’s *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf* sets the co-belonging opposition, or the vis-à-vis, between the prophets and the saints, through which he addresses the old question of the respective rank of the prophets and the saints⁶⁵. This vis-à-vis is built ending a long presentation of the appearances of the point, as letters, that manifests itself through the greatest point, which is the first pearl that God looked at, and the smallest one which is the root of the human being’s returning, from the throne up to the seas, which are the appearance of its life, thus linked with the Flood and the name *al-Ḥayy*, and the mountains, which are the appearance of supporting its load. “The prophets are the niche of its lights and the saints the glass of its lamp, the prophets are its language and the saints its clarity, the prophets are the appearance of its word and the saints the revealer of its act, the prophets are the place of revelation and miracles and the saints are the place of inspiration and charisma, the prophets are the depositors of the treasure into the talismans and the saints are the pullers of the treasure out of the talismans, the prophets are the laying down ones and the saints the bringing up ones, the prophets are the concealers and the saints the disclosers, the prophets invite the creatures from the close-world to the ultimate and the saints from the ultimate to the prince, the prophets point to the way and the saints are the guides on the way”⁶⁶. The passage from the close-world to the ultimate consists in exiting from the close world to “the end of the ultimate” with “the tool of the wisdom of prostration” and coming back and entering “from the ultimate to the extremity of the close world” with “the tool of the wisdom of bowing” “until the coveted (*murād*) servant exits” by both wisdoms “from the close world and the ultimate” “to the prince, the upright, the new-coming, the originary (*al-mawlā al-qā’im al-qādim al-qadīm*) who is beyond the door and above the lasting-distance of exiting and entering”⁶⁷. The expansion of the point, its

⁶⁴ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 196a; Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī, Abū Dhabī, 1998, p. 335.

⁶⁵ For this question M. Chodkiewicz, *Le sceau des saints*, Paris, 1986, pp. 73-78.

⁶⁶ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 137.

⁶⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *Nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 180b.

manifestation, is spread in a series of truths and finally receives its sense with the split of manifestation between its two appearances, prophet and saint, in the vis-à-vis that requires the constitution of the sense, evoking the split of the manifestation in the vis-à-vis of two mirrors. The sense cannot be unilateral. It requires two sides or directions looking at each other playing on symmetry and asymmetry, as in ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*⁶⁸. Prophets and saints are specific modalities of manifestation, light, speech and act, gathering the whole, opening the understanding of what is enlightened through an act. They have corresponding functions in mirror: receiving revelation and inspiration and acting through it, hiding and extracting the treasure of the essence, concealing and disclosing, which is the double aspect of truth, and calling to return. The call to return to the lord is a shift in the vis-à-vis that structures the relation between prophet and saint, since they are first facing one another opposite to one another. The shift is that they ultimately, and this is their last relation in which the relation is set in its truth, are not anymore in a vis-à-vis but in a succession. The first relation is fundamentally spatial, setting the scene of manifestation within the frame of truth. The second is the play of time:space, or timing this manifestation-space, as the return to the prince, the owner of manifestation, like in the Koranic verse (40:16) “*To whom is the kingdom this day*” often quoted by Ḥamūyeh, which places prophethood and sainthood in a succession. The only way to articulate sainthood and prophethood appears to be time so that this articulation turns time into history, which is essentially a returning back. This returning back, or this prophetic history, which is the timing of truth and thus the sense of truth, the very fact that truth means something, supposes the succession of prophethood and sainthood because it is a twofold journey, one that seizes the close-world in its truth, that is the ultimate, which is “the world of the essences gems”⁶⁹, and thus seizes manifestation as signifying manifestation or truth, and the second from the manifestation to its sense, which is its owner or prince. It supposes thus a time-difference between prophet and saint that highlights the previous oppositions in the vis-à-vis, for instance the double-sided truth: concealing-disclosing. This is where the saying attributed to Tirmidhī takes place

⁶⁸ ibn ‘Arabī, *Fūsūs al-ḥikam*, Istanbul, 2016, pp. 27, 37, 57, 172-3; P. Ballanfat, *Les châteaux des sages*, Paris, 2020, introduction pp. 50-51.

⁶⁹ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miqdār fī nuzūl al-jabbār*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 170a ; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 270.

and where stands the question of a double sealer, of prophethood and sainthood.

Simnānī discusses Ḥamūyeh’s perspective on sainthood without mentioning his saying at length: “As well as the end of sainthood is the beginning of prophethood likewise the end of prophethood is the beginning of sainthood”⁷⁰. He explains the saying he attributes to Tirmidhī according to which “the beginning of prophethood is the end of sainthood” saying that it doesn’t contradict the statement shared by the majority of the masters that “the end of sainthood is the beginning of prophethood”, since the first concerns the law (*sharī‘at*) and the latter the way⁷¹. The saint has to follow the prophet’s law so as to come to maturity and reach the beginning of sainthood that starts from the achievement of prophethood, but in the perspective of the way, the saint can only reach the beginning of prophethood which is the prophet’s ascension (*mi‘rāj*)⁷². In the *Chihil majlis*⁷³, he attributes this interpretation to Isfarāyīnī, but criticises what he presents as being Ḥamūyeh’s interpretation of the relation between the saints and the prophets. Simnānī claims that Ḥamūyeh was considering sainthood superior to prophethood out of his speculations on the letters, according to which the *wāw* of *wilāya* stands from the *alif* of *ulūhiyya* and the *nūn* of *nubuwwa* stands from the *wāw* of *wilāya*. Against this position Simnānī distinguishes *walāya*, the prophet’s sainthood, and *wilāya*, the saint’s sainthood, arguing that the *wāw* of sainthood stands with the *alif* of *ulūhiyya* and thus the prophet’s sainthood bears the vowel “a”, being *walāya*, and that his sainthood spreads over the saints’ sainthood that is thus vocalised *wilāya*. Simnānī’s critic is based on his perspective, the law and the way and their respective values, and misses the point that it carries nevertheless, the fact that both prophethood:sainthood stand on the ground of time and that, therefore, time is the perspective in which prophethood and sainthood are to be thought in their common belonging. The fact that Simnānī sees this question in terms of values and submits it to evaluation prevents him to think prophethood and sainthood in

⁷⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāh fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 137.

⁷¹ *Bayān al-ihsān li-ahl al-‘irfān*, in *Musannafāt-i fārsī-i ‘Alā’ al-dawla Simnānī*, ed. N. M. Herawī, Tehran, 1369, pp. 231-2 ; M. Molé infers from Simnānī’s statements that Ḥamūyeh considers sainthood higher than prophethood exonerating ibn ‘Arabī from it, “Les Kubrawīya entre sunnisme et shī‘isme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l’hégire,” *REI* (1961), pp. 100-102.

⁷² Amīr Iqbālshāh Sijistānī, *Chihil majlis*, ed. N. M. Herawī, Tehran, 1366, pp. 173-5.

⁷³ Amīr Iqbālshāh Sijistānī, *Chihil majlis*, ed. N. M. Herawī, Tehran, 1366, pp. 172-3; the critic of Ḥamūyeh is followed by a critic of ibn ‘Arabī.

Ḥamūyeh's terms, which is that prophethood:sainthood, which is a totality, is to be thought with the double couple that is beginning:end, or first:last, and revealed:hidden, or appearing:self-concealing, that refers to the Koranic verse "He is the first:the last:the appearing:the concealed and he is knowing of all things" (57:3). However, Isfarāyīnī knew Ḥamūyeh's version: "The end of prophethood is the beginning of sainthood". He says he heard it in a village in the province of Juwayn from a group of Ḥamūyeh's dervishes. He mentions he disapproved it at first since he was blinded by its external meaning but that, after thinking about it, God brought to his mind a verse out of which he concluded that since the prophet had achieved the muhammadian law and therefore brought prophethood to its end it is on this ground that sainthood could begin. He agreed thus finally with Ḥamūyeh that the possibility of sainthood stands necessarily in the fact that prophethood is achievement and can start only from the end of prophethood⁷⁴. In other terms a beginning can only happen from an ending and prophethood is precisely what opens the beginning by ending itself in Muḥammad.

After the first construction of the relation of prophethood and sainthood, Ḥamūyeh enters the question of their time relation that has been reminded by Isfarāyīnī and Simnānī. "Know that the beginning is from prophethood and the end from sainthood because the prophet (*nabī*) comes from God (*ḥaqq*) to creation and the saint goes from creation to God (*ḥaqq*). But as well as the end of sainthood is the beginning of prophethood likewise the end of prophethood is the beginning of sainthood because the beginning of the saint occurs with the meaning from semblance and the beginning of the prophet occurs with the semblance from the meaning. Hence, the beginning of that is the end of this and the end of this is the beginning of that. These two are two rivers that flow from the spring of the sea of the essence of the absolute point and stream in the souls and intelligences"⁷⁵. The relation between the saints and the prophets implies an intricate intertwining of time. On one hand, time is linear going forward from the world to the lord because the saints are in the continuation of the prophets, the two drawing a straight way, though it is divided into two parts so that the

⁷⁴ Isfarāyīnī, *Kāshif al-asrār*, ed. tr. H. Landolt, Tehran, 1358, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁵ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, pp. 137-8.

prophet’s way doesn’t require the saints’ way. The way is the line between a beginning and an end in which the end is already addressed to its end and the end requires a beginning. Prophethood and sainthood receive their determination from this specific structure of time. Prophethood ends half-way leaving a second part beyond the ultimate, which thus is an end doubled by a second which is finally the ultimate of the ultimate. Like Noah is a new beginning after a first beginning, the end is overcome by a second end. The beginning and the end suppose an inner structure of duplication and reproduction. Hence, on the other hand, while the prophet goes from the world to the ultimate one, he goes from God to the creation, which seems the opposite. This circular movement of prophethood is why the beginning belongs to prophethood, which sets the place of sojourn of creation in its double aspect, the close-world and the ultimate, from God (*ḥaqq*), the sense that gives creation its right. The end belongs to sainthood that is ultimately what gives it its sense since sainthood is the way that goes back from prophethood to God. But the prophet goes from the meaning to the semblance, the semblance is its end and thus it is from its end that the saint starts from the semblance back to the meaning. Sainthood and prophethood are, for one another, both end and beginning in a structure of time that is somehow going forward and backward at the same time, turning to one direction and counter-turning to the opposite direction at the same time, like an over-turning double circle, like the double loop of the letter *hā’*, which is so many times drawn in the margins of some manuscripts of several Ḥamūyeh’s treatises.

The question of the co-belonging of prophethood and sainthood, their vis-à-vis and their timed relation addresses the question of the sealer-of the saints and the sealer-of-the-prophets in their essential co-belonging. Indeed, prophethood is at the same time beginning and end since prophethood receives its meaning from its being sealed by a prophet who is its sealer. Prophethood and sainthood stand in giving right:sense (*ḥaqq*) from the sealer that appears with Muḥammad in its duplication. “Muḥammad and Aḥmad are two names appearing with one named. At the beginning of time, he appears with the Muḥammadian name (*ism-i Muḥammadī*) and calls human beings from the close-world to the ultimate; at the end of time he appears with the Aḥmadian name and invites human beings from the ultimate to the prince, to the root of the

objects and the existing ones and to the secret of the law”⁷⁶. The beginning and the end are likewise that of prophethood, that of time itself, and that of both prophethood and sainthood. Here the two proceedings, from the world to the ultimate and from the ultimate to the prince, belong to the same one who is named differently according to the two folds of the way. Since the saint is the one who calls and guide to the prince from the ultimate, sainthood is an essential character of the prophet who splits in two ways and two names. Sainthood is thus a name for prophethood, and this revealed by Muḥammad’s prophecy who is the sealer-of-the-saints. Moreover “the sealer-of-the prophets and the sealer-of-the-saints come from one single art and their rise is one; God’s loved one (*ḥabību’llāh*) descends from the (letter) *ḥā’* of “*Ḥayy*” (the Living) and the friend-of-God (*walī-u’llāh*) from the *yā’* of “*Ḥayy*”; “*Ḥayy*” is the semblance of the mantle covering the things; the *ḥā’* of “*Ḥayy*” points to the spirit and the *yā’* of “*Ḥayy*” to the hand (*yad*); the creation of Ādam happens with the wisdom of the hand and his bringing to life to the wisdom of the spirit”⁷⁷. The saint-sealer achieves thus the spirit with the hand, brings knowledge that does not exceed, with the figure of Jesus, to the action that does not deviate, with the figure of Yas‘ā. The stress on the hand and action must have been one cause of misunderstanding and confusing the saint-sealer with the *mahdī*⁷⁸. Moreover, Ḥamūyeh uses once the expression *walī al-‘adl*⁷⁹ because justice is the aim as he says⁸⁰. While it seems he never uses the word *mahdī*, this expression, linked with the apparently messianic events he describes, has most probably led his readers and even some disciples like Nasafi his saint-sealer as the *mahdī*, the timelord. Ḥamūyeh points to the essential unity of the two sealers which belongs actually to the essential co-belonging of the one named with two names, Muḥammad:Aḥmad: “He took his loved one from the *bā’* of his name the lord (*rabb*) and his companion (*rafiq*) from the *rā’* of his name the lord; he installed the loved one personified in the door of acknowledging as prophet and messenger and it is Muḥammad and Aḥmad, and he installed his companion personified in acknowledging as the

⁷⁶ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, pp. 99-100.

⁷⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 100.

⁷⁸ In one of his treatises, wrongly attributed to ibn ‘Arabī, Ḥamūyeh indicates that “the (letter) *yā’* is the *mahdī* and the right path (*hudā*)”, *Risāla adhkār*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 9b.

⁷⁹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 39b.

⁸⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 33a; *Marātīb al-qurra*, Princeton 3793Y, fol. 3b, 25a.

agreed saint and it is Yas‘ā”⁸¹.

The two sealers are one and their split belongs to the word “Ḥayy”, which constitutes the process of time as a totality from the letter ḥā’ to the letter yā’, which is taught to Yas‘ā, the sealer-of-the-saints, by Noah, and to Ḥamūyeh himself. The time relation between the two sealers is given through the relation between Noah and Yas‘ā that reveals the name *al-Ḥayy* and its fundamental position in this timing. It gives thus the basis for understanding the historical process that comes to sight through the sealer-of-the-saints, which is life (*ḥayāt*) that is the essence of existence. “The face (*wajh*) is the semblance of the diversity of the essence and the essence is the place of manifestation of the absolute existence’s emanation. Existence is the word for life for which one part is god:sense (*ḥaqq*) and the other creation-by-adding; the lineage (*nisba*) of God:sense is the manifestation of life and its might (*qudra*) and creation is the merging of its light; life descends with the name “Ḥayy” and might with the name “Qayyūm”⁸². All Ḥamūyeh’s interpretation of the sealer is based on the enigmatic notion of existence that is determined first as being absolute. Absolute existence, as a pure secret, manifests itself within the essence (*dhāt*) of which the semblance is the face, so that the whole process is existence as such. Existence is the general process of life and it is, so far as we understand, existence as life that can be characterised as the difference between God that is what gives sense because it is linked through life and might and the creation that manifests light since it is enlightened so as to be related to sense through meaning. Life is what ties the whole thing together by timing it and thus it is what gives existence its meaning. The sealer, thus, brings to its achievement the whole unfolding of existence as a totality. The prophet and the sealer-of-the-saints summarise the whole process of existence, or life, which means also the singular life of the one who witnesses it, who is no other than Ḥamūyeh.

“God, in the *yā’* of the Living, set two grips; he established each grip as an eye for his light; he set the saints as two parts turning over the two eyes of his light and the light of the two eyes of his two grips are prophethood and sainthood;

⁸¹ *Al-fasl fi’l-fadl*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 12a.

⁸² Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 109.

he put for each eye a tongue and it is the prophets and for each tongue of both a finger and for each finger a hand; he extracted from the tongue and the hand the semblance of the call”⁸³. The letter *yā’* is the foundation of sainthood. This letter receives its meaning and function from the name “*al-Ḥayy*” that is opened with the prophet-sealer who is the loved one (*ḥabīb*) who opens sainthood, being the first saint, as already mentioned. The *yā’* stands within the prophecy of Muḥammad achieving the name “*al-Ḥayy*”. Sainthood is at the same time opened by prophethood and giving prophethood its meaning in return. The meaning of prophethood is achieved by sainthood with the saint-sealer. The saints are turning over prophethood and sainthood, which are the totality of seeing since they are two eyes, revealing thus the double structure of sight. Apparently, there is one sight but the oneness of sight is achieved with two eyes. Seeing hides its own structure within its act. Sainthood with the saint-sealer reveals the inner double structure of prophethood, achieved with the *ḥā’* of *al-ḥabīb*. In other terms, sainthood reveals that the *ḥā’* of *al-ḥabīb* is actually the *hā’* of *huwa* with its two loops that are like two eyes. The *yā’* is delayed because it is concealed over the two eyes in the hiddenness of the ‘*Azrā’īlyyāt*, and because it is the night that veils the truth⁸⁴, waiting for saint-sealer to achieve it, sainthood, with the *dāl* of the extension of time through the hand that belongs to the finger-like prophetic tongue. The saint-sealer is the one who gathers with the hand, performatively, the totality of the saints since “the saints all of them are from the *yā’* of the Living (*al-ḥayy*)”⁸⁵ and “the letter *yā’* is the house of the Living”⁸⁶. The Living is appearing in reflection in the letter *yā’* of sainthood and constitutes sainthood as such as the night of secrecy in which sainthood is concealed. “The Living appeared in his mirror and it is the *yā’* and it is the veil of the truth over the eye [...] the *yā’* became night (*layl*) in which occurs the descent of the supreme name”⁸⁷. Because sainthood belongs to the name “*al-Ḥayy*”, “*Khidr* became the semblance of gathering the saints and the saints the light of *Khidr*’s gathering; the sealer-of-the saints is the semblance of gathering and light and the sealer-of-the-prophets is the spirit of gathering and light; the *khā’* the *yā’* and the *rā’* are the good (*khayr*)

⁸³ Hamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 198b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 341.

⁸⁴ *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 61a.

⁸⁵ Hamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 198b; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 341.

⁸⁶ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb bayna ḥikma al-kitāb wa al-turāb*, Ayasofia 1673, fol. 114a.

⁸⁷ *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 61a.

that is in the hand of God and Khiḍr is in the *khā’* the saints in the *yā’* and the prophet and the saint in the *rā’*”⁸⁸. Gathering the saints in darkness with his light. Sainthood requires the difference of semblance and light. The effective possibility of the gathering is provided by Khiḍr, who is its semblance, so that all the saints have the semblance of Khiḍr because they stand with the *yā’* of being-alive. But being-alive, happening, must be enlightened so as to be seen. The saints bring light to the living and thus bring together light and living by which existence stands in its right:sense. The saint-sealer, thus, is the ultimate semblance that gathers all the saints, because sainthood can be gathered only if it is in the likeness of Khiḍr, while the prophet-sealer is the spirit who achieves knowledge because he is the speaking tongue. Because Yas‘ā does not die like Khiḍr he carries the name *al-Ḥayy*, the Living, by which he gathers all the saints and by which he is the term of all creatures⁸⁹. Hence, the gathering of Khiḍr, Yas‘ā and the prophet (*rasūl*) achieves the good (*khayr*), because the good is in the hand of God and that the hand is brought to light by Yas‘ā. However, the achievement of time with Yas‘ā is no other than the achievement of prophethood itself, since the whole history is prophetic. In other terms, the saint-sealer achieves the seal of prophethood within prophethood. Sainthood is not a supplement to prophethood as if there would be a super-prophethood. It is a guise of prophethood that belongs to it and reveals its inner structure.

“Do not think that the sealer-of-the saints is a supplement to the sealer-of-the-prophets because they are the place of manifestation of a single truth though, in creation, they are two forms, one at the beginning of time and one at the end of time”⁹⁰. Prophethood and sainthood are the two forms of one single truth since truth is achieved by being differentiated, or rather truth is always necessarily double like the two eyes the two loops of the *hā’* because it is seen and thus is a manifestation. Duality can be a property of beingness because it belongs to sight. Though there are two eyes there is one sight. The conflict that constitutes time is the conflict that constitutes sight and that is required by truth. The wish of the essence to come out with its essential manifestation so as to be acknowledged is

⁸⁸ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa‘d*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 199a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 342-3.

⁸⁹ *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātīm al-wilāya*, Aya Sofīa 2058, fol. 206a.

⁹⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 98.

as such what us achieved through the opposition of revealing and concealing that becomes the conflict between faith and unfaithfulness as shows a long description. And “the complete word, that is “be” (*kun*), appeared from the root of unfaithfulness and associationism and it is composed of the *kāf* of unfaithfulness (*kufr*) and *kāf* of associating (*shirk*) and *nūn* of faith (*īmān*) in which there is the *wāw* of unity (*wahda*)”⁹¹. The difference between sainthood and prophethood is the structure of truth that articulates hiddenness and manifestation within manifestation, and this difference is time as delaying the coming-out of the hand of good. The sealer-of-the-saints is not someone who happens as a supplement to prophetic history, who would thus remain alien to it, above it because external. He is the necessity of prophetic history, since it can be a history only through its being sealed and its sealing requires a double sealer that corresponds to the inner split of prophethood that makes what prophethood is, the difference in the prophet himself between Muḥammad and Aḥmad, difference that constitutes the very essence of time through which life unfolds. This why the truth of prophethood is disclosed in time after being delayed and why the letter *dāl* that is the duration of time until the saint-sealer’s apparition is the timed truth of the prophet: “He completed the meanings of the *dāl* in his right:sense and, in this sense, he called him Muḥammad and Aḥmad”⁹².

The sealer is one and this unity stands as the letter *alif*, the one. The inner difference in prophethood is the difference between the *manṣūb* and the *maḥbūb*, about which Ḥamūyeh wrote his *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*: “The upright (*manṣūb*) is the bearer of the *Koran* as well as the beloved (*maḥbūb*) is the bearer of the distinction code (*furqān*) [...] the upright is the sealer-of-the-prophets like the beloved is the sealer-of-the-saints”⁹³. Upright and beloved are the two determinations of the prophet who includes thus the sealer-of-the-saints precisely because he is the sealer-of-the-prophets. There is a fundamental unity of the two sealers that is achieved through time that splits them so as to unfold existence. The truth of the two sealers stands in the letter *alif* of which Ḥamūyeh says: “In the beginning *alif* is the occurrence (*qiyām*) of resurrection and in the end it is the apparition of the hour; the character of resurrection is the sealer-of-

⁹¹ *Kitāb al-istimsāk*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 44a, 44b.

⁹² Treatise without title, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 70b.

⁹³ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fi al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 112.

the-prophets and the character of the hour is the sealer-of-the-saints”⁹⁴. The sealers overturn the usual understanding of prophetic time. The difference between the beginning and the end is not between creation and resurrection, but between resurrection and the hour. In other terms, the meaning of being the sealer-of-the-prophets is less sealing prophecy than already achieving resurrection, sealing creation with resurrection, as well as sealing the saints is not bringing sainthood to its truth but rather actualising resurrection as the hour. This is also why the sealer-of-the saints is associated with the hand (*yad*) since the hand ends with the *dāl* of the extension of time to the end and the abode. The hand of the saint-sealer is bringing back the *alif* of the beginning with the hour that seems to be at the end but that stands in between the end and the beginning since the end is actually the beginning of the pure living of the Living and thus the beginning of the muḥammadian dwelling, because “the Living is the acting succeeding (*darrāk*)”⁹⁵.

While during the celebration of the end when the saint-sealer came out in the hidden room of Damascus mosque, the prophet-sealer appeared in between Jesus and Yas’ā , “to this extent there is the streaming of the sun of prophethood (*risāla*), the moon of prophecy and the star of guidance ⁹⁶ and it is expressing the coming out of the case to its location and dwelling; God appears to the saint in the ‘highest likeness’; the prophet Muḥammad, his messenger, appears also to the saint of God in the ‘highest council’; to the extent of God and his prophet Muḥammad’s manifestation to the saint occurs the apparition of the saint in the ‘highest sight’ that is between the highest likeness and the highest council”⁹⁷. In the saint who experiences the end, the saint-sealer appears now between God’s and the prophet-sealer’s apparition, relating one to the other by being the “highest sight”, that is the time:space seeing relation. This new location is the way the case finds its dwelling. In other terms it is the way the saint-sealer assumes the descent of the seal in his being performatively the seal. The saint-sealer is ultimately no other than the prophet-sealer, Muḥammad, because “the illiterate prophet is the coveted-beloved-sealer who presses God’s coveted in his action and

⁹⁴ Ḥamūyeh, *al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 75.

⁹⁵ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 80a.

⁹⁶ In another text Ḥamūyeh mentions “the moon of sainthood, the sun of prophecy (*risālat*) and the stars of prophethood”, *al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-taṣawwuf*, Tehran, 1362/1403, p. 75.

⁹⁷ Ḥamūyeh, *Sharḥ sirr al-wa’d*, Hüdayi Efendi 425, fol. 200a; *Rasā’il ibn ‘Arabī*, Abū Dhābī, 1998, pp. 345.

knowledge and his action in God's coveted one and his beloved"⁹⁸. Since he bears the seal, the saint-sealer becomes the place that gathers all the servants that become saints. "The coveted is the coveted of the essence and the beloved (*maḥbūb*) is the beloved of himself; the coveted is the coveted by his entering his domain and the beloved is the beloved by his descending in his home and his arrival in his land; the saint-sealer is the coveted beloved amongst his creation and he is truly speaking his valley" through which what pours into him pours into the hearts of the servants⁹⁹. However, the essential unity of the two sealers can appear in truth only through their differences since truth is necessarily double, which is its limit. The saint-sealer has thus two essential determinations, sight and giving home, that distinguishes him from the prophet-sealer: "Know that what gathers the qualities is veracity (*ṣiddīqiyya*) and what gathers the characters is sainthood; the veracious is the succour of the creatures and the saint their safety [...]; the veracious stands with his proof and the saint from the eyes of God; man surrounds his place and his position with sainthood and descends in his place and location and comes closer to him with veracity"¹⁰⁰. Sainthood must be understood in its stricture with veracity. The saint is the place of dwelling, the home, of the man (*rajul*) who approaches him through veracity because he achieves in himself the veracious quality which consists in succouring. Veracity is the essence of sincerity since « The veracious is a faithful believing in God with a compelled faith [...] in the sense that he does not lie"¹⁰¹. The one who seeks succour stands in the veracity of the veracious and finds refuge in the safety (*amān*) of the saint-sealer who is the immune valley (*al-wādī al-muqaddas*) that belongs to sainthood because sainthood is *'Azrā'īlī*. Sainthood stands thus beyond veracity, which used to be the essence of sainthood in Baghdadian Sufism, and Ḥamūyeh makes of veracity the essential character of prophethood. The saint is the abode gathering the abodes, that of Jerusalem and Mecca, as mentioned, that requires closeness to be looked for through veracity. Prophethood is aiming at the nearness of sainthood immunity. « The veracious (*ṣiddīq*) is the mirror of the essence and the saint the tablet of the face; the head of the veracious ones who

⁹⁸ *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 67b.

⁹⁹ *Marātib al-qurra*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 66a.

¹⁰⁰ *Ḥaqq al-waqt wa al-sā'a*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 141a.

¹⁰¹ Ḥamūyeh, *Baḥr al-shukr*, Hüdāyī Efendi 425, fol. 152b; *Rasā'il ibn 'Arabī*, Abū Dhabī, 1998, pp. 225; among the signs of the saint-sealer God annihilates the liars and strengthens the veracious, *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

came with the gem of sincerity is the sealer-of-the-prophets and it is Muḥammad and the head of the saints is the sealer-of-the-saints Yas‘ā; the veracious is the one who stands with the proof of God [...] and the saint is the one who is appointed to God, discerning through the eyes of God standing by his might and he is the owner of the case of certainty and existence, and to the case belongs a way of acting, to certainty a sense (*ḥaqq*) and to existence result”¹⁰². Sainthood, because it is gathered by the saint-sealer which gives it its sense, is the orientation of prophethood within prophethood. What prophethood promises through veracity is achieved in sainthood so that sainthood is the inner achievement of prophethood.

As it has been said before, the saint-sealer belongs to Muḥammad’s prophecy, to which it is not a supplement. Rather, like in ibn ‘Arabī’s vision of the brick in the wall being two, the saint-sealer is the hidden dimension constituted of prophecy. This co-belonging, or rather the inclusion of the saint-sealer as a secret in Muḥammad has to be elucidated. Muḥammad is the one who achieves the truth of prophethood by causing sainthood to appear. This is why “the *kāf* and the *yā’* are the seal of prophethood”¹⁰³. His being a sealer consists in the fact to he causes sainthood to appear in due time, which means that he reveals also time as a delaying, as the delaying of truth. This is why his achievement happens through sainthood, which is his own sainthood starting with Adam, and that it requires sainthood to be completely manifested as such through the saint-sealer, who is the one who carries the seal in any achieved saint. “Know that the *nūn* of *innī* is the mediation for moving the vowel “i” from the *alif* to the *yā’* until *innī* is pronounced in the word; the *nūn* is his light and the *yā’* is that of the praiseworthy saint in the saint-sealer; the meaning of this word is the descent of the divinity [...], of the I-ness (*inniyya*) qualified by appearing and the light [...] to the saint-sealer who is the return of his prophet Muḥammad”¹⁰⁴. Ḥamūyeh borrows the word *innī* from the koranic verse he often quotes: “*I, I (am) Allāh the lord of the worlds*” (*Kor.* 28:30). The word *innī* summarises the whole process that starts with the *alif* of creation, linked with Muḥammad, as seen before with the three darknesses, and ends with the *yā’* of sainthood that is achieved with the hand

¹⁰² *Ḥaqq al-waqt wa al-sā’a*, ms. Princeton 3793Y, fol. 141b.

¹⁰³ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb bayna ḥikma al-kitāb wa al-turāb*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 84b, Aya sofia, fol. 114a.

¹⁰⁴ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 216a.

(*yād*) of the saint-sealer who frees life from any take back and that is the *yā* of the call (*nidā'*). The *nūn* in between is the delaying from the *alif* to the *yā'*, or rather it is time with the hesitation belonging to the essence that is shown with the Flood of Noah. It brings light through the fingers of Noah that spread to the saint-sealer the wisdom by which he is the fingers carrying the seal, or the dome of the domes keeping the secret of sainthood. *Innī*, as a time, is the space-time structure of the I-ness constitutive of *anā* that is achieved in Muḥammad. The process is the descent of the seal, the secret, upon the saint-sealer who is carrying the I-ness of God. “The pillar of the *alif* of the saints standing in the meaning of the I-ness is the *nūn* of the prophet of the prophets and the pillar (*‘imād*) of the return (*ma‘ād*) of the *alif* of the prophets is the *nūn* of the light (*nūr*) of the saint of the saints”¹⁰⁵. Carrying the I-ness, thus, is ultimately the return of Muḥammad. The saint-sealer is the one who achieves the return of the prophet-sealer and thus achieves it as a circle, the one circle of the beloved that achieves the double loop of the *hā'* of *huwa*. The saint-sealer is finally achieving nothing else than the seal of prophethood. This is why “Yas‘ā the sealer-of-the-saints is the light of the sons, the semblances of the lands, the truth of the return, the root of reason and the place of the expansion of mercy in the worlds and by him is completed and achieved the meaning of his saying: “*I, I (innī anā) (am) Allāh the lord of the worlds*” (*Kor. 28:30*)”¹⁰⁶. Through him is achieved resurrection by which life is the achieved truth of existence, because he brings together “the persons of resurrection that are four: Adam, Muḥammad the sealer-of-the-prophets, Noah and Yas‘ā the sealer-of-the-saints, and they are the loyal ones (*umanā'*)”¹⁰⁷. Then Ḥamūyeh indicates that what was before Adam returned to the age of Adam, and everything that came to being during Adam’s age returned to Muḥammad’s age, what happened before Muḥammad returned to Noah’s age and what happened during Noah’s age returned to the age of the sealer-of-the-saints from whom rises resurrection. The saint-sealer, thus, is not only the return of Muḥammad but the returning in general, or rather returning as the achieved figure of the circle because he causes all the periods of time, that are four, to return to their proper locations, which is their truth, truth being the proper space of time, since he is the

¹⁰⁵ *Kitāb al-ḥikma al-bāhira*, Bursa Ulucami, fol. 98b.

¹⁰⁶ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 216a.

¹⁰⁷ *Kitāb al-hāḍir ma‘al-khāṭir*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 121a.

one who gives the Flood its full meaning through the hand. Thus, as being the four of resurrection, they achieve human being as such, since there are the four modes of human being: “the human of the essences (*a’yān*), the human of the fingers, the human of vision and the human of exposure and these are Adam, Noah, Muḥammad the sealer-of-the-prophets and Yas‘ā the sealer-of-the-saints”¹⁰⁸. However, achieved human being is the one before whom the angels prostrate and this prostration occurs in front of the lieutenants, of which the meaning is gathered through Adam, Muḥammad and Yas‘ā: “He ordered the angels to prostrate before his three lieutenants who are Adam, Muḥammad and Yas‘ā, lieutenant, loved (*ḥabīb*) and companion (*rafīq*), and they are, by this, in this, for this, and there, right:sense and worthy; the angels prostrated all of them in one direction toward Adam, all together in various directions toward Muḥammad and all together one within another toward Yas‘ā, the sealer-of-the-saints”¹⁰⁹. These three lieutenants stand on different grounds: “Adam is the lieutenant of God in the earth (*arḍ*) of obligation (*farḍ*), Muḥammad is the lieutenant of God in the earth of presentation (*‘arḍ*) and the sealer-of-the-saints Yas‘ā the lieutenant of God in the earth of the earth”¹¹⁰.

The relation between the prophet-sealer and the saint-sealer appears also within language. The saints depend on prophethood because the saints are the saints of a specific prophethood. The typology of the saints corresponds to specific prophecies, that are three types: Muḥammad, Abraham and Moses. The co-belonging of the three prophets and the three types of God form the face of God, analogue to the six aspects of the dome that preserves sainthood. “The saint of God is the saint of the prophethood of the sealer-of-the prophets and the loved of God; the saint of God’s right (*walī ḥaqq Allāh*) is the saint of the prophethood of Khalīlu’llāh; the saint belonging-to-God (*walī li-llāh*) is saint in the prophethood of the confident of God and the interlocutor of God; the three prophets and the three saints are all the face of God; the relation between the loved of God and his saint in the face is that of the two eyes; the relation of Khalīlu’llāh and his saint in the face is that of the hears; the relation of the confident of God and his saint in

¹⁰⁸ *Kitāb al-hāḍir ma ‘a’l-khāṭir*, ms. Hüseyin Çelebi 442, fol. 127b.

¹⁰⁹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 48b.

¹¹⁰ *Risāla fawā’id nafsiyya fī’l-kalimāt al-qudsiyya*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 7a.

the face is that of the two nostrils [...]”¹¹¹. Ḥamūyeh goes on describing the relation between the prophets and the saints as a space:time structure: “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 A’jamī [...] a group claimed this day is Friday but according to the truth it is Tuesday”¹¹². The space:time face-to-face of the prophets and saints end with the three determinations that correspond respectively to Muḥammad, Noah and Yas‘ā in which the mediation between the prophet-sealer and the saint-sealer is Noah and his wisdom fingers pouring out of the Flood. This relation is manifested with the seventh day that ends with the six face-to-face specular structure which is that of prophetic history’s repetition. The seventh day is not double in the same sense as the preceding days that were going from sainthood to prophethood and from prophethood to sainthood. The seventh day is the co-belonging unity of the two sealers, not anymore of prophethood and sainthood. In other terms, as long as the relation between divinity and humanity is thought through the relation between sainthood and prophethood it remains within permanent repetition that does not allow sainthood to appear as such since sainthood does not appear as such except in the saint-sealer. The unity of prophethood and sainthood is achieved as the seal, or rather the seal is this unity and therefore does not reproduce the opposition between prophethood and sainthood. The prophet-sealer is the saint-sealer though the prophet-sealer has already ended prophethood and appears further as the saint-sealer who does not, properly speaking, end sainthood but is the endless continuation of sainthood as the seal it is through life. The prophet thus is blessed by a blessing of which “the end:seal (*khītām*) is musk and its musk is the sealer of the end:seal (*khātīm al-khītām*)”¹¹³.

¹¹¹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 77a-b.

¹¹² *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 77a-b.

¹¹³ *Kitāb burūz al-nūr*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 47a.

The “prophet appears to the creatures in the form of the saints”, nine times, and the last is “with the semblance of the sealer-of-the-saints”¹¹⁴. Thus, the sole difference remaining between the two sealers is the ordinary difference in language. The root of the Arabic is the letter *sīn* and that of the non-Arab is *shīn* that are placed within the existence of the loyal spirit that is the true existence which is the pairing between knowledge and religion that can be called either Gabriel or ‘Azrā’īl; while the *mīm* is the meaning revolving from one to the other and it is the name of the sun (*shams*)¹¹⁵. Arabic and non-Arabic, thus, are the first languages of intelligence from which Adam spoke seven hundred languages that were later gathered in one tree¹¹⁶. They are also the words that speak the two spirits to whom belong the close-world and the ultimate¹¹⁷. The saint-sealer, like the word *shams* unifying in revolving the *sīn* and the *shīn*, brings together at the end the two languages¹¹⁸ that were already dividing language at the beginning and opening the general division of the prophetic tongues from the tree of Adam. The “truth of the Arabic word” uses the coming-out of the speaker (*al-mukhātib*) and he speaks “from the face and the attributes” with the verses and the “the truth of the non-Arab word” speaks “from the soul and the essence” who says the difficulties of the discourses through the customs and the rituals¹¹⁹. Thus the saint-sealer, through his thinking:acting gathers together with language the face and the attributes and the soul and the essence that were divided. What the seal reconciles out of the separation between Arabic and non-Arabic, prophethood and sainthood, is ultimately the division between thinking and acting, the inward and the outward, the spirit and the hand. This reconciliation is the definitive victory of the word *al-Ḥayy*. “The sense (*ḥaqq*) of the pen and the letter appears in the saint-sealer with the semblance of the spirit and the case [...]; the sense of the pen goes back to the might, the wish and the will and the sense of the letter to life, satisfaction and division”. He unites thus the case and the spirit as well as the might and life so that knowledge becomes action and might become pure life. This unity causes him to “speak out of his mouth while the others speak out of their tongue”. Since prophecy happens from the finger:tongue that spreads wisdom,

¹¹⁴ *Risāla fī zuhūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 207a.

¹¹⁵ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 221a-b.

¹¹⁶ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 227a-b.

¹¹⁷ *Kitāb nuzūl al-tawwāb*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 81a.

¹¹⁸ Also in *Risāla fī zuhūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 207a.

¹¹⁹ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 50a-b.

letters of speaking, and that corresponds to the letter *alif* he speaks out of an open mouth that corresponds to the letter *hā'*¹²⁰ and that consists in the fact that his saying happens to him and not from him and occurs as performing letters¹²¹. In other terms, he speaks with letters that are the unity of knowing and acting, of the face and the attributes and the essence and the soul, the soul belonging to the highest and being the manifestation of the essence since it is absolutely commanding (*ammāra*).

The name Yas'ā

Ḥamūyeh, for the seal, uses systematically the expressions: *khātim al-awliyā'*, *khātim al-anbiyā'*, *al-walī al-khātim* and *al-nabī al-khātim*. Ḥamūyeh almost never uses the expression *khatm al-wilāya*¹²². As I showed before the name Yas'ā might be used to hide any personal attribution since the notion of the saint-sealer does not allow such an attribution unlike the prophet-sealer who is Muḥammad. Yas'ā is thus a pseudonym that allows any identification because it is actually the pseudonym of the prophet-sealer. The name of Yas'ā is to be found as a verb in many Koranic verses but, strangely enough, these are not to be found in Ḥamūyeh's treatises. However, in his *Risāla al-mizān fī ma'rifa al-awzān*, written in 629h., he refers explicitly to the verbal form: "This night that stands in the highest of *'Ilīyūn* comes down each night to the sky of the near-world and covers Yas'ā who urges (*yas'ā*) to *Sijjīn*"¹²³. Urging, thus, is a characteristic of the saints' sealer precisely because he is covered by the night of the prophet and awaits for coming out, which is his vocation. This is why in the same passage Ḥamūyeh says: "The scripture is the inversion of the night and the significations that of "it covers" (Kor. 92:1) so that "it covers" becomes Yas'ā". These passages offer an additional elucidation of the relation between the saint-sealer and the prophet through the distinction between the night that covers and the saint-sealer who urges to appear because he is the sun of prophethood. Prophethood is covering sainthood because it is in its essence a covering that delays and preserves sainthood. In other terms, delaying is the way of preserving and, thus, the way

¹²⁰ "The *hā'* is the place of the tongue and it is the *hā'* of him (*huwa*), to him and from him", treatise without title, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 66b.

¹²¹ *Risāla fī zuḥūr khātim al-wilāya*, Aya Sofia 2058, fol. 206a.

¹²² It is only used four times in *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 85b, 86a, 300a, 247b.

¹²³ Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 121b.

sainthood grows for being the unveiling of truth. Prophethood articulates time which is the condition of sainthood. Prophethood keeps truths in its secrecy, because “the night is the essence of the illiterate Hashemite messenger that covers the essence of Yas’ā, in which occurs the veil of the invisible and the visible and which is the nest (*‘ushsh*)”¹²⁴. The saint-sealer is what awaits in the delaying night for bringing contemplation: “This sun is the essence of Yas’ā that comes in the secrecy of night and contemplates God (*haqq*) between the letter and the veil”¹²⁵. Indeed “the sun of the messenger is the saints’ sealer because he came at night and rose from the fire and the night of what comes down is the illiterate prophet because he came to it (the night) for enlightening his frame and darkening his tablet; and what comes down is “*God the unique the dreadful*” (*Kor.* 39:12, 38:65, 39:4)”¹²⁶.

He also mentions the verse in which Yas’ā appears with the verbal declension *tas’ā*: “*Then he threw it and it was a snake sliding*” (*Kor.* 20:20) in a significant passage of *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*:

“He (God) told you [...]: I placed the pearl in the position of the inkwell and my glance like the pen coming to the location of darkness so as to spread the essences over the attributes, to cause to descend the attributes over the semblances of the practices and the rituals and to insert the secret of the hour in between the destinies occurring with the moments and the hours attached to the semblances of the existing things and the singularities of the in-comings; when I looked at the pearl, it became water expanding, life fell in it, life breathed and I transformed it to air; the essence of life appeared between water and air; I saw in it the *ḥā’* of the loved one (*ḥabīb*) within “*the Living the Guardian who does not vanish*” and I wrote with the most sublime letters of my glance “*the Living the Guardian who does not vanish*” upon the *ḥā’* of the loved one; the two *ḥā’* entered in the *ḥā’* of “*him unique (waḥdahu) no associate*”; then I saw on the right side of the essence of life the sea of life agitated by waves [...] and appeared inside its rolling-around the *ḥā’* of the truth; I wrote with the closest letters to my glance the *ḥā’* of “*the clear sense*” (*al-ḥaqq al-mubīn*) upon the *ḥā’* of the clarified truth;

¹²⁴ Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 121b.

¹²⁵ Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 121b.

¹²⁶ Aya Sofia 1673, fol. 122a.

the two *ḥā'* were unified and entered in the *ḥā'* of “*him unique no god except him*”; then I saw on the left of the essence of life the river of life sent [...] to the valley of the hearts who [...] rejoined the loved one [...] and it is the loved one called the physician; [...] I wrote with the most middle letters of my glance the *ḥā'* of the true Living upon the *ḥā'* of the truth of the truth; the two *ḥā'* paired and was born the *ḥā'* of the limit (*ḥadd*) of God that is the limit of the limits and it embraced the *ḥā'* of “*him unique no associate to him no god except him*”; came out of it the language of the attribute, the knowledge of the semblance and the declension of the mark and I called it the staff that confirms, purifies and clarifies: “*Then he threw it and it was a snake sliding*” (*Kor. 20:20*) I took the *ḥā'* of the snake (*ḥayya*) from the *ḥā'* of the sea of life, the *yā'* of the snake from the *yā'* of the essence of life and the *hā'* of the snake from the *hā'* of the river (*nahr*) of life; so, the snake is a sign that includes nine outward signs and one turned inward that is the most sublime and that surrounds the sea, the essence and the river of life”¹²⁷.

This passage summarises the whole process going from the beginning with the pearl in darkness in which descends the pen, or the *alif*, which is already the pen of the saint-sealer, until the hour that gives a sense to destinies. The beginning actually happens with the violence of the might that irrupts in the pearl and divides it. But moreover, the beginning does not start because it would be oriented towards an end because the end would not have a necessity and the beginning could always miss it. The end is what begins the beginning because it is the pen of the end that starts the process. In other terms, the end precedes absolutely the beginning that, therefore, is already achieved in the hand of the saint-sealer. The pen divides the pearl into water and air from which appears life that is the ultimate mode in which existence is achieved by Yas‘ā, who is actually urging to it. Life appears divided in three, the essence of life, the sea of life and the river of life that are ultimately joined with the *ḥā'* of the limit that encompasses and from which comes Moses’ staff. The staff actually transforms into the snake because it splits with the pen of the saint-sealer as it was mentioned earlier. This transformation which brings about the end with the saint-sealer

¹²⁷ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 39a-b.

achieves the complete circle of life that contains its three modes: sea, essence and river, which are the modes of the loved one. Ḥamūyeh adds that there are three loved ones (*ḥabīb*): Muḥammad in the sea of life, “his saint appointed to justice and his companion in intelligence” in the essence of life who is facing the sealer-of-the-saints, and the loved one in the river of life who is the first and the last, the first being Abraham and the second Moses¹²⁸. The snake is the accomplishment of the beloved (*maḥbūb*) who has become the total lover (*hābib*), as mentioned earlier. It does not contain the saint-sealer since the nine marks are the multiplication, or the dynamics, of the three components of life. The snake is the tenth sign revolving within itself because it is the limit that contains the totality of achieved life and thus carries the name *al-Ḥayy*, and because the limit (*al-ḥadd*) is composed of the *ḥā’* of the loved one (*ḥabīb*) and the *dāl* of the hand of Yas‘ā. Hence, it is the semblance of the saint-sealer that is revolving to the prophet-sealer and achieves it in its definitive limit. Ḥamūyeh clarifies the relation between spirit, hand, life and existence in a small text: “What is extended from existence is called hand and from life spirit; the spirit has two faces: one related to God (*ḥaqq*) which is the very-merciful and one related to creation and it is the spirit; the hand also has two faces: one related to creation and it is the hand and one related to God (*ḥaqq*) and it is the Living; the spirit has a hand from which comes the outwards and the hand has a spirit from which comes the inwards; the *ḥā’* and the *dāl* are limit (*ḥadd*) of which *ḥā’* is the life of existence and *dāl* the continuation of existence, the name of the continuation of life is lord (*rabb*) and that of the life of existence is sense (*ḥaqq*)”¹²⁹.

Yas‘ā is essentially a proper name for something else, in other terms a pseudonym by which something is indicated in secret. “Like the spirit claimed its body, the light claimed its body and name and it is the sealer-of-the-saints Yas‘ā”¹³⁰. Yas‘ā is thus the name for the light, or the pen, that fell upon the pearl at the beginning. He has no proper name but he is the name of another. Because he is an analog, we could even dare to say something of metaphor. Because he is carrying the “quality of the name” he has no proper name. In other terms, he is

¹²⁸ *Kitāb al-maḥbūb*, ms. Berlin 4084, fol. 39b.

¹²⁹ *Risāla fawā'id nafsīyya fī'l-kalimāt al-qudsīyya*, Bursa Ulucami 1622, fol. 6b-7a.

¹³⁰ Ḥamūyeh, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār*, H.S.A. 491, fol. 58b.

carrying the seal, the secrecy of the secret. “The sealer-of-the-saints is carrier of the quality of the name; the muhammadian name is in the chest of his secret, Jesus’s name in his heart, Moses’s name in his intelligence, Adam’s name in his courage, Noah’s name in his core (*lubb*), Abraham’s name in his sight and David’s name in his soul; each name has a named and each named is a pole; the name is his pole such that a point coming from the secret of sainthood appears in him and reflects of the saints’ heart’s pain; the pole bears the point of sainthood and each pole is like a mosque; during his age, when the hearts are directed towards him, every hundred years a manifestation occurs in the world; the pole and the sealer-of-the-saints descend to a degree in the world in the hearts and the secret of prophethood and prophecy comes closer with two degrees”¹³¹.

Provisional conclusion

The discussion concerning the relation between prophethood and sainthood has always been set in wrong terms since it already separated both and, thus, opposed them. Prophethood can stand only if it conceals the sainthood that gives it its meaning by timing it towards the end. It is not enough to assume that sainthood is a part of prophethood since it does not elucidate in which way it belongs to it. For Ḥamūyeh the truth of sainthood consists in sealing because it is the way prophethood itself seals prophethood. Ḥamūyeh’s choice to designate the seal of sainthood as the sealer-of-the-saints on one hand stresses on the seal as a performative process, action, rather than a speculative concept, on the other hand it shifts the question of the seal by transforming it immediately through its formulation. The sealer-of-the-saints is not thought for building a hierarchy of the saints as it would be expected. He is not thought to clarify the essence of a system of sainthood. Rather, ultimately, the saint-sealer absorbs sainthood within its notion so that sainthood does not require anymore to thought as such neither to be placed in a permanent relation with prophethood. The difference between prophethood and sainthood disappears within the relation of the two sealers. These two do not receive their meaning from the meaning of prophethood and sainthood but on the contrary prophethood and sainthood receive their meanings from the sealers. Hence the question of the beginning about deciding

¹³¹ *Kitāb sharh bismillāh*, Çorlulu Ali 445, fol. 4a.

whether sainthood or prophethood is prior to each other appears meaningless because it does not consider the only question that is the question of the sealer. When coming to to this question, it appears that there is only one sealer. When considering the prophet in his essence, that is as the prophet-sealer, there is only one sealer and it is the prophet. The saint-sealer is the prophet-sealer’s inner mode for coming to the truth of his essence, which is delayed. The saint-sealer is what achieves the full manifestation of the Living in the prophet. The coming out of the saint-sealer is the way the secret of the beloved of God is carried by his witness, the sealer who bears the seal. Thus, the essence of the saint-sealer is the space-time process of the case. The saint-sealer brings to full action the case without take-back and accomplishes the victory of life over the essence’s back movement to concealment. It is giving justice to existence by turning it to pure life after the Flood. With him, prophethood is achieved by freeing the case from its hesitation in pure action that consists in thinking at the fingertips. God destroyed his manifestation because it was not as he wanted it to be, which means that he looked at the things rather than at the process of manifestation. The new start that is the process of the saint-sealer’s coming out is the liberation of the catastrophe from which life is liberated as the pure manifestation of the case. This is why the process that leads the saint-sealer to come out is the accomplishment of the promise, which is the pen of the beginning, that manifests itself as justice. The theme of justice is constitutive of of life. The saint-sealer who brings life to full manifestation because he is the snake or the limit of life, is the one who brings justice.

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