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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Reinterpreting the Tension between *Dīn* and *Dunyā*: The Naqshbandī *Ṭarīqah* as Experienced and Shaped by its Mujaddidī and Khālidī Shaykhs

Din ve Dünya Geriliminin Yeniden Yorumlanması: Müceddidî ve Hâlidî Şeyhlerinin Deneyimleri Bağlamında Nakşibendî Tarikatı

Metin Noorata*, Önder Küçükural**

Abstract
In his article "Did Premodern Muslims Distinguish the Religious and Secular?," Rushain Abbasi convincingly demonstrates how pre-modern Muslim thinkers had made an array of meaningful distinctions between *dīn* ('religion') and *dunyā* ('the world') approximating the religious-secular dyad. This paper explores a fourth typology, a latent opposing attitude toward the *dīn-dunyā* binary, by expanding Abbasi's analytical trajectory to include both a discursive and pragmatic framework – the former involving scrutiny of the content and substance of rationally thought-out arguments, the latter demanding a closer look at how ideas have informed and shaped practical forms of reasoning and their application in the real world. Therefore, beyond the conceptual and epistemological signification of the *dīn-dunyā* binary in Islamic thought as surveyed by Abbasi, an attempt will be made to show how Muslims have also reasoned in both theoretical and practical terms to bridge the tension between the two spheres. The overarching objective is to consider how the *dīn-dunyā* binary fares in the Islamic mystical tradition through a case study analysis of five prominent Naqshbandī shaykhs: Aḥmad Sirhindī, Khālid al-Shahrazūrī, Aḥmad Gümüşhānevī, Zahid Kotku, and Mahmud Esad Coşan. The dialectical method developed by Shmuel Eisenstadt, which supposes a basic tension between the transcendental and mundane orders, will be applied to examine how each individual shaykh experienced, interpreted, and bridged the opposition between *dīn* and *dunyā* in both their doctrinal teachings and life-practices. The study aims to show how the shaykhs applied certain ethico-mystical principles like *khalwat dar anjuman* ('solitude within society') in a way that saw them engaging in a constant and concerted effort at bridging the unbridgeable in their worldly and other-worldly pursuits.

Keywords
Naqshbandiyyah , *Dīn-Dunyā* Binary , Dialectical , Tension , Transcendental , Mundane , *Khalwat dar Anjuman*

Öz
Rushain Abbasi "Modern öncesi dönemde Müslümanlar dini ve seküleri birbirinden ayırdılar mı?" adlı makalesinde birçok yazarın aksine bu iki alanın modern öncesi dünyada da günümüzdekine benzer bir biçimde ayrılmakta olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bu makalede Abbasi'nin önerdiği üçlü sınıflandırmaya bir dördüncüsünü eklemeyi önermekteyiz. Din ve dünya arasındaki ayrımın sadece analitik bir ayrım olmadığını, iki ucun birbirine zıt, gerilimli bir ilişki içinde ortaya çıktığını iddia etmekteyiz. Bu ayrım sadece doktriner düzlemde değil, aynı zamanda günlük yaşamda, söylemsel düzlemde ve

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pratik akıl yürütme noktalarında ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu bağlamda din ve dünya arasındaki ayrım Abbasi'nin iddia ettiği gibi sadece İslam düşüncesine içkin kavramsal bir ayrımın ötesindedir. Makalenin temel amacı beş Nakşibendî şeyhinin bu çabayı bizzat kendi yaşamlarında ne şekilde sergilediklerini göstererek tartışmaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Shmuel Eisenstadt tarafından öne sürülmüş olan gerçekliğin *transcendental* (aşkın olan) ile *mundane* (gündelik olan) düzlemler arasındaki gerilimi ele aldığı kavramsal çerçeveye başvurulmuştur. Beş şeyhin bu gerilimi nasıl yaşadığı ve kendi pratik kararlarında ne şekilde yorumlayarak üstesinden geldikleri, iki alan arasında nasıl köprü kurdukları ve bunun kendi öğretilerine nasıl yansıdığı makalede tartışılmaktadır. Bu bağlamada Nakşibendiliğin "halvet der-encümen" prensibi bu iki dünya arasındaki gerilimin üstesinden gelinmesini mümkün kılan anahtar yaklaşım olarak ele alınmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler
Nakşibendî Tarikatı, Din-Dünya Ayrımı, Diyalektik , Gerilim, Aşkın, Gündelik, Halvet Der-Encümen

Introduction

In one of his most recent articles, Rushain Abbasi presents a persuasive case that calls attention to the concepts of *dīn* and *dunyā* – in what he renders as 'religion' and 'non-religion', respectively – in pre-modern Islamic discourse as representing an indigenous Islamic binary that corresponds, at least in some approximation, to the modern religious-secular dyad.[1] He identifies three main typologies of Muslim thinkers in this regard: (1) separationists, who maintain a differentiating distinction between *dīn* and *dunyā*; (2) non-differentiationists, who insist that Islam encompasses all dimensions and aspects of life; and (3) synthesizers,[2] who affirm the *dīn* and *dunyā* distinction but in a way that finds a middle course between the first two typologies. Abbasi goes on to illustrate how the thought of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) conforms to the third typology as one who "acknowledges an inherent division between the religious and secular sciences, whilst simultaneously understanding the latter through a religious cosmology that embeds the word of God into His natural creation."[3] The thought and practice of Ghazālī – including many Muslims of his caliber – is far more complex than what the above categorization allows. We would like to therefore problematize his threefold typology by exploring precisely what he dismisses, namely, a latent rift between *dīn* and *dunyā*.

Approaching Islamic discourse as a product of discursive inquiry and reasoning runs the risk of overlooking other interrelated aspects including, most generally, the practical elements of discourse. One form of reconciliation between text and practice is found in Talal Asad's characterization of Islam as a 'discursive tradition' where discourse is said to "address itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present."[4] Asad's proposed methodological corrective, which he offers from an anthropological perspective of Islam, is also helpful when conducting a textual analysis on concepts like *dīn*

1 It should be noted that the *dīn*-*dunyā* binary signifies, at best, two separate spheres, which is the distinction Abbasi essentially attempts to bear out in the context of Islamic thought. Conversely, in the religious-secular binary, 'the secular' represents, in the first instance, an ideology that purports to be the sheer absence of 'the religious', whether in the social or political domain. While this study entertains the semblance of the *dīn* and *dunyā* distinction with that of the modern religious and secular divide, this issue continues to be the subject of much controversy and debate, however, one that is well beyond the scope of this paper.

2 Although Abbasi does not refer to "synthesizers" in his study, this term seems to correspond best to his typological description.

3 Rushain Abbasi, "Did Premodern Muslims Distinguish the Religious and Secular? The Din–Dunya Binary in Medieval Islamic Thought," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 31, no. 2 (May 2020): 26.

4 Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Occasional Paper Series*. Washington: Georgetown University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (1986): 14.

and *dunyā*, that is, by constructing meaning based not only on the text's empirical content but also on the writer's practical intent. To illustrate, when we take the life of Ghazālī as an example, we find that the content of his thought strongly correlated with his own practical experiences. Before he penned his *magnum opus*, the *Iḥyā'*, a masterful literary synthesis of Islamic doctrine and ethico-mystical teachings, Ghazālī had undergone a momentous personal crisis which ultimately saw him abandoning his worldly career and life altogether to pursue otherworldly salvational activities. Ghazālī's acute breakdown involved an apparent disconnect between his *dīnī* and *dunyawī* aspirations. His solution to this, we are told, was to forgo the *dunyā* and focus on *dīn*. This decision of his would lead him to vagabond about the world in more than a decade-long spiritual retreat. In this context, Ghazālī was attempting to subvert the tension between *dīn* and *dunyā* through a radical separation of the two. He, however, admits his failure to realize this separation in any absolute way: "the vicissitudes of the times, the affairs of the family, the need of subsistence, changed in some respects my primitive resolve, and interfered with my plans for a purely solitary life."[5] Although Ghazālī eventually returns to his family and career, the opposition that he initially discerned and experienced between *dīn* and *dunyā* is significant, not least because this is what later enabled him to synthesize the two domains in his own thought and practice.

Applying a discursive and pragmatic framework to the dīn-dunyā *binary*

Abbasi makes an important observation when he writes, "The *dīnī* was often seen as above the *dunyawī* and could breach it in an almost inverse relationship to the modern religious-secular distinction, in which it is the secular that sets the terms for religion."[6] However, by broadening the trajectory in how we probe the notions of *dīn* and *dunyā* to include both a discursive and pragmatic framework – the former involving scrutiny of the content and substance of rationally thought-out arguments, the latter demanding a closer look at how ideas have informed and shaped practical forms of reasoning and their application in the real world – would arguably enrich our understanding further. This line of inquiry is partly informed by Ahmet Karamustafa's assessment of the notion of *dīn*, which he carries out in light of both frameworks. In this context, he gives the example of the thirteenth-century mystic-philosopher ʿAzīz Nasafī (d. circa 1300), who had "viewed human life as a continuous struggle to achieve perfection in which individual human souls attempt to develop themselves to the highest level of the "spiritual" domain of existence

5 Quoted in William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), 313.

6 Abbasi, "Did Premodern Muslims," 9.

(which is, nevertheless, inextricably interconnected with the "physical" domain)."[7] Karamustafa continues to tell us how, "Nasafī had monistic views about the cosmos, and seen in this context, such a conception of *dīn* as a pragmatic framework for human conduct proves to be quite different from the theistic understanding of *dīn* as a natural human propensity toward monotheism."[8] Therefore, examining the *dīn-dunyā* binary in light of both discursive and pragmatic frameworks allows us to see how Islamic thought and practice intersected as Muslims simultaneously engaged in theoretical discussions and addressed real-life practical issues.

The latent rift between dīn *and* dunyā *in Islamic spirituality*

Historically, Muslims can be shown to have taken an ambivalent or even negative stance with respect to the *dunyā* – paralleling, in an inverse manner, the modern secularist view of religion – which had led more piety-minded Muslims to relinquish their temporal (*dunyawī*) responsibilities and duties in search of a spiritual (*dīnī*) life. This, however, is not to suggest that Muslims had conceded to a doctrinal separation between the religious and the secular as we find in early Christianity, for instance, but to rather put forward the idea that Muslims have without question exhibited comparable tendencies in the name of piety. This was especially true in the case of Ghazālī whose attitude toward the *dunyā*, according to his *Iḥyā'*, was as follows: "At the judgement the *dunyā* will appear as a horrid old hag and will be cast into the fire,"[9] to which Arthur Tritton notes is "an idea which contradicts the fundamental thought of Islam."[10] Ghazālī's view of the world in this manner, which may not cohere with his thought elsewhere, is not surprising since he operated on multiple levels as a jurist, theologian, philosopher, and mystic.[11] Abbasi is therefore right to point out that Ghazālī in different instances makes clear distinctions between *dīn* and *dunyā*, albeit in varying degrees.[12] Yet, as alluded to already, Ghazālī had also made a markedly *radical* distinction between the two spheres over the course of his protracted spiritual journey.

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7 Ahmet Karamustafa, "Islamic Dīn as an Alternative to Western Models of "Religion"," in *Religion, Theory, Critique*, ed. Richard King, 163-171. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 167.

8 Karamustafa, "Islamic dīn," 167.

9 Quoted in A.S. Tritton, "Dunyā," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Bernard Lewis, Ch. Pellat and Joseph Schacht, vol. 2 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965): 626.

10 Tritton, "Dunyā," 626.

11 Notwithstanding, Ghazālī generally expresses a dim view of the world in the context of its misuse for serving the passions and ego.

12 Abbasi, "Did Premodern Muslims," 23-5.

In probing the Islamic renunciant tradition, we find that Muslims who adopted a world-renouncing outlook had often spurned the *dunyā* and polarized it with *dīn*. Many early Muslim renunciants had, therefore, perceivably embraced an attitude that was, in some measure, strikingly similar to Christian and Buddhist monks, which, in effect, translated into an apparent schism between *dīn* and *dunyā*.[13]

Later, Sufis who advocated inward piety and adopted a world-transcending attitude are said to have "bridged the abyss between individualist renunciatory piety and community-oriented world-affirmation."[14] Therefore, the great majority of Sufis increasingly began embracing the world and had no qualms about material gain, especially considering their devotional regimen foregrounded ideas such as *faqr* ('spiritual poverty'), which signifies the recognition of being in complete reliance and constant need of God. Earning a living was taken so seriously by some Sufi shaykhs, such as those of the Shādhiliyyah, that aspirants who did not have an occupation would be denied initiation.[15]

The so-called synthesis mentioned above would introduce a new kind of tension, nevertheless, since Sufism "was still subject to the antisocial pull of the option of other-worldly contemplation."[16] The peculiar tension between *dīn* and *dunyā* in the Sufi context thus tended to be in what may be described as a flux between being in a 'mutually-defining relationship' as Abbasi aptly phrases it, and a 'mutually opposing' one as a modern secularist would have it. That is to say, while Sufis indeed generally accommodated both *dīn* and *dunyā* in a complementary way, they nevertheless did at times see the *dunyā* as having a corrupting influence on *dīn*, and in turn, led some to adopt a mental posture or course of action that indicated a mutually opposing sentiment toward *dīn* and *dunyā*.

Yet the supposed rift between *dīn* and *dunyā* as indicated by certain Muslims of either a pronounced renunciant or mystical bent has invariably been objected

13 This is not to suggest that other spiritual traditions directly influenced the development of Islamic renunciation, but to simply point out the undeniable, even if ever so slight, resemblance in their religious and worldly orientations. See Ahmet Karamustafa's *God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period 1200–1550*. (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1994), 29.

14 Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends*, 29.

15 The Shādhilīs' insistence on gainful employment and physical labor, in particular, is said to have stemmed from the Khurasanian Malāmatī ethic, which stressed, among other things, the importance of being a producer rather than a mere consumer; see İrfan Gündüz's "Mehmed Zâhid Kotku (RH.A)'in Tarikat ve İrşad Anlayışı," *Vuslatının 14. Yılında Mehmed Zahid Kotku (K.S.) ve Tasavvuf Sempozyum Konuşmaları*, ed. H. Hüseyin Erkaya, 85-94 (Istanbul: Seha Neşriyat, 1995).

16 Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends*, 31.

to by their Muslim detractors. Some of these detractors who tended to be of a resounding legalist bent were generally against the dualistic conception of reality upheld by Sufis in which they divided everything into the outward (*al-ẓāhir*) and the inward (*al-bāṭin*).

The dīn-dunyā *binary in the case of the Naqshbandiyyah*

Meanwhile, legal-minded Muslims who positioned themselves within the mystical tradition have also sought to address and reconcile the perceived opposition between *dīn* and *dunyā*. In this regard, the Naqshbandīs emerge as one of the prime examples of Muslims who developed their mystical regimen by accommodating the tension between *dīn* and *dunyā* in their everyday lives and institutionalizing it in their doctrinal interpretations. As indicated earlier, under the early Sufis, the *dunyā* and, by extension, "Life in society was now seen not as an evil snare that had to be shunned at all cost but as a challenge, admittedly formidable but not insurmountable, on the path that led humanity to God."[17] Nevertheless, the Sufis were still vulnerable to the temptation of seclusion from the world in pursuit of the contemplative life. In this way, the response put forward by the Naqshbandīs to the tension between *dīn* and *dunyā* becomes intelligible in light of the *Ṭarīqah*'s ethico-mystical principle of *khalwat dar anjuman* ('solitude within society') – one of eleven Naqshbandī precepts known as the *kalimāt-i qudsiyyah* or 'sacred words' – and the primacy that the Naqshbandīs have consistently assigned to teaching and guiding the people which, in Sufi parlance, refers to the activity of *irshād*.[18]

This paper will therefore explore the *dīn-dunyā* binary in the Naqshbandī path by employing the dialectical method proposed by Eisenstadt. Along with the *dīn-dunyā* binary and our main analytical tool of the transcendental-mundane dialectic, we will also make use of similar expressions such as 'other-worldly and this-worldly' as well as 'spiritual and temporal' depending on the context and specificity of the matter under discussion.

Certain ideational and practical differences are known to have existed between the Naqshbandīs as those who continuously adapted to the times, reconfigured past legacies, and reoriented themselves in light of changing contexts. Yet they have also exhibited a definitive character in terms of strict adherence to legal injunctions and prophetic prescriptions, a generally positive attitude toward worldly activism, and

17 Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends*, 29.

18 A concisely written analysis of the *kalimāt-i qudsiyyah* is provided in Itzchak Weismann's *The Naqshbandiyya: Orthodoxy and Activism in a Worldwide Sufi Tradition*. (London & New York: Routledge, 2007), 27-30.

an inner contemplative life in total devotion to God. In this respect, the principle of *khalwat dar anjuman*, which combines inward devotion with outward activity, arguably not only provides the theoretical grounds on which this-worldly and other-worldly affairs could be justified and accommodated in a consonant way but further suggests that the tension between the transcendental and the mundane was to be made one of the prime elements of the Naqshbandiyyah.

Khalwat dar anjuman is amply mentioned in scholarly works dealing with the Naqshbandiyyah, and much has been said regarding its significance throughout the literature.[19] However, there has been little emphasis in terms of the various implications that *khalwat dar anjuman* has had in the lives of its practitioners in different historical and regional contexts. Now, to be more specific, *khalwat dar anjuman* refers to a peculiar attitude or orientation toward the here and now where the Sufi mystic adopts a posture of detached involvement. In practice, the seeker on the path is meant to be at once in constant recollection of God and actively engaged in worldly pursuits. This, in theory, is expected to culminate in a state of mystical immersion where only God is perceived to truly exist and matter.

With that said, while the substantive meaning of *khalwat dar anjuman* remained consistent throughout the ages, its functional signification nonetheless appears to have changed over time. The objective here will therefore be to examine how the Naqshbandīs practiced *khalwat dar anjuman* in different ways and across varying historical contexts in their attempt to bridge the tension between this world and the other world.

In what follows, our analysis will revolve around the life and thought of five Naqshbandī shaykhs from the Mujaddidī-Khālidī sub-branch: Aḥmad Sirhindī, Khālid al-Shahrazūrī, Aḥmad Gümüşhānevī, Zahid Kotku, and Mahmud Esad Coşan. All of these figures, who happen to be part of the spiritual chain of the Iskenderpasha community, stand out in the manner in which they responded to and bridged the tension between the transcendental and the mundane. Sirhindī marks the starting point in our narrative where the Naqshbandī revivalist impulse begins to burgeon in Mughal India. Khālid and Gümüşhānevī as major actors within the *Ṭarīqah* are representative revivalists of the Ottoman period while the revivalism of Kotku and Coşan do especially well in the context of modern Turkey. The Iskenderpasha community led by Kotku and later under Coşan would serve as the

19 For an excellent outline of the early Naqshbandiyyah, see Jürgen Paul's *Doctrine and Organization: The Khwājagān/ Naqshbandīya in the First Generation after Bahā'uddīn*. (Berlin, Germany: Das Arabische Buch, 1998); cf. Jürgen Paul, "Solitude within Society: Early Khwājagānī Attitudes toward Spiritual and Social Life," *Sufism and Politics*, ed. Paul L. Heck, 137-164. (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2012).

backbone of several major political parties. It would, therefore, not be any stretch of the imagination to view the Naqshbandīs as having played a critical role in the political landscape of both the pre-modern and modern world.

In showcasing Abbasi's point on the *dīn-dunyā* binary, the five Naqshbandī shaykhs mentioned above will serve as a case study to demonstrate how each figure responded to the tension between the transcendental and the mundane in the context of both pre-modern and modern times. The paper's analytical approach is based on Eisenstadt's criteria of the following five possible ways that alternative visions could develop in their response to the said tension: (1) the nature of the tension is *reformulated*; (2) the degree of the tension is significantly, if not entirely, *diminished* such that the transcendental and the mundane become conflated; (3) the prevailing conception of the tension is *rejected*; (4) the conventional religious and intellectual conceptions are *broadened* through other-worldly (e.g. mystically) charged responses to the tension; and (5) the original conception of the tension is *preserved*, suggesting opposition to its institutional concretization.[20]

Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564–1624)

Widely recognized as the *mujaddid* or 'renewer' of the second millennium for his revivalist achievements and contribution to Islam's florescence in the Indian sub-continent, Aḥmad Sirhindī left a most indelible mark on the mystical thought and ethos of the Naqshbandiyyah. Based on Eisenstadt's five-fold criteria, we will begin by looking at how Sirhindī kept to the conventional implementation of *khalwat dar anjuman*, and, as such, *preserved* the original conception of the tension between the two realms at the level of praxis. This will be followed by considering Sirhindī's engagement with Ibn 'Arabī's mystical philosophy to show how his nuanced conceptualization prompts a *reformulation* of the tension at the level of theory.

Sirhindī was thoroughly concerned with practical matters inasmuch as he was with theoretical ones. While Sirhindī goes to great pains in developing an elaborate method of understanding the various states and stages of mystical ascent, he confesses that all of this is meant for one to better adhere to the prophetic model and to practice the Sharī'ah with sincerity and excellence. Sirhindī's life is moreover full of examples where he exercises his practical reasoning in response to the tension between the transcendental and the mundane. In a letter written by Sirhindī detailing his mystical experiences under his preceptor, Muḥammad al-Bāqī(bi'llāh) (1564–1603), he tells us of an instance when he once sensed a deficiency in his spiritual state and wished to leave his preoccupation with *irshād*. Yet, despite his

20 Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "The Axial Age," European Journal of Sociology, (1982): 305-6.

self-dismay, he is said to have continued carrying out his duties and abandoned his desire to flee.[21] In his *Mabda' wa Ma'ād*, we find Sirhindī telling his disciples while in *i'tikāf*[22] that their intention to seclude themselves should be for none other than adhering to the prophetic way. And he concludes by asking rhetorically, 'What would be gained from us secluding and withdrawing from the people?.'[23]

Then there is Sirhindī's engagement with the mystical philosophy of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (1165–1240). Sirhindī's incisive and critical take on *waḥdat al-wujūd* has attracted much scholarly attention in both the past and present.[24] This has not unexpectedly presented us with a wide range of interpretations on the matter. Granted that observers in certain cases have made the most out of the distinctions between the two variant conceptions of God's unity, the implications underlying both, however, cannot be easily assailed.

There are two majorly contrasting paradigms in how Muslims have theorized about the reality of God's being in relation to the world. The first postulates a classical theist perspective wherein God is entirely distinct and separate from the world. The second proposes a panentheistic[25] view wherein God is neither altogether separate from the world nor altogether unified with it. The latter corresponds to the theosophical framework devised by Ibn 'Arabī who accentuates God's immanence and, in all important respects, fuses the this-worldly and the other-worldly. While the former is consistent with the (final) configuration by Sirhindī who underscores God's transcendence while taking attention away from His divine immanence. However, Sirhindī does not completely invalidate Ibn 'Arabī's model and instead relegates it to a lower status of mystical attainment. In this way, as we shall see, Sirhindī attempts to reconcile the tension between the two paradigmatic perspectives through his conceptualization of *waḥdat al-shuhūd*. But before delving into what Sirhindī had to say, it would seem appropriate to first briefly sketch out the crux of Ibn 'Arabī's thought.

21 Ahmed Sirhindi, *Mektûbât Tercemesi*, trans. Hüseyin Hilmi Işık. (Istanbul: Hakîkat Kitâbevi Yayınları, 2007), 450.

22 This refers to a vow of spiritual retirement that is carried out typically in a mosque during the last ten days of the sacred month of Ramadan.

23 Ahmed Sirhindi, "Mebde' ve Me'âd." *İmâm-ı Rabbânî Risâleleri*, trans. Necdet Tosun, 18-144. (Istanbul: Sufi Kitap, 2016), 95-6.

24 This comes as no surprise not least because Sirhindī himself draws a great deal on *waḥdat al-wujūd* as a point of reference when fleshing out his own thought in several of his works including *Maktūbāt*, *Mukāshafāt al-Ghaybiyyah*, and *Ma'ārif al-Ladunniyyah*.

25 This is not to be confused with pantheist. For a discussion on panentheism in the Islamic tradition, see Ahmed Afzaal's "Disenchantment and the Environmental Crisis: Lynn White Jr., Max Weber, and Muhammad Iqbal," *Worldviews* 16, (2012): 239-262.

While Ibn ʻArabī may have been the first to develop a fully-fledged mystical philosophy centered on unraveling the enigma surrounding the nature of God's existence, many thinkers prior and posterior had also tackled this issue and arrived at conclusions analogous to his.[26] Above all, their concern in making a clearer sense of Islam's core doctrine of *tawḥīd* (lit: unification; the profession of belief in the unity of God) appears to have united them in their intellectual endeavors. Junayd al-Baghdādī (d. 298/910), the archetype of Irāqī Sufism, is a primary example worth mentioning as one who defined *tawḥīd* as "the separation of the Eternal from that which has originated in time," (*Ifrād al-Qadīm ʻan al-muḥdath*).[27] In this regard, as one author elaborates, there is a "paradox of the idea of unification being achieved by separation [which] implies that one of these elements has no true reality: thus the Eternal, the Real (*al-Haqq*) must be separated from all that is created and ultimately unreal."[28] And then there is Ghazālī, another representative example, who affirmed that 'there is nothing in existence save Allāh Most High and His acts', (*laysa fī al-wujūd illā Allāh taʻālā wa afʻāluh*).[29] The overlapping idea of assigning ultimate reality to God alone aligns with Ibn ʻArabī's conceptualization of God – later to be styled by others as *waḥdat al-wujūd* [30] – albeit with some variation in their depth, purpose, and final verdict.

In the thought of Ibn ʻArabī, *waḥdat al-wujūd* ('oneness of being') holds that "there is only one Being, and all existence is nothing but the manifestation or outward radiance of that One Being." Hence, "everything other than the One Being…is nonexistent in itself, though it may be considered to exist through Being."[31] We also find Ibn ʻArabī in his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, which is where he sets

26 Muslim thinkers were already formulating ideas that corresponded to the essential meaning of *waḥdat al-wujūd* as early as the second century of the Hegira; for instance, see William C. Chittick's "Rūmī and *waḥdat al-wujūd*," *Poetry and Mysticism in Islam: The Heritage of Rumi*, ed. Amin Banani, Richard Hovannisian, and Georges Sabagh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 70-1.

27 Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd: A Study of a Third/Ninth Century Mystic with an Edition and Translation of his Writings*. (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), 70.

28 Andrew Wilcox, "The Dual Mystical Concepts of *Fanā'* and *Baqā'* in Early Sūfism," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 38, no. 1 (April 2011): 104.

29 Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*. (McGill Library Islamic Lithographs Digital Collection, 1288/1871-2), 7.

30 The term *waḥdat al-wujūd* was first popularized by one of Ibn ʻArabī's foremost disciples and commentators, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274), to only later be rendered equally infamous through the polemics of his main detractor, Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328).

31 William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 79.

out to establish the essential link between God and His creation, explaining that every human individual has an element of the Divine within them. Along these lines, he writes: "for He describes Himself to us through us. If we witness Him we witness ourselves, and when He sees us He looks on Himself."[32] He then proceeds to demonstrate the inseparability of God's transcendence from His immanence. This is followed by an exposition on how the perfected human individual's elevated state is contingent on God's essence, for it is the only thing that is said to be elevated in itself.[33] Therefore, as far as Ibn 'Arabī is concerned, all opposites are united in God's essence, and all propositions are attributed to either God as the infinite, or God as the finite manifestation (*tajallī*).[34] Moreover, since the world, whose existence Ibn 'Arabī deems as purely a manifestation of God, has no reality of its own, he ultimately rules out any separate realities of either, say, a higher or lower order.[35] The points mentioned hitherto amid Ibn 'Arabī's thought differ in crucial ways from the perspective of Sirhindī, which, for our purposes, shall be highlighted in what follows.

Sirhindī grounds his thought in the doctrine of *waḥdat al-shuhūd* ('oneness of perception'), characterized by a mystical experience where one becomes aware of God as if He were one with the world yet in a manner that reflects not objective reality but rather an individual's subjective perception. Yet he, interestingly, advances the idea of *waḥdat al-shuhūd* in a way that skillfully circumscribes *waḥdat al-wujūd* without requiring him to reject its core premise. In other respects, Sirhindī does not stop short of arguing against the conflation of experience with knowledge but pursues the matter further with the idea of *'abdiyyāt* ('servitude to God') in what he describes as the culminating stage of mystical ascent.[36] This is likewise alluded to by Sirhindī in the verse, 'A servant [of God] must know his limits', which he intersperses throughout his collected letters.

Sirhindī affirms, pace Ibn 'Arabī, that the notion of *waḥdat al-wujūd* is something that the imaginative faculty can grasp if one were to contemplate on the meaning underlying the declaration of faith – i.e. 'There is no god save Allāh' – deliberately as 'There is no existent save Allāh'.[37] But the apprehension of God's unity in this

32 Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī, *The Bezels of Wisdom*, trans. Ralph Austin. (New York, Ramsey, & Toronto: Paulist Press, 1980), 55.

33 Ibn 'Arabī, *Bezels*, 85.

34 Muhammad Abdul Haq Ansari, *Sufism and Shari'ah: A Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's Effort to Reform Sufism*. (London: The Islamic Foundation, 1986), 105-6.

35 Ansari, *Sufism*, 115.

36 Sirhindi, *Mektûbât*, 18, 197.

37 Sirhindi, *Mektûbât*, 458.

manner, Sirhindī explains, is at once self-induced and impermanent. It is a mere construct of the mind, an imaginative experience that has no relation to the spiritual heart. For, knowledge of God's unity does not entail knowledge of the state (*ḥāl*) or station (*maqām*) of one's heart. In this sense, with respect to the idea of God being one with reality, we find Sirhindī bringing into focus the distinction between *belief* and *perception*, the latter of which he holds to be closer to the truth since it does not culminate in a denial of other existents alongside God.[38] And while Sirhindī concedes to the idea that mystical experiences could indeed lead to an unfolding of true reality (*ḥaqīqah*), he nonetheless saw the intuitive significance of such experiences being outweighed by their practical benefits of purifying and transcending the self to duly obey and please God.

In countervailing the notion of *tashbīh*, God's divine immanence, with an added stress on *tanzīh*, God's divine transcendence, Sirhindī underlines that God is entirely separate from the world and His creation. Everything apart from God is considered a non-being that exists only as a shadow (*ẓill*) of God's being. This distinction, which Sirhindī foregrounds in his system of thought, ultimately allows him to refute the premise that the world is ontologically conterminous with God, as Ibn 'Arabī contends. Sirhindī establishes the primacy of God's transcendence through his mystical journey, from *'ilm al-yaqīn* (knowledge-based certainty) and *'ayn al-yaqīn* (visual-based certainty) to *ḥaqq al-yaqīn* (realization-based certainty) as its culmination – the first two corresponding to *waḥdat al-wujūd* and the third to *waḥdat al-shuhūd*.[39] In doing so, Sirhindī not only maintains a clear and meaningful separation between God and all that is other than God but also demonstrates that the tension between the transcendental and the mundane realms of existence, which Ibn 'Arabī arguably dissolves through his conceptualization of God's unity, is retainable not only from a theological perspective but also from a mystico-philosophical one.

The two conceptions offered by Ibn 'Arabī and Sirhindī in regard to God's unity indicate two very different manifestations of Eisenstadt's proposed tension between the transcendental and the mundane. The notion of *waḥdat al-wujūd* and its widespread adoption by Sufis in general aligns with Eisenstadt's second alternative, in which the tension between the transcendental and the mundane is effectively denied. Moreover, *waḥdat al-wujūd* implicates a return to a previous state in which the said tension was non-existent. Now, if Sirhindī's conception is understood in opposition to that of Ibn 'Arabī, this necessitates the designation

38 Sirhindi, *Mektûbât*, 72.

39 Sirhindi, *Mektûbât*, 73-74.

of Sirhindī's position as a reformulation. Therefore, according to Eisenstadt's framework, it ultimately seems to be the case that Sirhindī restored the centrality of the tension within the Naqshbandiyyah by countervailing the transcendental with the mundane.

Khālid al-Shahrazūrī (1779–1827)

While initially restricted to provinces within the Arab-speaking Ottoman territories, the Khālidī offshoot of the Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī path would bolster its socio-political presence and spread throughout major parts of Islamdom in a rather impressive fashion under the auspices of its founder Khālid al-Shahrazūrī and his able deputies. Khālid's personal life was representative of how he not only bridged the tension between the transcendental and the mundane but also *preserved* the original conception of the tension[40] through his practice of *khalwat dar anjuman*. His calculated responses to the time's socio-political challenges, which depended on several key practical innovations in his mystical teachings, saw him *broadening*[41] *khalwat dar anjuman* to include the conventional Sufi ritual practice of *khalwah*, which was nonetheless utilized by Khālid purely as a spiritual technique intended to more efficiently train and mobilize his disciples.

The presence of the *dīn-dunyā* binary is especially discernible in Khālid's practical reasoning. Before leaving his shaykh's company to spread the *Ṭarīqah*, Khālid says to Dihlawī, 'I shall seek religion (*al-dīn*) and this world (*al-dunyā*) in the interest of strengthening religion', to which Dihlawī responds, 'Go, I approve giving you both'.[42]

In the grander scheme of things, Khālid's vision was set on revitalizing Muslim societies through the Sharī'ah and the prophetic example, very much like Mujaddidīs prior to him. Although his thinking was geared less toward offering theoretical solutions than practical ones. And while indeed Khālid represents a critical link to

40 This corresponds to Eisenstadt's fifth criteria where the 'pristine form' (i.e. of contemplative solitude) is upheld.

41 The fourth criteria is where other-worldly charged ideas or practices are presented in response to the tension.

42 Ibrahim Fasih Haydarīzāde, *al-Majd al-Tālid fī Manāqib al-Shaykh Khālid*. (1875), 33; cf. Ḥasan Shukrī, *Mānāqıb-ı Shams al-Shumūs dar Ḥaqq-ı Ḥ aḍrat-i Mawlānā Khālid al-'Arūs*. (Istanbul: Mahmut Bey Matbaası, 1884), 17-18. This reminds us of the kind of dedication that Sirhindī had for *irshād*, one that was akin to "a veritable "politics of guidance" (*siyāsat al-irshād*) which led him [i.e. Khālid] to construct a network of no fewer than 116 khalīfas […]" (Algar, "Political Aspects of Naqshbandī History," 132).

Sirhindī as one who revived his ideals,[43] there are nonetheless several underlying distinctions between the two that cannot be ignored. Sirhindī exhibits more interest in explaining the inner aspects and meanings of the Sharī'ah, while Khālid draws on the superiority of the Sharī'ah to counteract its undermining by those from within and without. This fundamental distinction explains why Khālid was far more practical-minded than Sirhindī when responding to the tension between the transcendental and the mundane.

To elaborate further on this last point, even in Khālid's written correspondences we find him integrating the divergent affairs of mysticism and politics. He, for instance, dedicates one of his letters to an apologetic explanation of the much-debated subject of *rābiṭah* ('spiritual bond') in an attempt to justify it as a legitimate mystical technique,[44] and in his closing remarks implores his disciples residing in Istanbul as follows:

> 'I bid you to supplicate whole-heartedly, during the day and night, for the perpetuity of the Sublime Ottoman State upon which [the integrity of] Islam depends; and for its deliverance from the enemies of the religion, the accursed Christians (*al-Naṣārā al-malā'īn*) and the dissident Persians (*al-A'jām al-murtaddīn*)'.[45]

What his line of reasoning suggests is that even when Khālid can be seen sorting out issues related to mystical practice, he insists on reminding his disciples of the importance of worldly matters and their inseparability with being a Naqshbandī Sufi.

As alluded to already, after he was appointed shaykh and given complete authority to initiate others into the *Ṭarīqah*, Khālid soon attracted aspiring Sufis to his circle, offering them spiritual instruction and, in time, mobilizing them for his own purposes. Despite his overt political ambitions, Khālid was equally concerned with spiritual matters. He emphasized in particular the practices of silent-*dhikr,* solitary retreat, and, above all, *rābiṭah*.

There are several different ways in which the Naqshbandīs have understood and practiced the technique of *rābiṭah*. Overall, there are two major significations of

43 David Damrel,"The Spread of Naqshbandi Political Thought in the Islamic World" In Naqshbandis, ed. Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic, & Thierry Zarcone, 261-279. (Istanbul & Paris: Éditions Isis, 1990), 277.

44 See below for more on *rābiṭah*.

45 Khālid, "Risālah fī al-Ḥaqq al-Rābiṭah." In Majmū' 'Aẓīmah, 19-27. (Istanbul, n.d.), 27. See also Butrus Abu-Manneh's *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century (1826–1876)*. (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2001), 25n1.

rābiṭah that stand out. The first is a general practice that complements *ṣuḥbah*.[46] The second is where *rābiṭah* is considered an entirely separate technique and principle from *ṣuḥbah*.[47] Khālid would adopt *rābiṭah* in the second sense, alongside the conventional Sufi practice of *khalwah* as in ritual seclusion in a cell. These two spiritual techniques, as it turned out, proved to be far more appropriate and essential to the success of his mission.

Khālid's preference to utilize *rābiṭah* and *khalwah* in the strict sense mentioned above was due to the fact that *ṣuḥbah* required considerable devotion on the part of the shaykh, which proved impractical for Khālid given the distance and the sheer number of disciples under his tutelage.[48] The implication here is that had Khālid employed the practice of *ṣuḥbah*, the *Ṭarīqah* would not have been able to reach its full potential in scale and impact. In this way, Khālid's appropriation of *rābiṭah* and *khalwah* as a more efficient way of training disciples and broadening the *Ṭarīqah*'s reach and influence appears to have played a decisive role in his overall mission to revive Islam.[49]

All in all, Khālid's general orientation was very much like Sirhindī's in that both leaned a great deal more toward the mundane than the transcendental. Khālid introduced crucial changes into the Naqshbandiyyah, although he himself was not exceedingly concerned with doctrinal matters as was Sirhindī. And while Sirhindī's

46 In this sense, *rābiṭah* indicates the spiritual binding of the disciple's heart with his shaykh, which could take place either in the shaykh's presence or absence. Here, *ṣuḥbah* refers to the close association between shaykh and disciple in which the physical presence of both parties are required in order to facilitate an affectionate attachment (*maḥabbah*), and ultimately the impartation of the shaykh's spiritual qualities and manners to the disciple. *Ṣuḥbah* was to be fulfilled in unison with the practice of *khalwat dar anjuman*, which is where both the shaykh and his disciple are actively involved in the world during the entire training process. In this method of instruction, therefore, the ritual practice of *khalwah*, which in the specific sense corresponds to a forty-day spiritual retreat known as *arba'īn*, does not find support in the core doctrinal principles adhered to by the Naqshbandīs.

47 When discerned in this way, one is to practice *rābiṭah* in the way just-mentioned albeit in the absence of one's shaykh, and at all times. Under these conditions, *rābiṭah* is associated with the practice of *dhikr* – a technique which is typically reserved only for God – since "attaining absorption in the shaikh (*al-fana' fi al-shaikh*) is a prelude for absorption in God" (Abu-Manneh, "Studies on Islam," 33).

48 Abu-Manneh, "Studies on Islam," 30.

49 It may further be observed that these two religious practices were strongly correlated with his political ambitions in specifically creating a more formal and centralized arrangement within the *Ṭarīqah*. This is partly confirmed when we consider his unprecedented insistence on having all affiliates of the *Ṭarīqah*, including the disciples of his deputies whom he never came into contact with, to practice *rābiṭah* by having only his image fixed in their hearts (Abu-Manneh, "Studies on Islam," 30).

reworking of Ibn ʻArabī's thought had fostered a critical shift in the *Ṭarīqah*'s theoretical discourse, Khālid's overtly political and militant posture, along with his adoption of a new range of disciplinary techniques, proved to be instrumental in the shift in focus that he brought about in the realm of praxis. In this respect, Khālid's legacy would leave a significant impression on the caliphal center in Istanbul where, as we shall now see, over the next two centuries, the Naqshbandīs would preserve the spirit of his calling to actively revive Islam and resist anything that served to undermine its supremacy.

Aḥmad Gümüşhānevī (1813–1893)

Gümüşhānevī was a leading Ottoman scholar and revivalist during the second half of the nineteenth century. He provides us with one of the more intriguing examples of the tension in question when considering his religious revivalism, missionary zeal, and personal life, which was wrought with apparent contradictions. When we apply Eisenstadt's analytical approach, we will find that Gümüşhānevī *preserved* the original conception of the tension between the transcendental and the mundane in his own life while *broadening* the doctrinal interpretations of the *Ṭarīqah* to include the disciplinary technique of *khalwah*. It will also be observed that the tension had become a constitutive element in Gümüşhānevī's personality in what might be attributed to his predilection for *ḥadīth* – something we do not find with Sirhindī and Khālid – and emphasis on embodying the prophetic way in his conduct and character with strict attention to detail.

To analyze how the said tension figured in Gümüşhānevī's life, we may begin with a biographical work entitled *Hadiyyah al-ʻĀrifīn* by Muṣṭafā Fevzī. The *Hadiyyah* delivers an intimate account of not only Gümüşhānevī's upbringing and career but also his general frame of mind toward people, religion, and the world. We are told that Gümüşhānevī possessed a constant awareness of God's presence in the world and that, 'His [spiritual] essence was always free from worldly affairs'.[50] Evidently, out of a peculiar kind of reverence he felt toward God, he curiously saw it as improper to stretch out his legs even in a state of weakness or while asleep; for example, once, when he had fallen ill, he is said to have reddened at the doctor's request to extend his legs.

Meanwhile, in choosing to maintain an active interest in mundane affairs, Gümüşhānevī is known to have performed various administrative and executive functions in the *tekke* that he had founded. His *tekke* was strategically located right

50 Mustafa Fevzī, *Hadiyyah al-ʻĀrifīn fī Manāqib Quṭb al-ʻĀrifīn Mawlānā Aḥmad Ziyāʼ al-Dīn b. Muṣṭafā al-Gumushkhānawī*. (Istanbul, 1895), 34.

opposite the *Bāb-ı Āli*, viz. the Ottoman civil-bureaucratic headquarters otherwise known as 'the Sublime Porte'. He also established one of the largest libraries in Istanbul, in addition to a printing press which made reading material readily available to the public at no cost to them.

Gümüşhānevī was critical of adopting anything that stood contrary to Islam. This would manifest in palpable ways through his opposition to the project of westernization.[51] One example worth mentioning is his opposition to the founding of the Ottoman Bank.[52] It is said that this event motivated Gümüşhānevī to take initiative and offer an alternative form of financing at his *tekke* through a community chest, which operated much like a conventional *waqf* or 'pious endowment system'. The funds, initially collected from some of his wealthy disciples, were used to support small businesses as well as to establish extensive libraries across various cities including Bayburt, Of, and Rize.[53]

While Gümüşhānevī certainly lends the impression of someone who had a striking personality, the attitude that he appropriated in his spiritual life was, albeit, at once sober and calm. He, for instance, held firm to the principle of *khalwah* in keeping with the Khālidī path, and religiously practiced it four times during the year. The proper methodologies (*uṣūl*) and customs (*ādāb*) of spiritual practices in general were to be performed in secrecy, and any unseemly behavior was to be avoided. One should consume less, speak less, and sleep less – ascetic principles by which Gümüşhānevī himself is said to have lived. Escaping from the world is not proper, as was overly engaging in it. He was also keen on not engaging in any worldly discussions for a period of time after the morning prayer and throughout the night after the evening prayer.

In order to understand Gümüşhānevī's approach to the tension between the transcendental and the mundane from a religious doctrinal perspective, we may refer to his *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*. He explains that a true Sufi must meet certain conditions and possess certain qualities before engaging in any affair.[54] Another serious offense, according to Gümüşhānevī, is for a person to advance into a position of which they are neither eligible nor deserving. These two points are said to constitute

51 Especially when it came to European cultural values and its capitalist monetary system.

52 As far as Gümüşhānevī was concerned, the modern banking system as an interest-based institution not only went against the core fundamentals of Islam, but it also better positioned European powers in furthering their political dominance and economic interests at the expense of Muslims (İrfan Gündüz, *Gümüşhânevî Ahmed Ziyâüddîn*, 66).

53 Fevzī, *Hadiyyah al-'Ārifīn*, 34.

54 Ahmed Ziyaüddin Gümüşhanevi, *Velîler ve Tarikatlarda Usûl*. (Istanbul: Pamuk Yayıncılık, 2005). 167

the basis of all errors.[55] His emphasis on the second matter, in particular, is due to what he saw as the inextricable connection between spiritual excellence and worldly engagement.

Being of the view that treading the path toward God was a gradual learning process, Gümüşhānevī would make the most of *khalwah* as a technique to train his disciples. Retreating from the world for forty days gives a person the opportunity to rectify their heart by instilling it with the presence of God and preparing it for life in society. In this respect, Gümüşhānevī says that, 'If you [succeed in] not allowing your heart to become obsessed with the world (*dünya*) and the things that belong to the world (*dünyalık*), you will be among those who attain greatness in knowledge (*ilim*) and gnosis (*marifet*). No secret or knowledge will remain hidden from that person'.[56] Similarly, those who act in accordance with Gümüşhānevī's teachings are said to be guaranteed four things: 'God will make them truthful, their actions sincere, their sustenance [as if it were] pouring down on them like rain, and will protect them from physical dangers'.[57]

It is within reason to conclude that the very existence of the tension between the transcendental and the mundane was highly germane to Gümüşhānevī's life and thought. The tension was essentially interpreted by Gümüşhānevī as a threat to the believer and the main obstacle in one's spiritual journey. Reconciling the tension involves recognizing its ever-looming presence and grappling with it throughout the entirety of one's life.

Mehmed Zahid Kotku (1897–1980)

Despite the demolition of Gümüşhānevī's *tekke* during the middle of the twentieth century, his ideas and mission would live on through his spiritual inheritors. Foremost among them was the Sufi-scholar Mehmed Zahid Kotku, a prominent visionary of his time who hailed from Bursa during the late Ottoman period and

55 Gümüşhanevi, *Velîler*, 166.

56 Gümüşhanevi, *Velîler*, 169.

57 Gümüşhanevi, *Velîler*, 168. These two quotes appear to reflect a paradox between two ways of looking at the world. Following Gümüşhānevī's thought process we are left with the basic idea that by simply denying the world, one is guaranteed happiness, success, and affluence. In this way, wealth is not necessarily a thing to be shunned, even if in excess. 'The righteous person is the one who is freed from being captive to the transitory pleasures of the world, and in this way attains true freedom, and is [moreover] able to take from them (i.e. pleasures) whenever they want and relinquish them whenever they please. This act of taking and relinquishing should be such that the heart mustn't be saddened by its coming into or leaving one's possession, so that not even the slightest of taint will enter upon the heart' (Gümüşhanevi, *Velîler*, 171).

flourished in Istanbul throughout the mid Turkish republican era. Understanding Kotku's approach in how he negotiated the tension between the transcendental and the mundane requires scrutinizing the two major fronts on which he operated. The first was his determination in creating a moral society in compliance with Islam's religious standards and its Sufi-inspired ethical code. While the second was his aspiration for Muslims to politically and economically excel and become formidable in the face of their European and American rivals, in the hope of ultimately surpassing them one day.

As the Turkish regime began loosening its grip on the organization and expression of religion in the public sphere, Kotku would make the most of his dual position as a Sufi shaykh and civil servant at the Iskenderpasha mosque in Istanbul's Fatih district. Under these circumstances, he found himself at liberty to challenge – albeit in allusive ways – the state-sanctioned secularist ideology by promoting an alternative moral vision for society. This newfound freedom is commonly attributed to the democratization of the Turkish polity and its transformation to a multiparty system during the mid-1950s, which resulted in political parties competing with one another to gain support from Sufi-led communities.[58] While such an explanation may seem plausible, it is arguably misleading since it outright disregards the underlying agency of individual Sufis. From this perspective, it may be surmised that figures like Kotku who proved to be effective in adapting to the times made it all the more difficult for the Turkish state to eradicate Sufism from society even after decades of suppression.

The major struggle for Kotku which he interpreted as the *jihād* of the time was on the economic front. This was largely directed at Western imperialism, as often referred to in many of his works. Kotku seems to have embraced this sentiment by way of Gümüşhānevī. Both were keen on pointing out that Muslims ought to abstain from consumerism and goods produced abroad and to always be prepared for armed struggle.[59] Kotku also made it a point for Muslims to pursue opportunities of leadership, especially when it came to holding key positions in the state bureaucracy.[60] Moreover, he lamented at the fact that Muslims were more given to becoming civil servants than engaging in trade and industry.[61]

58 For example, see "Turkey," in *The Columbia World Dictionary of Islamism*, ed. A. Sfeir (2007), 368.

59 Şerif Mardin, "The Nakshibendi Order of Turkey," in *Fundamentalisms and the State,* ed. Martin Marty & R. Scott Appleby, 204-232. (Chicago & London : The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 223-4.

60 Kotku, *Cennet Yolları*. (Istanbul: Server Yayınları, 2018). 102-6.

61 Kotku, *Tasavvufî Ahlâk*. (Istanbul: Bahar Yayınevi, 1975).

Koktu believed that the economic struggle needed to be reinforced with a strong educational foundation. 'Whoever wants to work for the revival (*ihya*) of Islam must work toward [gaining] knowledge. Manufactories do not bring one closer to God, but perhaps may [even] lead them to depravity and sin. Salvation is [achieved] not with [building] manufactories, but with knowledge and *jihād*. Manufactories are needed for these [two] things. That is, it is a preparation for *jihād*'.[62] 'As for today's *jihād*, it is clear,' Kotku writes, 'freedom cannot be obtained except by fully mastering the most vigorous religious (*din*) and worldly (*dünya*) disciplines, [alongside] trade and commerce'.[63]

Taking into account the changes in the social and political context and conditions from 1958 onwards, the new code of conduct elaborated by Kotku, which sought to fuse tradition with modernity, was encapsulated in his reformulation of the classic Sufi adage: 'a morsel of food, a cloak, and a Mazda' – the last addition alluding to Japan's economic success and its preservation of traditional values.[64] As it transformed from a *tekke*-based, relatively small-sized community, to one founded on textual and more anonymous relationships,[65] we find the Iskenderpasha community gradually turning into a model for political associations and economic cooperation, demonstrating its adaptivity to changing circumstances and ability to reimagine Islam throughout these processes.

Mahmud Esad Coşan (1938–2001)

Kotku's successor and son-in-law, Mahmud Esad Coşan presents us with a highly contrasting example in comparison to Naqshbandī shaykhs in bygone eras. Coşan's response to the tension between the transcendental and the mundane proved not only pragmatic, but also tended to accentuate this-worldly concerns above and beyond other-worldly ones. Relative to his predecessors, he projected an aura that was of a man of this world and not so much of a Sufi, let alone a shaykh. In between his professorial duties and role as a Naqshbandī shaykh, Coşan would nevertheless display his ability to bridge the tension between the two orders through his practice of *khalwat dar anjuman*. His written and verbal communications concerning Islam's core teachings further suggest a *broadening* of the tension. This involved a two-step process. He would initially evoke a sense of awareness of the said tension's existence among his general audience who, as one might assume, was comprised

62 Kotku, *Cihad* (Istanbul: Seha Neşriyat, 1984), 24.

63 Kotku, *Cihad*, 27.

64 Hakan Yavuz, "The Matrix of Modern Turkish Islamic Movements," in *Naqshbandis in Western and Central Asia*, ed. Elisabeth Özdalga, 129-147. (Istanbul: Numune Matbaası, 1999), 141.

65 Hakan Yavuz, "The Matrix of Modern Turkish Islamic Movements," 146.

largely of uninitiated Muslims. He would then offer a resolution to the tension by drawing on ideas like *jihād* and *khalwat dar anjuman*.

During his professorship, Coşan initiated the publication of *İslam* and would use his writings as a platform to spread Islamic values and teachings, offer his take on the issues of the time at home and abroad, and maintain communication with his disciples.[66] The two key ideas underlined by Coşan, *jihād* and *khalwat dar anjuman*, do particularly well to understand how he bridged the tension between the transcendental and the mundane. Coşan divides *jihād* into two major categories: (1) struggling against the unbelievers (esp. western imperialist nations) who represent the enemy in plain sight; and (2) struggling against the less perceptible enemies of the Devil and one's own ego-self.[67] The first kind of *jihād* signifies a struggle at the mundane level, for even his remarks later down the line, indicate this.[68] The second kind of *jihād* stresses the inward struggle, wherein Coşan advises that Muslims transcend carnal desires and worldly attachments to earn the pleasure of God. Elsewhere, Coşan also mentions the significance of *jihād* as the ideal form of monasticism in Islam.[69] Meanwhile, his take on *khalwat dar anjuman* is relatively more straightforward.[70]

What is unprecedented in the case of Coşan is how he communicated the teachings of the Naqshbandiyyah on a mass scale to both readers of his periodicals and listeners of his radio program. He would therefore have to filter the teachings of the *Ṭarīqah* in his discussions to ensure that it contained nothing too technical for the

66 Mahmut Esad Coşan, *İslami Çalışma ve Hizmetlerde Metod*. (Istanbul: Seha Neşriyat, 1995), 41.

67 Mahmut Esad Coşan, "Allah Yolunda Cihad" in *İslam* (1983).

68 'The unbelievers want you to simply spend your time in worship, to pray and recollect God at home, [and to say,] "Look, there is freedom! What else do you want?" They are [essentially] telling you not to be concerned with anything else so that they may be able to exploit the country at will' (Mahmut Esad Coşan, "Allah Yolunda Cihad" in *İslam* (1983).

69 'As a term, what does *rahib* (monk) mean? It means people who fear God and aspire to regulate their conduct in a way that will make God love them. Indeed, monks in religions of the past, such as in Christianity, were religious people, [and were] striving to earn good deeds…by secluding into a cave, living alone in a tranquil setting, far away from the people, worshipping God, and being free from evil' (Mahmut Esad Coşan, *Hazineden Pırıltılar: Cuma Sohbetleri*, vol. 1, ed. Metin Erkaya, (1993), 155-6).

70 'In this context, he says: 'Ramadan ended, the religious festival began, *i'tikāf* concluded. What are we to do next? After this, we are to live based on the principle of *khalwat dar anjuman*... That is, to maintain a good state in society as if one were in solitude, [and] to be with God among the people. And they also said: The hand at work, the heart with God. This is why I advise *khalwat dar anjuman*, that is, to be as if in *i'tikāf* while among the people' (Mahmut Esad Coşan, *Hazineden Pırıltılar: Cuma Sohbetleri*, vol. 7, ed. Metin Erkaya (1999), 168.

uninitiated Muslim. And in conveying solely the content of principles like *khalwat dar anjuman*, its essential component as a mystical state of complete immersion in God's recollection becomes inadvertently lost.

Coşan exhibited very little interest in disseminating the *Ṭarīqah* as Naqshbandīs prior to him had. His intentions seem to have been more set on arousing the Turkish masses with a type of religious consciousness and the realization that Islam is the only authentic way of living in the world. One way he appealed to the people, for instance, was by underscoring Islam in terms of its significance as a cultural form of expression and potential as a unifying force against the Other. In his reading and listening materials, especially those intended for public consumption, Coşan would often provoke a negative sentiment toward western culture and its imperialistic impulse. In his periodical *İslam*, he was unambiguous in how he felt about the West and would use the Muslim-unbeliever dichotomy as an idiom of reawakening Muslims from their worldly- and materialist-induced stupor.[71] We also find Coşan's pragmatism especially prominent in his religious reasoning. In one of his articles, he explains the importance of studying economics and underlines that disregarding knowledge of this world may very well lead to retribution in the hereafter.[72]

At this juncture, the tension between the transcendental and the mundane, which had been defined by the personal initiative of Kotku, trended more toward the latter. The intensive use of mass media and social networks had transformed not only the content and means of conveying the community's message, but also the nature of the interaction between disciple and shaykh. The lack of poetry in Coşan's discourse, compared to Kotku's captivating oratory skills, likewise suggests a meaningful shift in the said tension. If one of the explanations for the displacement of language is closely linked to the historical moment, then in the case of modernization, not only does the interaction between shaykh and disciple become considerably altered due to the highly effective means of communication, but the substance of the message being transmitted becomes equally weakened.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to broaden Abbasi's categorization of the *dīn-dunyā* binary in pre-modern Islamic thought by exploring its alternative signification in the Islamic mystical tradition through a discursive and pragmatic framework. In this context, applying Eisenstadt's transcendental-mundane analytical model proved to be useful in framing the *dīn-dunyā* binary as a tensional opposition.

71 Coşan, "Allah Yolunda Cihad."

72 Coşan, "İslami Çalışma," 36.

In the case study analysis it was demonstrated how each of the five Naqshbandī shaykhs interpreted, experienced, and bridged the perceived tension between *dīn* and *dunyā* in both their life-practices and ethico-mystical doctrines.

Despite the vast historical and geographical trajectory from Sirhindī to Coşan, a remarkable continuity was made evident in how the Naqshbandīs bridged the tension between their worldly and other-worldly concerns through practices like *khalwat dar anjuman*. How each shaykh had bridged the said tension, notwithstanding, varied in noticeable ways. Sirhindī's response occurred on multiple levels, including in his own personal life, religious revivalism, and political activism. However, these three areas paled in comparison to his engagement with mystico-philosophical theory, as seen in his reconfigured response. Sirhindī's alternative conception of *waḥdat al-shuhūd* casted new light on *waḥdat al-wujūd* and, in significant respects, countered its subversion of the tension between the two orders of reality. The tension in the case of Khālid was addressed more pronouncedly on the practical level. His worldly ambitions and missionary zeal were on par with Aḥrār as their respective political endeavors in establishing the Sharī'ah at the state level were interpreted to be the most efficient way to guarantee its implementation. Gümüşhānevī's appropriation of the tension was far more pressing in his own personality and spiritual state owing to his attention to detail when it came to living his life according to the prophetic way. Kotku's efforts toward bridging the tension were salient in the social and economic spheres. Muslims in Kotku's estimation had either become too passive or too worldly (esp. in their lack of moderation and drive toward physical and spiritual *jihād*). He would try to develop a middle ground between these two extremes by encouraging a more competitive economic spirit and cultivating an ethos that was morally Islamic and ethically Sufi. Coşan's approach differed in crucial ways as he attempted to align his objectives with the vision laid out by Kotku. This saw Coşan bridging the tension by combining his role as a Sufi shaykh and university professor with his personal commitment to playing an active part in social, economic, and political affairs.

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