

PREFACE

Hz. Shams is the spirit of the spirit of the spirit...

He is the manifestation of *Hakikat-i Muhammadi* (Muhammedan Reality) with the name of "Jalal" (One who brings to existence after having destroyed).

He is like the Sun; one cannot behold him with bare eyes. It is only Hz. Mawlana's glasses that can make him visible.

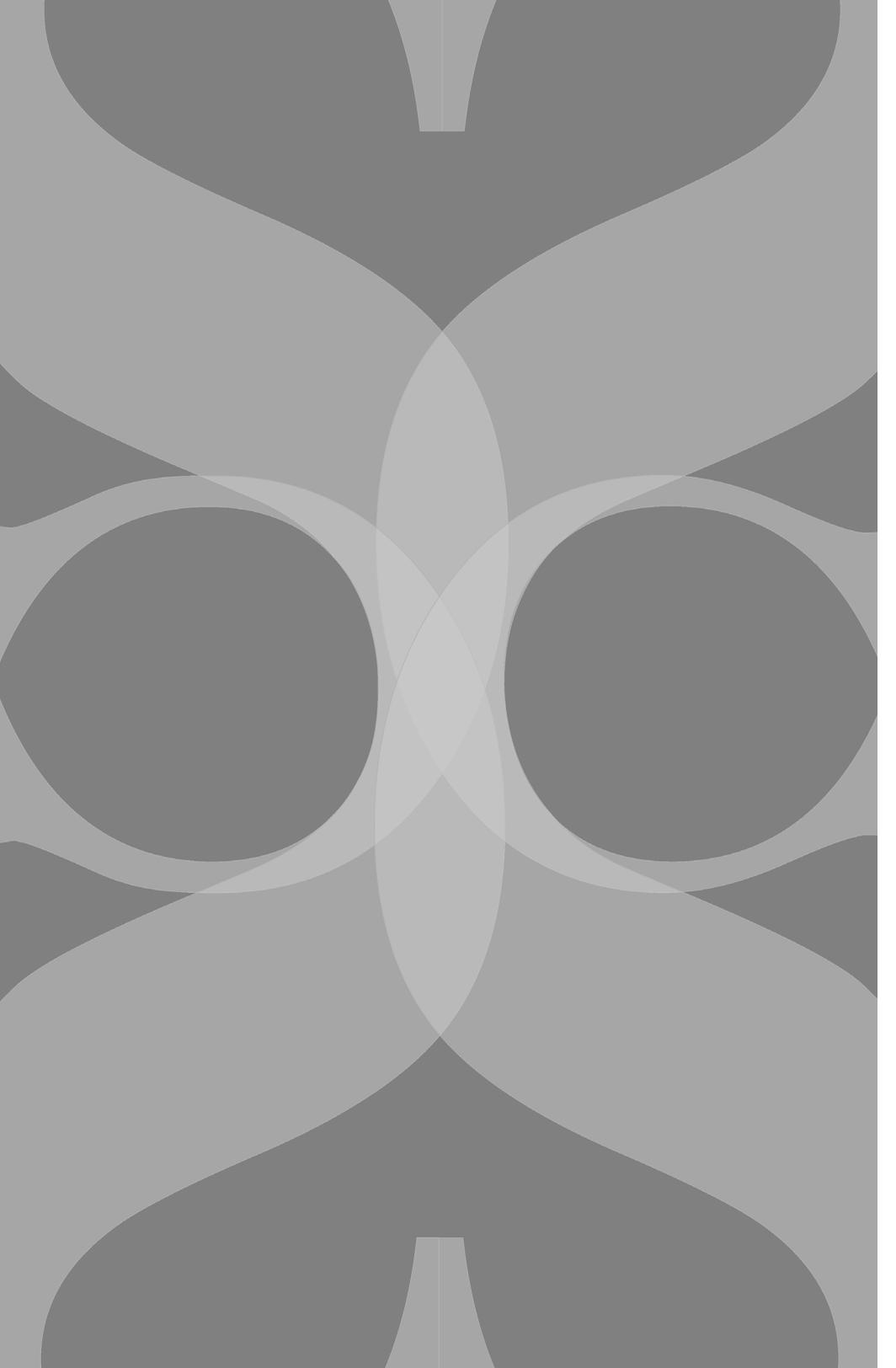
He does not disclose his blessed meaning to all.

Such an attribute is his grace that fills us with the scent of rose.

We wish that we can remember *insan-ı kâmil*s (perfect humans) who bear the manifestation of *Hakikat-i Muhammadi*.

We are fully aware that it is hard to understand them, but that it is easy to learn to take pleasure.

Cemâlnur Sargut



Shams: The Sun of Muhammeden Light (*Nur-i Muhammedi*)

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*“O Shams! My form is shaped with your breath, so is my thought
I would say I am your words”*

Hz. Mawlana

1. Shams of Tabriz
2. From Tabriz to the land of Rome
3. Shams – Mawlana encounters
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1. Shams of Tabriz

Shams-i Tabrîzî, was born in Tabriz 582 after Hijrat (1186 A.C.). His real name is Muhammad bin Ali bin Malikdad¹. He is referred as “Shamsaddin”, “Shams’ul Haq wa’d-din”, “Shams”, “Shams-i Tabrizi” in Mawlavi sources. According to Aflâqî, Shams was named by prominent sheikhs of Sufi orders of his territory as “Kâmil-i Tabrizi”, or because he was traveling a lot “Shamsaddin-i Perende”². His father Ali b. Malikdad (*or Malik Dawud*) was a fabric merchant who came from Bezer city of

1 Aflaqi, *Âriflerin Menkıbeleri (Manaqib al-Arifin)* (trns. Tahsin Yazıcı), Istanbul 1995, II, p. 189.

2 Aflaqi, II, p. 190.

Khorasan to Tabriz for business³. Davlatshah in his *Tadhqira* reports an account about Shams being the son of a person named Hâvend Jalâluddin Nav-Muselman who was the governor of Alamut, and who belonged to Kiya Buzurgummid's family who was an Ismaili and the successor of Hassan Sabbah. According to this account, Havend Jalaluddin who was a Sunni, sent his son for his education to Tabriz. Shams, who was a beautiful boy was protected among women to save him from people with bad intentions. Meanwhile he became a goldsmith and became famous in Tabriz by the name "zerduz"⁴. Badiuzzaman Furuzanfer and Abdulbaqi Golpinarli refuse the authenticity of Davlatshah's account claiming that it does not exist in Mawlawi records, and also based on Juwayni's *Jihangusha History*, Jalaluddin Nav-muselman did not have any sons other than Alauddin Ahmad⁵.

Both in *Risala of Sipehsalar* and *Ibtidanama* of Sultan Walad, which are the primary sources about Shams, there is not much information about his life's early stages. In Shams-i Tabrizi's *Maqalat* and *Manaqib al-Arifin*, it is said that Shams was leading a mysterious life, had great spiritual capabilities, which he was mostly in retreat and was performing sema, that he was granted spiritual experiences and that he stayed away from true school training⁶. We can say that Shams' first spiritual teacher was *Shaikh Abu Bakr-i Salabaf*, whose name is mentioned in the *Maqalat* in a few places. Sahih Ahmad Dede tells that Shams became his student at the age of twenty two, and started traveling after serving him for fourteen years⁷. Abu Bakr-i Salabaf who was teaching in a tekke near Tabriz was making

3 Davlatshah, *Tezkire (Tadhqira)* (trns. Necati Lugal), Istanbul 1977, II, p. 251.

4 Davlatshah, II, p. 251.

5 Badiuzzaman Furuzanfer, *Mevlâna Celâleddin (Mawlana Jalal al-din)* (trns. Feridun Nafiz Uzlu), Istanbul 1997, p. 162-163; Abdulbaqi Golpinarli, *Mevlânâ Celâleddin (Mawlana Jalal al-din)*, Istanbul 1952, p. 49.

6 Shams-i Tabrizi, *Maqâlât* (ed. M. Ali Muwahhid), Tahran 1369, p. 77, 119, 677, 740, 741; Aflaqi, II, p. 205.

7 Sahih Ahmad Dede, *Mevlevîlerin Tarihi (History of Mawlawis)* (ed. Cem Zorlu), Istanbul 2003, p. 139, 148.

his living by making baskets. He did not allow his students to wear *hirqa* (dervish garments) and he had *futuwwah* (spiritual openings) and *mala-mat* (attitude of humility and self blame). This spiritual teacher had a lot of influence on Shams' Sufi character. Muwahhid, who was the publisher of *Maqalat*, tells that most of Abu Bakr-i Salabaf's students were artisans like their teacher, and they also had *futuwwah*⁸. According to *Sipehsalar*, Shams was not interested in showing *karamah* (miracles that are granted to saints), he was wearing simple clothing and was hiding from people. He was in constant struggle against his *nafs* (ego), was travelling in trader's garments, was preferring to stay in *carvansarays* rather than *tekkes* and used to lock his door tight, although he had nothing precious. He was full of secrets. He was making his living by repairing clothes⁹. Molla Abdurrahman-i Jami says that while in Baghdad, Shams served Baba Qamal-i Jandi, who was the successor of Najmuddin-i Qubra and Baba Faraj-i Tabrizi, and Muhammad Ruknaddin-i Sujasi, who was the successor of Qutbuddin Abhari and the teacher of Awhaduddin-i Qirmani¹⁰. According to Dawlatshah, Shams' lineage goes to Abu al- Najeb al-Suhrawardi and Ahmad al-Ghazzali via Sujasi, and to Najmuddin-i Qubra via Baba Qamal-i Jandi. He thinks that Shams was sent to Anatolia to find his spiritual friend by Sujasi¹¹, but Jami thinks that this was

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- 8 Mohammad Ali Muwahhid, *Shams-i Tabrizî*, Tahran 1996, p. 62. The name of Abu Bakr Salabaf is not found in the majority of sufi biographies. Hafiz Hosain Karbalâi in his *Rawzat al-Cinân* reports that Salabaf was the spiritual master of Shams and a contemporary of 70 sufis. But Salabaf is not mentioned among the famous of those sufis of Tabriz. Pir Salabaf's lodge is located in a suburb of the city of Tabriz, the so-called Charandab region; while 70 sufis of Tabriz who belonged to Baba Hasan Ali are lived in İmam Hafadah's dargah which is located in the Sarhâb region, east of Salabaf's lodge. Hâfiz Hosain Karbalâyî-i Tabrizî, *Ravzat al-Finân ve Jannât al-Janân* (ed. Cafer Sultân el-Karrâi), Tahran 1965-70, I, p. 291, 294-6, 49-50.
- 9 Faridun Sipahsalar, *Risâle: Mevlânâ ve Etrafındakiler* (*Risala: Maulana and the ones around him*) (trns. Tahsin Yazıcı), Istanbul 1977, p. 121
- 10 Lâmiî, *Nefehât Tercümesi* (*Translation of Nafahât*), p. 520.
- 11 Davlatshah, II, p. 52.

Baba Qamal-i Jandi¹². Fāhruddin Iraqī was there when Jandi told Shams to go to Anatolia. Since neither Baba Qamal-i Jandi nor Ruknaddin Sujasi is mentioned in *Maqalat*, it is highly suspicious that Shams was a student of these two Sufis. However, since he was a traveling dervish, it is possible that he met and talked with them.

2. From Tabriz, to Anatolia

We know that after leaving Salabaf, Shams went to Baghdad, Damascus, Aleppo, Caesarea, Aksaray, Sivas, Erzurum and Erzincan. Aflaqi says that he made these trips to know the Qutub and abdals of his time and to talk with them, to gain spiritual grace and to know a true friend¹³. He met Awhaduddin-i Qirmanī¹⁴ and Sayyid Burhanaddin Muhaqqiq-i Tirmizi¹⁵ in Baghdad and Caesarea; Muhyiddin Ibnu'l-Arabi (*Shaikh Muhammad*)¹⁶, Damascus' judge Shams-i Huyi¹⁷, philosopher Shihab-i Hariva¹⁸ in Damascus; Asaduddin-i Mutakallim¹⁹ who was an expert in kalam in Sivas, and he talked with these. Rumi says that Shams has extensive knowledge on sciences like chemistry, astrology, *riyazat* (*retreat*), divinity, *hikemiyat* (*philosophy*), logic, *hilaf* (*dialectic*) and *naranjiyat* besides *tasawwuf*. He explains Shams' expertise in a variety of sciences as follows: "Our Shamsuddin's breath was similar to that of Jesus when it came to take full control of our souls. He has no similar in chemistry. There is no other like him about astrology, *riyazat*, divinity, philosophy, logic, dialectic and *naranjiyat*. But after he was invited to the circles of *rijalullah* (*men of God*), he turned his back to all of these, he forgot about sciences pertinent to intellect and other's opinions based on intellect. Instead he chose seclusion, loneliness and the

12 Lâmiî, p. 521

13 Aflaqi, II, p. 190.

14 Shams-i Tabrizî, p. 218, 294.

15 Sahih Ahmad Dede, p. 150.

16 Shams-i Tabrizî, p. 96, 239-240, 299, 304-5, 338, 777.

17 Shams-i Tabrizî, p. 221, 241, 831.

18 Shams-i Tabrizî, p. 82, 118, 271-272, 635, 641, 658.

19 Shams-i Tabrizî, p. 294-5.

world of tawhid (*unity*)”²⁰. He belonged to Shafi sect²¹, as Mawlana says, after reaching the *rijalullah*’s circles, he deleted all of his knowledge, he turned his back to sciences on intellect and other’s opinions, and preferred the world of seclusion, loneliness and *tawhid*²². Shams-i Tabrizi tells that during his travels as a consequence of his *malami* character, he tested numerous *sheikhs* and knowers in order for the truth to be revealed. He would test those concentrated on *walayāt* (*Allah’s friendship*) with *shariat* (*Allah’s law*), and those concentrated on *shariat* with *walayāt*. He observed that they were not fully surrendered, and that their seeking was deficient. He said that he found true friendship and the qualities of a *sheikh* in Mawlana²³. Shams did not consider Awhaduddin-i Kirmani whom he met in 1237 in Baghdad worthy of friendship. He thought he was a novice in the path and that he had a *shahidbazi* attitude²⁴. He praises Muhyiddin Ibnu’l-Arabi in his *Maqalat* referring to him as “*Shaikh Muhammad*”²⁵ whom he met in Damascus around 1240, yet he says that they were different in Sufi character. Although Ibnu’l-Arabi was criticised by Shams due to his submission to *zahir* (*outer form*) of *shariat* and due to his concentration on the subject of divinity instead of *Insan-i Kamil* (*Perfect Man*), he still considers him among the best of the spiritual guides he had seen. Although William Chittick has reservations about the person referred to as “*Shaikh Muhammad*” being Ibnu’l-Arabi²⁶, the fact that he is mentioned in one part of *Maqalat* as “*Shaikh Muhammad b. Arabi*” clears all doubts²⁷. Shams stayed in a retreat cell in Aleppo for fourteen months, and upon a mystical sign, he star-

20 Aflaqi, II, p. 201.

21 Shams-i Tabrîzî, p. 182.

22 Aflaqi, II, p. 201.

23 Shams-i Tabrîzî, p. 219, 756, 784.

24 Shams-i Tabrîzî, p. 218, 294, 700; Aflaqi, II, p. 191-193; Lâmiî, p. 639.

25 Shams-i Tebrizi uses these phrases about Ibn al-Arabi: “wonderful and magnificent man”, “good and confidant”, “peaceful and tolerant”. See Shams-i Tabrîzî, p. 299.

26 William Chittick, *Me and Rumi: The Autobiography of Shams-i Tabrizi*, Louisville 2004, p. XVIII, 380.

27 Shams-i Tabrîzî, p. 299.

ted his journey to Anatolia to find his friend. In his *Maqalat* he says that upon his prayers to find a spiritual friend, it was said to him “let us make you the companion to a friend of Allah”, when he asked about his whereabouts, the answer came the day after that he was in Anatolia but the time to meet him had not come yet. Sipehsalar says that this dream was the sign to put him on the way to Anatolia to meet Mawlana.²⁸

According to Sarı Abdullah Efendi, one of the *Mathnawi Sharihs* (explainer), Shams was sent to Anatolia to be Mawlana’s guide by the *Ghaws* (the mystical leader) of the time Haja Ali, whom we do not know much about. Sarı Abdullah asked Mawlana about this information in his waqia, and he approved of the authenticity of this news. According to him, there are a lot of allusions to Haja Ali in the *Mathnawi*.²⁹

According to Aflaqi, Shams tutored the children of a king in Erzurum³⁰ before he went to Konya, and he signed the bill of Hacilar water duct in Caesarea. In some late studies there are claims that Shams entering Anatolia from Erzurum-Erzincan met Mongolians on his way, and that he was sent to Konya by these latter to establish connection between Mongolians and Mawlana.³¹

3. Shams – Mawlana encounters:

Mawlana and Shams met first either in Damascus³² or Aleppo.³³ According to Aflaqi, after his father’s passing away, following his teacher Sayyid Burhanaddin’s orders he went to Damascus for his studies. One day

28 Sipehsalar, p. 123-124.

29 Sarı Abdullah, *Javâhir-i Bavâhir-i Mathnawi*, Istanbul 1288, I, p. 116.

30 Aflaqi, II, 264, 275.

31 Miqâil Bayram, *Abi Evren–Mevlânâ Mücadelesi* (*The Struggle Between Mawlana and Abi Avran*), Konya 2005, p. 139-142; See for the critics of these claims which are not based on historical document Osman Nuri Kuchuk, *Mevlânâ ve İktidar* (*Mawlana and The Government*), Konya 2007, p. 124-127.

32 Aflaqi, II, p. 193.

33 Badiuzzaman Furûzanfer, p. 185.

when he was walking in public he saw Shams with his hat and black robe. He held his hands and told “O expert of the world, understand me!” Shams was intoxicated by these words and passed out. When he woke up Mawlana had already gone away. In some sources it is claimed that Shams’ journey to Anatolia was due to his finding out about Mawlana’s *kamal* after this encounter. The fact that Mawlana’s close entourage like Sayyid Burhaneddin, Ibnu’l-Arabi, Najmuddin-i Kubra, his successors Bahauddin Walad and Baba Qamal-i Jandi, Awhaduddin-i Qirmani should know Shams makes us think that he had somehow met Mawlana before his arrival to Konya. Their second encounter takes place in Konya five years after Sayyid Burhanaddin’s passing. According to Sahih Ahmad Dede, Sayyid Burhanaddin who decided to move from Konya to Caesarea in his last years was the person who gave the good tidings to Mawlana about Shams coming to Konya.³⁴ Aflaqi reports that Shams had come to Konya on Jamaziyalakhir 26th, 642 (*November 29th, 1244*).³⁵ It is understood that when he came to Konya Shams was sixty and Mawlana was thirty eight years old. Sheikh Ahmad Dede tells that Shams was born in 590 A.H. (*1194 A.D.*) and that he arrived to Konya at the age of fifty two. Although records are indicating that Mawlana was born in 604 A.H. (*1207 A.D.*), Abdalbaki Golpınarlı asserts that Mawlana was born in 580 A.H. (*1184 A.D.*) and that he was sixty two when he met Shams.³⁶

There are different accounts about the dialogue that took place between Shams and Mawlana during their first encounter. The accounts of Aflaqi and Sipehsalar are similar to those in *Maqalat*. Aflaqi tells that Shams settled in *Şekerciler Hami* and according to Sipehsalar he settled in *Pirinççiler Hami* upon his arrival to Konya. One day after Mawlana left Madrasa

34 Sahih Ahmad Dede, p. 160.

35 Aflaqi, II, p. 193.

36 Abdalbaki Golpınarlı, “Mevlânâ Şems-i Tebrizî ile Altmış İki Yaşında Buluştu” (*Mawlana met Shams of Tabriz When He is Sixty Two*), *Şarkiyat Mecmuası*, III (1959), p. 156-161.

of Pamukçular with his students, one of the four institutions he was lecturing in, Shams appeared before him and held the gag bit of his mule and said “O the expert of worldly and spiritual truths! Which one is the greater: Muhammad or Bayazid-i Bistami?” When Mawlana replied “Muhammad Mustafa is the leader of all prophets and saints” Shams asked again “But he said, ‘I exalt thee My Lord, we did not know you the way you deserve to be known’ when Bayazid-i Bistami said ‘How great is my glory, I am the king of the kings.’” Upon this Mawlana’s answer was “Because Bayazid’s thirst was little, it was quenched by a gulp of water. His glass of perception was suddenly full to the brink; however Muhammad’s thirst was increasing every moment. His breast was opened by Allah. He was talking about his thirst everyday and he wanted to be nearer to Allah every moment.” Shams passed out upon hearing this answer and after a while they went on foot to the madrasah.³⁷ According to an account mentioned in Dawlatshah’s *Tazkirat*, Shams asks the following question to Mawlana: “What is your purpose in struggling with your *nafs* (*ego*), seclusion and learning positive sciences?” Mawlana replies “to walk in the path of *shariat’s sunnat* (*prophet’s manners*) and *adabs* (*good behaviour*)” Upon this Shams says “These are all *kishr* (*bark*)”. When Mawlana asks “Then what is beyond these?” Shams replies finally “Knowledge is that which will get you to the known”.³⁸ According to another account the encounter in Konya happened in the following way. Shams’ question: “What are these books you are reading about?” Mawlana’s answer: “You would not understand.” Suddenly a fire starts and the books start to burn. Mawlana asks “What is this?” Shams’ answer “You would not understand”.³⁹

Midhat Bahari, one of the near era Mawlawi knowers, claims that Mawlana was already at the level of *Qutbiyyat* (*principle axis of sainthood*),

37 Shams-i Tabrizi, p. 685-686; Sipahsalar, p. 124-125; Aflaqi, II, p. 193-195.

38 Davlatshah, p. 253.

39 Muhyiddin Abdulkadir, *el-Kevâkibü'l-muzia*, Haydarabad (*facsimile*), II, p. 124-5.