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Cemal KAFADAR • Gönül A. TEKİN

IN MEMORIAM
ŞİNASİ TEKİN
III

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Tughra, Mehmed II (1481)
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ŞİNASI TEKİN HATIRA SAYISI III

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Harvard Üniversitesi

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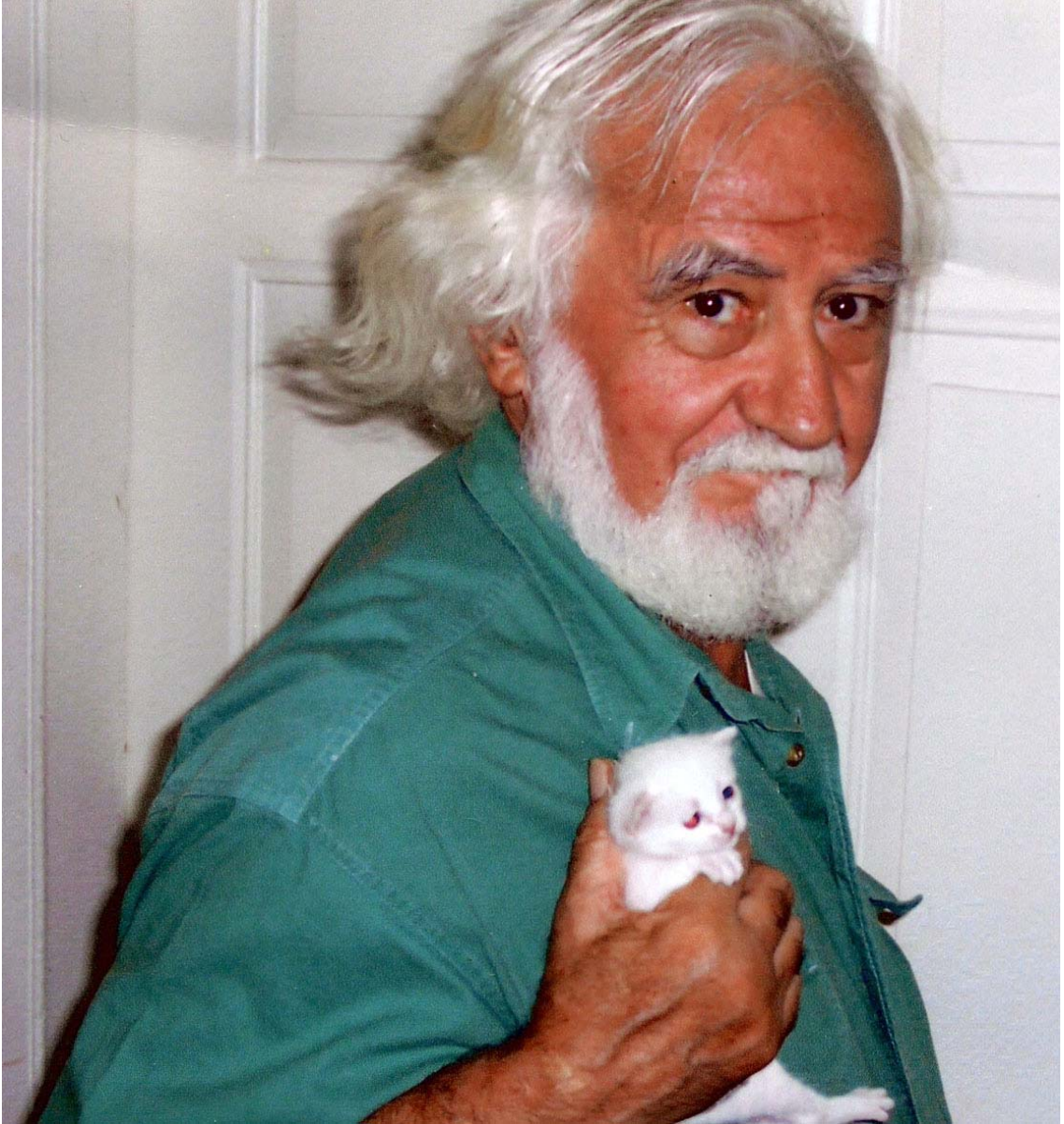
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‘ÂŞIK PÂŞÂ (d. 1333): Ğarîb-Nâme (İ. Koyunoğlu Ktp., Konya)
[ve mâ erselnâ min resûlⁱⁿ illâ bilisâni kavmihi liyübeyyine lehüm]

(K 14:4 "Onlara apaçık anlatabilsin diye
her peygamberi kendi halkının diliyle gönderdik!")

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BUNLARA DÜŞMİŞİDİ CÜMLE ‘UKÛL
TÜRK DİLİNE KİMSENE BAKMAZIDI
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TÜRK DAKI BİLMEZİDİ OL DİLLERİ
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Hakk'ı dillerinde anlasınlar diye.*



ŞİNASİ TEKİN
(1933 - 16 Eylül 2004)

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THE INTERSECTION OF PAST AND PRESENT IN
THE GENESIS OF AN OTTOMAN SUFI ORDER:
THE LIFE OF CEMÂL EL-HALVETÎ (D. 900/1494 OR 905/1499)
AND THE ORIGINS OF THE HALVETÎ *TARÎQA*

John J. CURRY*

Preface

Dr. Tekin's scholarly legacies were numerous, as this volume will no doubt demonstrate, but his own focus was primarily on the history and development of Turkish language and linguistics, especially its development in early historical periods. He was able to bring insights into this topic to which few others could aspire. Thus, it is somewhat ironic that the surviving manuscript legacy of one of the central figures that I present in this contribution, Cemâl el-Halvetî (d. 900/1494 or 905/1499), left a much larger written legacy in the Arabic and Persian languages than he did in his native Turkish. So I hope my colleagues will take the expansive view of early Turkish history, and consider the contribution that an understanding of Cemâl el-Halvetî's career can bring to the formative centuries of Ottoman civilization and culture.

I contribute to this project certain that my grief at the sudden loss of Dr. Şinasi Tekin as a colleague, mentor and friend is understood by all the contributors to this series of volumes, and indeed to all who came into contact with him over his many years of service in the field of Turkish studies. I owe Şinasi Bey, as we affectionately used to call him, a debt of gratitude I cannot hope to repay. I spent two summers studying Ottoman language and paleography with him and others on the island of Cunda in the summers of 1997 and 1998; it is no exaggeration to say that I would not have advanced my research to the extent I did were it not for his patience and the generous granting of his spare time to teach a graduate student who was not even from his own program. He worked with another student and me well into the hot afternoons of the summer of 1997, teaching us the paleographical skills that would one day allow us to work more effectively in the Ottoman manuscript libraries in Istanbul and beyond. Even after completing his program, I found myself making a peri-

* University of Nevada, Las Vegas

odic trip to he and his wife Gönül's summer home on Cunda island to share my ideas and progress on current projects, and never failed to receive valuable advice in return. It is among my deepest regrets that I did not complete most of my recent work in time for him to witness the results, and that I can no longer collaborate with him on future projects.

Historiographical challenges for the study of Islamic mysticism between 1200 and 1500

The historiography of Islamic mysticism poses many challenges for the researcher, especially in the earlier centuries of Ottoman history. Scholars are invariably confronted with hagiographical narratives that were not codified into fixed narratives until later centuries, which can make it difficult to map the earlier contours of the major Ottoman Sufi orders and their followers.¹ Moreover, the miraculous content of many of these narratives, combined with a didactic narrative strategy that aims toward the present and future training of Sufi adepts, or to legitimate an order's leadership for social or political reasons, requires researchers to exercise care in determining what type of historical information these reports convey. At the most basic level, each biographical or anecdotal notice must be interrogated: Was a given Sufi leader a central figure in the events of their time, or was he just a minor local player in a broader political and social context who was retroactively granted an inflated status to fit the doctrinal or political concerns of a later generation of Muslim mystics? Other questions can even challenge the relevance of the researcher's topic of inquiry: Can these sources be corroborated or intersected with other types of contemporary historical sources for the period and the region, including non-textual sources such as architectural remnants?² If not, do they still add anything to our knowledge of that history, or do they have to be discarded as an *ex post facto* attempt to weave a group's history into the fabric of the formative periods of Ottoman history and culture?

Recent attempts to document the sweep of Muslim mystical practitioners and the Sufi orders in the Ottoman Empire have focused the majority of their efforts on a period dating from the late fifteenth through the nineteenth century.³ Difficulties in interpreting the earlier periods, coupled with a limited number of accessible sources (a linguistic barrier can attend earlier-period texts, which are almost always in Persian or Arabic), sometimes leave a gap between Ottoman and pre-Ottoman studies. Obviously, a figure like Cemâl el-Halvetî did not emerge without influence from past or contemporary trends; the background of preceding centuries of Islamic history suggests he represented a culmination of an earlier set of developments as much as he did a new beginning in the history of Ottoman Turkish mysticism.

¹ See, for example, the remarks of Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menâkıbnâmeler (Metodolojik bir Yaklaşım)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), p. 97.

² For an excellent example of how this tactic can be used to great effect, see Zeynep Yürekli, "A Building Between the Public and Private Realms of the Ottoman Elite: The Sufi Convent of Sokollu Mehmed Pasha in Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 20 (2003), pp. 159-185.

³ The period preceding the sixteenth century is described briefly and in very general terms by Reşat Öngören, *Osmanlılar'da Tasavvuf: Anadolu'da Sûfîler, Devlet ve Ulemâ (XVI. Yüzyıl)* (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2000), pp. 17-24.

Cemâl el-Halvetî as 'âlim and scholar

It is worth commencing our study, therefore, by examining some of the elements of his geographical and intellectual background to better understand the importance of his subsequent career. In so doing, we must start with his genealogical background, which can also explain some of his early intellectual influences. Biographical accounts of Cemâl el-Halvetî's life report that his great-grandfather, Cemâl al-Dîn Aksarayî (d. 791/1388), was reportedly descended from a line of scholars reaching back to the notable Muslim intellectual Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî (d. 606/1210).⁴ Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî was a noted polymath of his age, having produced works on everything from Muslim jurisprudence to philosophy to astronomy and mathematics. He also reputed to have had ties with some of the noted Sufi figures of his era, including Najm al-Dîn al-Kubrâ (d. 618/1221), 'Umar al-Suhrawardî (d. 632/1234) and Ibn al-'Arabî (d. 638/1240).⁵ One can assume that his great-grandson Cemâl al-Dîn Aksarayî was heir to at least an attenuated part of that legacy, though what we know about his works suggests interests primarily in ethics, philosophy and the religious sciences.⁶

Cemâl al-Dîn Aksarayî's pedigree suggests that his descendants, who would become well-known as the Cemâlî family⁷, were among the numerous Muslim notables who fled from the Mongol invasions of the eastern half of the Islamic world into its western reaches after the third decade of the thirteenth century. Aksarayî was noted for a philosophical teaching style that emulated that of the Greek stoics; he would teach one group of students while walking from his home to the *medrese*, then speak with another group waiting for him at the entrance, and only then would he go into the *medrese* itself to teach a final group of students waiting there. Despite his lifelong residence in areas that were not part of the Ottoman state during his lifetime, Aksarayî was seen by later generations to have linkages to the early Ottoman state, as he attracted the attention of other noted scholars, and later founders of Ottoman jurisprudence and intellectual circles such as Molla Fenârî (d. 834/1431) may have started their careers as part of his circles.⁸

Given this background, one would expect that his great-grandson would have followed in his footsteps to take on the role of a provincial scholar and jurist of note.

⁴ Mecdî Mehmed Efendi, *Şaka'ik-ı Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri: Hada'iku's-Şaka'ik*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989), pp. 40-41; Ayvansarâyî Hüseyîn Efendi et al., *Hadîkatü'l-Cevâmî: İstanbul Câmileri ve Diğer Dînî-Sivil Mî'mârî Yapılar* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2001), p. 222; Mustafa Öz, "Cemâleddin Aksarayî," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, v. 7, pp. 308-309.

⁵ Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, "Fahreddin er-Râzî," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, v.12, pp. 90-91; for the correspondence with Ibn al-'Arabî, see Muhyî al-Dîn b. al-'Arabî (d. 638/1240), "Risâlat ilâ imâm al-Râzî," in *Rasâ'il Ibn al-'Arabî*, ed. Muhammad Shihâb al-Dîn al-'Arabî (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 1997), pp. 239-247; for the correspondence with al-Suhrawardî, see Erik S. Ohlander, "Abâ Hafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardî (d. 632/1234) and the Institutionalization of Sufism" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 2004), pp. 490-491. I am indebted to Erik Ohlander for the latter two references.

⁶ Mustafa Öz, "Cemâleddin Aksarayî," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, v. 7, pp. 308-309.

⁷ A study of the descendants of Cemâleddin Aksarayî has been done by Yusuf Küçükdağ, *II. Bâyezid, Yavuz ve Kanûnî Devirlerinde Cemâlî Ailesi* (İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1995).

⁸ Mecdî, p. 41; Tahsin Görgün, "Molla Fenârî," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, v. 30, p. 245.

In fact, some of the biographies cite the recollection of Cemâl el-Halvetî himself to suggest this was a distinct possibility. For example, in the account of the noted Halvetî biographer, Mahmud Cemaleddin el-Hulvî, (d. 1064/1654), he recounts that Cemâl el-Halvetî was paying a visit to one of his relatives who was serving as a *kazasker*⁹, most likely in the waning days of the Karamanoğlu ruler Tâceddin İbrâhim Bey (r. 826-869/1423-1464).¹⁰ His initial hope was to gain knowledge and connections that would advance his own career as a state functionary. One day, however, he witnessed a scene where his powerful relative inquired about the purchase of a copy of the Qur'an from a seller, only to reject it when he was told that the price would be 300 akçe. Shortly thereafter, one of the *kazasker*'s servants appeared and informed him that he had found him a good horse for purchase. After they went and inspected the animal, the *kazasker* purchased it for an extraordinarily high sum of 10,000 akçe. Disillusioned by the *kazasker*'s placing more value on worldly goods than on the Qur'an, the young Cemâl swore to never follow in such a path, and became more inclined to seek out Sufi shaykhs instead.¹¹

Past historiography might have framed this decision as an evocation of the tension that had developed between the exoteric, *shari'a*-minded jurisprudence of the scholarly classes and the circles of Sufi mystics who rejected their dry legalism and ties to state power.¹² Yet this does not mean we should assume that Cemâl was abandoning his grounding in the scholarly tradition of the *'ulama*. Other members of his family served in the scholarly hierarchy; some accounts suggest that he supported the early career of his cousin Zenbilli 'Alî Çelebi (d. 932/1525), who would later become a noted scholar and jurist in his own right.¹³ It is wiser to suggest that Cemâl el-Halvetî was instead integrating a second, parallel tradition in Islamic history into his world view. Despite the tensions that this process invariably evoked among Muslims, it is also clear that did not require an abandonment of the scholarly tradition in which his family had gained fame.

⁹ This may well have been Cemâl el-Halvetî's father Mahmud Çelebi, according to one of the biographers of the Halvetî order, see Sinaneddin b. Yusuf b. Ya'kub (d. 1581), *Tezkiretü'l-Halvetiyye* (Istanbul: Süleymaniye Lib. MS Esad Efendi 1372/1), fol. 10a; see also Küçükdağ, p. 11.

¹⁰ It should be stressed that the exact chronology of Cemâl el-Halvetî's early career cannot be determined with any certainty. However, given the circumstances of his life, career and date of death, this seems to be the most likely possibility as the Karamanid state ceased to exist shortly thereafter and the region became a field of conflict between the Ottomans and the Akkoyunlu under Uzun Hasan. See Faruk Sümer, "Karamanoğulları," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, v. 24, pp. 458-459.

¹¹ Mahmud Cemaleddin Hulvî (d. 1651), *Lemezât-ı Hulviyye ez Lemezât-ı Ulviyye (Büyük Velilerin Tath Halleri)*, trans. Mehmet Serhan Tayşi (Istanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 1993), p. 428.

¹² For examples of the scholarly tension that surrounds this oversimplified view of the jurist-mystic conflict, see de Jong's introduction to Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke, *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999), pp. 1-21 and Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam* (New York: New York University Press, 1989), p. 174.

¹³ Küçükdağ, pp. 56-57.

Cemâl el-Halvetî as inheritor of the developing mystical tradition of the Halvetî order

The parallel track of Islamic mysticism that had appeared by the time of Cemâl el-Halvetî's lifetime was a reflection of other forces that had also been handed down for many generations. This process had begun with the textual consolidation of the Islamic mystical tradition in the form of biographies and didactic works beginning in the late fourth/tenth century, and evolved into the formation of Sufi networks that centered around prominent shaykhs who could attract a following beyond their own local milieu. The culmination of these developments on the eve of the Mongol conquests might be best exemplified by the career and works of Abu Hafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardî (d. 632/1234).¹⁴ However, this process of expansion was largely interrupted by the advent of the Mongol invasions under Chinggis Khan and his descendants from 616/1220 to 658/1260, and the establishment of Mongol successor states over the course of the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries. During the century of Mongol rule over large parts of the eastern Islamic world, the traditional Islamic institutions represented by the legal scholars and traditional 'ulama were often destroyed or weakened; many of their prominent scholars and leaders were either killed or dispersed widely into frontier zones outside the direct range of Mongol influence. The resulting leadership void among the surviving members of the Muslim community was often filled by prominent Sufi mystics, who often lacked the direct linkages with the power bases of the pre-existing states of the region destroyed by the Mongols.¹⁵ Recent scholarship has even suggested that in some cases, Sufi historiography expressed condemnation of previous Muslim states and their scholarly figures and invoked a tacit alliance with the Mongol cause as a way of punishing a wayward Muslim community.¹⁶

In the inchoateness of the period, these prominent figures, who would later coalesce in the minds of later Ottoman Muslims into the Sufi chains of authority leading back to the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions, did not yet recognize themselves as belonging to "Sufi orders" in the sense of a bounded group that set itself apart from other mystical adherents in the form of an explicit chain of authorities legitimizing its descent (i.e., a *silâsile*), distinctive forms of mystical praxis (e.g., specific prayers and litanies), or specific rituals of initiation through the conferring of item of clothing and the like. A growing body of research on prominent Sufi figures active under the Mongol successor states in Iran and the eastern Islamic world strongly suggest that a historical framing of them as leadership figures in a specific Sufi order was a product of later generations of consolidators. Sometimes the figure in question even revised the details of their own life experiences to better suit the

¹⁴ An important study that chronicles the evolution of Sufism and Islamic mystical institutions up to the Mongol conquests is that of Erik S. Ohlander, *Sufism in an Age of Transition: 'Umar al-Suhrawardî and the Rise of the Islamic Mystical Brotherhoods* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

¹⁵ This idea was first posited in Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), v. 2, pp. 371-372.

¹⁶ Devin Deweese, "'Stuck in the Throat of Chingîz Khân:' Envisioning the Mongol Conquests in Some Sufi Accounts from the 14th to 17th Centuries," *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), esp. pp. 23-24 and 54-56.

messages they wanted to convey; thus, their writings and those of their successors did not necessarily reflect the actual agenda of these figures at a given time or place.¹⁷ One finds instead that prominent mystical leaders from different regions interacted with each other in either cooperative or antagonistic patterns based on the matrix of political or religious debates impacting upon a given time and place. It was out of this complex interaction of disrupted, but reviving Sufi networks and institutions that Cemâl el-Halvetî's chosen Sufi order would emerge, and to which he would become heir in its Ottoman context.

The historical origins of the Halvetî order, like many others, are difficult to discern for three reasons, which are often interrelated. The first is the degree of chronological distance between later biographical writers and the events that came down to them. A good example of this can be found in the massive biographical compilation of prominent figures in two major Halvetî *silsiles* (a form of genealogical chain of authority) that link back to the Prophet Muhammad, written by Mahmud Celaluddin Hulvî (d. 1064/1654) in the first decade of the seventeenth century. In the section of the work devoted to the fifteenth generation of Halvetî leaders since the time of the Prophet and his Companions, Hulvî discussed the activities of İbrahim Zâhid-i Gîlânî (d. 705/1305) and his prominent follower, Safiyyüddîn-i Erdebilî (d. 760/1358). The relationship between the two figures was critical for multiple reasons: most notably, the historical narratives about Safiyyüddîn had come to be reworked by the emergent Safavids of Iran as an eponymous Sufi founder for their Shi'ite dynastic house. This fact did not escape critics of the Halvetî order among the Ottomans, who were prone to unfairly accusing them of Shi'ite sympathies.¹⁸

It becomes clear, however, from a close reading of Hulvî's work that he had only a rudimentary understanding of the history of these figures. We know that the Ottomans had access to a monumental hagiography of the life of Safiyyüddîn, which also treated elements of the personality of his teacher İbrahim, that had been completed by the end of the fourteenth century; at least one of these redactions did not undergo the massive ideological reworking that marked the later Safavid period.¹⁹ Hulvî did draw on narrative elements from this larger hagiography; he relates simple variations on how İbrahim Zâhid sent Safiyyüddîn to the city of Meraga as his successor, and about how Safiyyüddîn came to establish a Sufi lodge in a certain place along the road while performing this task. However, these short accounts are lacking in the rich detail that is to be found in the earlier Persian hagiography by Tavakkulî b. İsmâ'îl b. Bazzâz al-Ardabilî (fl. 759/1358); for example, in the latter's version we receive a more detailed narrative about Safiyyüddîn's encounter with

¹⁷ See, for example, Jamal J. Elias, *The Throne Carrier of God: The Life and Thought of 'Alâ' ad-dawla as-Simnânî* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 4-10.

¹⁸ This accusation, ironically, came to be worked into much of the early literature on the formation of the Halvetî order; see, for example, B.G. Martin, "A Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes," in *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions Since 1500*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), esp. pp. 284-285.

¹⁹ Kathryn Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs: Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 143-145; see also F. Babinger and R.M. Savory, "Safî al-Dîn Ardabilî, Shaykh Abu'l-Fath Ishâk, son of Amîn al-Dîn Djibrâ'il and Dawlatî," *EF*, v. 8, p. 801.

a noted scholar by the name of Mevlana Shams al-Dîn in Meraga upon his arrival that Hulvî does not discuss.²⁰ Since Hulvî's early education background was more limited than his contemporaries, he probably drew, at least initially, on oral recitations of these elements from later-generation shaykhs, who would not convey as many of the broader details that an earlier, fourteenth-century audience might have found relevant.²¹

A second historiographical challenge, however, lies in the didactic character of these hagiographical sources. As noted, the lives of prominent Sufis could often become backdrops for various lessons about the interaction between follower and shaykh, or how to pursue the finer points of the mystical path. Or, as Himmet Konur suggested in his study of one of the founders of a branch of the Halvetî order in Egypt, İbrahim-i Gülşeni (d. 940/1534), "*what İbrahim[-i] Gülşeni was seen as* is as important as *what İbrahim-i Gülşeni was*" [italics Konur's].²² When reading a biographical compilation of Halvetî saints as a whole, rather than extracting just their component parts, there is a sense of repetitive motifs whose characters and scenarios might change, but the message behind them is always formulaically similar. For example, the protection of a shaykh during the travels of one of his followers recurs repeatedly throughout the Halvetî hagiographies. A parade of shaykhs and anonymous informant recount how recourse to the shaykh saved them from a shipwreck, or warned them in advance about dangers to be found on a road, or protects a traveler's life and goods from an attack by bandits. The question then becomes: do these narratives lend any factual information about a shaykh's life and times? In some cases, there is little of substance to be extracted, save examples of didactic strategy that Halvetî authors employed to convince their audiences to respect and obey the Sufi shaykhs among them.

Finally, a third challenge comes in the form of political and structural consolidation of the Halvetî order over the course of the Ottoman period. Narrative structures often come to be intertwined with later political concerns, as when Mahmud Hulvî, writing about the career of Shaykh Pir Ahmed el-Erzincânî (d. after 877/1473), describes how he won over the heart of Sultan Mehmed Fatih while he was negotiating a peace treaty with him on behalf of the defeated Akkoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan (d. 882/1478) after the decisive battle between the two sides at Otlukbeli in 1473. Hulvî is careful to note in his previous biographical essay that Pir Ahmed's shaykh, and later Cemâl el-Halvetî's final guide, Pir Muhammad el-Erzincânî (d. 878/1474) had explicitly warned Uzun Hasan against conflict with the Ottomans; Uzun Hasan only realized his error after his forces had been destroyed. Subsequently, when his dervish Pir Ahmed was sent as an emissary to make peace with the Ottomans, he explicitly stated his wish to avoid conflict between two Muslim sovereigns, and then graciously accepted Mehmed's invitation to come to Istanbul and preach at the Aya

²⁰ Compare Hulvî, pp. 326-327 with Ibn Bazzâz Tavakkul b. Isma'îl, *Safvat al-Safâ'*, ed. Ghulâm Reza Tabâtabâ'î Majd (Ardabil: G. Tabâtabâ'î Majd, 1994), pp. 161-163.

²¹ This seems at least consistent with what we know about Hulvî's life up to the time that the *Lemezât* was compiled; see Mustafa Uzun, "Hulvî, Cemâleddin," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, v. 18, p. 347.

²² Himmet Konur, *İbrâhîm Gülşenî: Hayatı, Eserleri, Tarikatı* (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2000), p. 92.

Sofya mosque as a way of placating him.²³ Since we have no corroborating accounts that discuss the role of Pir Ahmed in these events, questions must be raised about the degree to which this particular account functioned as a legitimizing narrative for later Halvetî leaders and dervishes worried about persecution. The works produced from the sixteenth century onward often reflect defensive responses to various groups within Ottoman society that became increasingly hostile toward their activities.²⁴

Moreover, the very structure of these works often betrays a process of sifting, weighing and consolidation of certain mystics' lives at the expense of others; once again, Mahmud Hulvî's biographical compilation is the most striking example. He claimed to have consulted at least 48 previously existing works, in addition to tapping the oral history preserved by leadership figures in two separate branches of the Halvetî order.²⁵ From this, he constructs a line of prominent mystics and early Muslims stretching back to the Prophet Muhammad and his companions: the work commences with a description of the first four caliphs, the founders of the four major schools of Islamic law, the semi-legendary Persian figure of Salmân al-Fârisî²⁶ and the Prophet's Companion Jâbir al-Ansârî, and a list of the twelve accepted Shi'ite imams. From there, each major figure in the Halvetî chain of shaykhs, starting from the prototypical Sufi figure Hasan al-Basri (d. 110/728) is graced with the title of *lemze*, which is an obscure term for some kind of sweet morsel that likely reflects the Hulvî family's occupational background in the production of sweets. For each of the *lemze*, three "tasters" (*za'ike*) are subsequently discussed as an extension of the master shaykh's career and life. Obviously, this structure takes a rather procrustean approach to the history of Islamic mysticism by forcing various prominent Sufi figures into anachronistic roles, especially in the earlier periods of Sufi history. This does not mean, however, that Hulvî's choices in filling out this structure has nothing to teach us; in fact, his downgrading of prominent figures such as the aforementioned Safiyyüddîn-i Erdebilî (who had come to be tainted with Shi'ite associations in the minds of some) in favor of lesser-known successors.

So must we concede that the origins of the history of Islamic mysticism are obscured by the thicket of chronological, didactic and political concerns that run through the surviving sources? Not necessarily, as long as the accounts of the period are read together as a broader whole. Some things do become clear in regard to the emergence of the Halvetî or-

²³ Hulvî, pp. 412-413 and 418. It should be noted that the death dates given in Hulvî for both Pir Ahmed (870/1465) and his shaykh Muhammad el-Erzincânî (869/1464) cannot be correct if this narrative is to be accepted at face value, and advance additional doubts about the narrative's veracity. On the other hand, we do know that Uzun Hasan was present in the city of Erzincan before and after the battle at Otlukbeli; see C.E. Bosworth and V. Minorsky, "Uzun Hasan b. 'Alî b. Kara Yoluk 'Uthmân," *EF*², v. 10, p. 964.

²⁴ John J. Curry, "The Growth of Turkish Hagiographical Literature Within the Halvetî Order in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *The Turks*, ed. Hasan Celâl Güzel et al. (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2002), v. 3, pp. 912-920.

²⁵ Hulvî, pp. 30-31.

²⁶ A semi-legendary figure associated with the strategies that gave the early Muslim community the victory at the Battle of the Trench, Salmân was later tied to the emergence of the *futuwwet* from the twelfth century onward; see G. Levi Della Vida, "Salmân al-Fârisî or Salmân Pâk," *EF*² suppl., p. 702.

der during the Mongol and post-Mongol eras of Islamic history. First of all, the vast majority of the shaykhs discussed in Hulvî's *Lemezât* and other works as being tied to the Halvetî order tend to be geographically centered in an area that today is located in the modern regions of northwestern Iran and Azerbaijan. Even those figures that lived and worked in areas that lay outside of this geographical region traveled there in order to spend time with prominent Halvetî shaykhs. In addition, the descriptions and activities of these shaykhs frequently evoke rural or village origins, though we should not ignore the fact that these districts were closely tied to urban centers like Tabriz, Meraga or Ardabil.

More importantly, these sources reflect a growing web of interconnections with prominent figures who originated from geographical locations further to the west in what would become the emerging Ottoman domains. As early as the beginning of the fourteenth century, Hulvî's *Lemezât* records that one shaykh, Ahî Yusuf (d. 708/1309), was sent to Niğde to guide the people there.²⁷ Leaving that aside, a more definite pattern emerges with the destructive advent of the conquests of Temür-e Leng on the regions of northwest Iran, Azerbaijan and Anatolia. A number of Halvetî shaykhs who appear in Hulvî's work discuss the impact of Temür's campaigns upon their activities; one of them, Muhammad el-Karsî (d. 803/1401) may have been killed as a direct result of the Timurid invasion of Anatolia.²⁸ More striking, however, is the figure of Ahî Mîrem el-Halvetî (d. 812/1410), a direct descendant in the Halvetî *silsile* from Pîr 'Ömer el-Halvetî (d. 800/1397), a figure widely credited among later Halvetî leaders as having established many of the basic principles that guided the later Ottoman incarnations of the order. Due to the destruction wreaked on the regions by Temür's campaigns, Ahî Mîrem fled to the Anatolian city of Kırşehir, where he lived out the remainder of his life. Even before this event, he seems to have attracted followers from as far afield as Sinop.²⁹ Moreover, the chaotic period of Temür's conquests exposed early Ottoman figures to the Halvetî order in other ways as well; the fate of the Ottoman soldier Baba Resûl-i Rûmî (d. 840/1437) may well indicate a broader trend. A native of the region of Herzegovina who was recruited into the Ottoman army, he was captured by Temür's forces in the wake of Bayezid I's defeat at Ankara in 804/1402, and most likely forced to join Temür's forces in their return to Transoxiana. After Temür's death, he wandered around in the company of Kalenderî dervishes for a time before meeting the Halvetî shaykh İzzeddîn-i Türkmânî (d. 827/1424) in the city of Meraga in northwestern Iran. After İzzeddîn's death, he returned to the Cappadochian city of Niğde to establish a branch of the order there.³⁰

²⁷ Hulvî, p. 330.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 340. As his name suggests, he was born in Kars, and aside from the time spent with his shaykh, Muhammad Khwarizmî (d. 780/1379) in the province of Gilan. According to Hulvî, his contemporary and fellow follower, Kütbüddîn Tebrizî (d. 818/1416), fled to İznik and assisted the population in turning Temür's forces away from the city; however, the defensive tone of Hulvî's account suggests that Kütbüddîn's status as a Halvetî shaykh was contested among his contemporaries. See Hulvî, pp. 341-342.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 357-360; note also the hagiography of Shaykh Pîr Tevekkül Hazretleri (d. 837/1434) on pp. 363-364.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 379-380. The presence of İzzeddîn-i Türkmânî and other Halvetî leaders in the area of northwestern Iran, Azerbaijan and Gilan indicates that not all of the Halvetî notables fled the region as

By the middle of the ninth/fifteenth century, this initial trickle of Halvetî representatives in the region of Anatolia would develop into a flood with the appearance of the formidable Shaykh Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî (d. 869/1465). Sometimes called the "Second Pîr" (*Pîr-i Sâni*), Yahyâ is credited with preparing the text of Halvetî litany of the Vird-i Settâr, which would become a unifying facet of the branches and sub-branches of the order that would spread throughout the Ottoman Empire during the early modern period. His role as a founder of the Ottoman Halvetî may have overstated by later generations: a good example is the debate over the origins of the Halvetî teachings on the *atvâr-ı sab'a* ("seven stages"). The *atvâr-ı sab'a* was a seven-step progression through which each dervish sought to separate himself from vices during the first two stages, while acquiring various virtues of expanding complexity in the third through sixth stages, with the seventh and final stage being the completion of the path.³¹ It seems likely that these types of ideas predated the career of ninth/fifteenth-century figures like Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî, as variants on these types of themes appear in the careers of earlier notable Sufi figures in other traditions as well. In fact, even when defending the role of Yahyâ in creating the tradition, defenders like the late seventeenth-century Halvetî writer Mehmed Nazmî Efendi (d. 1112/1701) were forced to downplay evidence that suggested that primordial Halvetî-*silsile* figures like İbrahim Zâhid-i Gilânî were the true originators.³² His true contribution probably lies in an aggressive expansion of the size of his following and the training of numerous new Halvetî leaders whose careers stemmed from his teaching.³³

In fact, the reason for Yahyâ's aggressive recruitment and building of a following may well have stemmed from tensions within the order in the mid-ninth/fifteenth century surrounding his own guide, Sadrüddîn-i Hıyavî (d. 860/1456). Sadrüddîn was illiterate, a fact which troubled some of his contemporaries; even some of his own followers have been recorded as expressing doubts about his abilities. According to Hulvî, one of his followers from Egypt, a teacher and commentator on the works of İbn al-'Arabî (d. 638/1240) by the name of Muhammad al-Jalvânî, later returned and attempted to claim superiority over his former master by reason of education. Of course, in Hulvî's presentation of the affair, Mu-

a result of the Timurid incursions; the hagiographies make it clear that many of the followers of Ahî Mîrem first bound themselves to him while he was still living in the region, and that they did not depart to the west with him when he went.

31 A more thorough treatment of the *atvâr-ı sab'a* and its manifestations in Halvetî literature and practice, at least in regard to its elaboration under prominent Şa'baniyye thinkers, can be found in the author's dissertation; see John J. Curry, "Transforming Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire: the Case of the Şa'baniyye Order in Kastamonu and Beyond" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: The Ohio State University, 2005), esp. pp. 237-274.

32 Mehmed Nazmî Efendi (d. 1112/1701), *Osmanlılarda Tasavvufî Hayat* BHalvetîlik Örneği: *Hediyetü'l-İhvân* (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2005), p. 329.

33 B. G. Martin's article on the Ottoman Halvetî, which drew on earlier research by the German scholar H. J. Kissling, argued that the real foundation of the Halvetî order should be traced to Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî on the basis of his movement-building activities rather than the *halvet*-centric activities of Pîr 'Ömer. Given the tenor and narrative content of the hagiographies discussed in this article, I am not convinced that Yahyâ's activities should be viewed as a fixed starting point for the trends under discussion. See Martin, pp. 276-277.

hammad al-Jalvânî suffered a terrible fate.³⁴ Yet leaving the supernatural elements aside, such tensions may have reflected the growing sophistication of the emerging Akkoyunlu dynasty, which would become home to a number of prominent scholars. Hulvî's discussion of Sadrüddîn and his contemporaries betrays further evidence of a gap between the older generation of Halvetî leaders who struggled through the turbulence of the late eighth/ fourteenth and early ninth/fifteenth century and later generations who had begun to recover a greater sense of stability and revival of older traditions of Islamic scholarship.

Sadrüddîn's own son-in-law, Shaykh Pîrzâde (d. after 860/1456)³⁵, who was the son of his own guide İzzeddîn-i Türkmânî, illustrates the tension in a backhanded way. Pîrzâde's life might be interpreted as representing the Melâmî tradition in Sufism, in which the mystic goes around behaving in the worst possible way to draw reprobation upon himself from the community and thereby discipline his carnal soul and gain a sense of humility.³⁶ Out of love of a beautiful woman, he fell into a dissolute life drinking in the taverns of Tabriz, and even corrupted one of his father's dervishes who had been sent to try and rescue him. Finally, the Akkoyunlu authorities got involved in the affair when Kara Halil Beg's brother and governor Muhammad Beg came at the request of İzzeddîn himself to confront the wayward son. But Pîrzâde turned the tables on them when they arrived at the tavern where his was drinking with his companions:

O Father, may the government of the world be increased. [But] why are you shaming me? For the love of the majesty of a beautiful one, we have left our struggles, our asceticism, our worship, in short the breath of eloquence (nefs-i nâtika). Why are people acting hypocritically for the councils and boon companions of the rulers? They try to obtain this through charms and spells.... See that, even though he was not invited, the governor of the city and ruler of the time came to this tavern which is our council. They find my conduct unsuitable and outside [the bounds of] etiquette. But your governor and emir doesn't let the drinking-cup fall from his hand any day or night. He doesn't lift his head a moment from the heart enjoying beloved things. When those who are the rulers are in this state, why shouldn't the subjects see it as proper?

After hearing these words, not only did Muhammad Beg repent of his sins, but the entire population of the tavern who heard them also repented, and according to the narrative, became "drunk with the divine love" in place of the wine they were drinking before. Pîrzâde concluded by saying to his father:

"O my respected father, you came and went to the mosques for seventy years, how many sermons you preached, but it influenced no one! You came to

³⁴ Hulvî, p. 382-383. See also the case of Pîr İlyâs, discussed subsequently on p. 21 of this article.

³⁵ Hulvî's information on dates of death for these figures cannot be taken as reliable in a number of cases; in this case, he gives Pîrzâde's date of death as 856/1451, some four to five years before that of his father-in-law Sadrüddîn. However, in another part of the work he suggests a conflict between Pîrzâde and some of his father's followers after his death.

³⁶ For background on the Melâmî tradition, see F. de Jong, Hamid Algar, and C.H. Imber, "Malâmatiyya," *EF*, v. 6, p. 223.

the tavern once, it was the cause of so many people's attaining the path of guidance and teaching, and their repentance."³⁷

After Sadrüddîn's death, a schism opened up between the followers of Pîrzâde and the emerging figure of Seyyid Yahyâ-yî Şîrvânî. If the general tenor of Hulvî's narrative is accepted, one could see why some of Sadrüddîn's followers might have had reservations about Pîrzâde given his dissolute background and his challenges to his own father, who only commended him to his successor Sadrüddîn later in life, in part through marriage to his daughter. Pîrzâde seems to have sought and obtained the official successorship position in the order by reason of his strong family connections; and the politics surrounding this process imposed enough pressure to force Seyyid Yahyâ to break away from the order and flee to the remote area of Baku on the Caspian Sea. His drive to build a large following, therefore, may have been tied to a political, as well as spiritual competition with the son-in-law of his guide. While later accounts that exaggerate his followers and successors as numbering in the thousands might not be taken literally³⁸, the near-universal presence of Anatolian followers that Hulvî includes in his hagiography from this point forward indicates a critical turning point in the movement of the Halvetî from their geographical regions of origin into the framework of the expanding Ottoman Empire by the end of the fifteenth century.

Ironically, but perhaps not surprisingly, the process of succession to a new set of leaders after Seyyid Yahyâ's death proved to be a contested one along the same lines. Separate narratives discussing the careers of Pîr Şükrullah Halife (d. after 868/1465)³⁹ and Yusuf Maḥdûm (d. 890/1485), the ostensible founder of the Ottoman Sivasîyye branch of the Halvetî order clash over the legitimacy of the succession to each. Muhammad Nazmî Efendi preserves an argument in favor of Yusuf Maḥdûm that suggests that Yahyâ viewed him as being like his son. Hulvî's account of Pîr Şükrullah, however, invokes a counter-narrative that states that Pîr Şükrullah went on the pilgrimage to get away from the troubles incumbent on the struggle, only to learn in a dream from Seyyid Yahyâ that "his son" had been "sacrificed" so that Şükrullah could take his place!⁴⁰ Interestingly, Hulvî's branch of the order solved the problem by framing the true succession as devolving upon what seemed to be an otherwise unlikely provincial successor to Yahyâ, a man by the name of Muhammad el-Erzincânî (d. 869/1465). Nevertheless, the geographical shift embodied in this move proves indicative of an integration into a new milieu that was much closer to the hearts of Mahmud Hulvî's contemporaries. After all, it would be through his connections with Muhammad el-Erzincânî and his followers that Cemâl el-Halvetî's life and career would take on a clearer form.

³⁷ The full account of these events can be found in Hulvî, p. 388.

³⁸ See, for example, Sinaneddin b. Yusuf b. Ya'kub (d. 1581), *Tezkiretü'l-Halvetîyye* (Istanbul: Süleymaniye Lib. MS Esad Efendi 1372/1), fol. 8b-9a; Mecdî, p. 277; Hulvî, p. 398; and Martin, p. 278.

³⁹ Once again, Hulvî's dates of death for Pîr Şükrullah do not match up with the narratives connected with him; he gives the date of death as 868/1464 which would be before the death of Yahyâ and would not have allowed him to contest the succession.

⁴⁰ Compare the accounts in Nazmî, pp. 256-260 to Hulvî, pp. 403-404; the preservation of the tension and rhetoric surrounding the conflict is especially striking.

Intersections of the Halvetî order and the Ottoman Empire in the life of Cemâl el-Halvetî

The Ottoman Halvetî leader Cemâl el-Halvetî, who was also known by the moniker "Çelebi Halife," has been recognized as a pivotal figure in expanding the following of the Halvetî Sufi order from its eastern Anatolian strongholds into the rising Ottoman state of the fifteenth century.⁴¹ He would go on to found an influential branch of the Halvetî order in the Ottoman capital of Istanbul known as the Cemâliyye, named after himself, and multiple sub-branches of the Halvetî order, tracing their spiritual lineage back to his leadership, appeared throughout the Empire in the century following his death.⁴² Other members of his extended family would also come to be tied in with both the Ottoman state and the Halvetî order, including such luminaries such as his two uncles; the future Ottoman *şeyhülislâm* Zenbillî 'Alî Efendi (d. 932/1525), and the noted teacher of calligraphy to Mehmed II, and fellow Halvetî shaykh, İshak-ı Karamânî (d. 933/1526). Descendants in Cemâl el-Halvetî's family tree also included Cemâl's nephew Pirî Paşa (d. 939/1532), who subsequently became Sultan Selim I's grand vizier.⁴³ Given these connections with some of the future elite figures of the Ottoman state might lead us to think that Cemâl el-Halvetî was in an excellent position to contribute to the rise of the Halvetî in the Ottoman realm. Yet it must not be forgotten that Cemâl el-Halvetî's origins in the regions ruled by the Karamanids may not have initially endeared him to the centers of Ottoman power, and the trajectory of his life and career must be examined more closely to understand how he became such a pivotal figure in both Ottoman and Sufi mystical history.

Interestingly, the sources are not necessarily in full agreement about the outlines of his early life and career. Hulvî explained that he initially began his Sufi training under a shaykh of the Zeyniyye order based in Bursa, Hacı Halife Kastamonî (d. 895/1489).⁴⁴ This is not the first time that an interaction or tension with the Zeyniyye order can be detected in Hulvî's narration. An earlier set of anecdotes about a Halvetî figure by the name of Pîr İlyâs el-Amâsî (d. 837/1434), a follower of Seyyid Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî's teacher Sadrüddîn-i Hıyavî (d. 860/1455), describes how he became troubled by his shaykh's illiteracy after he returned to Amasya to establish the order's teaching there, and resolved to leave his post to set out for Transoxiana to meet with Zeyneddîn Hâfî (d. 838/1435), whose fame had just begun to reach the communities of Anatolia and who would later gain recognition as the

⁴¹ An early example of Turkish scholar research into Cemâl el-Halvetî and some of his successors is that of Tahsin Yazıcı, "Fetih'ten Sonra İstanbul'da İlk Halvetî Şeyhleri: Çelebi Muhammad Cemaleddin, Sümbül Sinan ve Merkez Efendi." *İstanbul Enstitüsü Dergisi* 2 (1956), pp. 87-111.

⁴² Reşat Öngören, *Osmanlılar'da Tasavvuf: Anadolu'da Sûfîler, Devlet ve Ulemâ (XVI. Yüzyıl)* (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2000), p. 42. Some of these sub-branches deriving from Cemâl's leadership, such as the Sümbüliyye of Istanbul, extend well into the twentieth century; see the detailed *silsile* laid out by Nazif Velikâhyaoğlu, *Sümbüliyye Tarikatı ve Kocamustafapaşa Külliyesi* (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1999), pp. 173-238.

⁴³ For more on the various members of the Cemâlî family in Ottoman history, see the aforementioned work of Küçükdağ, *II. Bayezid, Yavuz ve Kanûnî Devirlerinde Cemâlî Ailesi*.

⁴⁴ Hulvî, p. 428.

ostensible founder of the Zeyniyye.⁴⁵ However, this part of Hulvî's narrative is not corroborated by earlier sources from figures contemporary with Cemâl el-Halvetî's life and career; both Taşköprüzâde and Lâmi'î Çelebi claim that he initially joined the following of 'Alâuddîn el-Halvetî (d. 867/1462), but could not complete his study with him before his death; they make no mention of any connection with any of the followers of the Zeyniyye order.⁴⁶

Be this as it may, it is also worth noting that though the sources agree on the role of 'Alâuddîn el-Halvetî in the early life and career of Cemâl el-Halvetî, the former was not an uncontroversial figure in Ottoman circles. All three sources, in other biographical entries unrelated to Cemâl el-Halvetî, note his troubled relationship with the early sultanate of Mehmed II during the 1450s, in which he initially preached in Edirne, but later left for the Ottomans' Karamanid adversaries after falling under suspicion at the Ottoman court. Hulvî offers the fullest description of these events, and suggests that tensions over Halvetî ritual among some of the Ottoman *'ulema* were responsible for the tension.⁴⁷ In any case, the connection to 'Alâuddîn el-Halvetî makes sense in the context of Cemâl el-Halvetî's later career path; he was one of the many successors of Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî and would have offered the young Cemâl an introduction to some of the basic principles of the Halvetî order. It is also not outside the realm of possibility that, as Hulvî suggests, Cemâl experimented with the teachings of other orders as well before settling on the Halvetî teachers as the most suitable for himself.

After the death of his shaykh (or shaykhs), he left the Karamanid centers of his youth for undetermined reasons and moved northward to settle in the area of the modern-day city of Tokat. Here, he began to work with another Halvetî shaykh, whom we know only by the name Tâhîrzâde. Tâhîrzâde, much like some of his aforementioned Halvetî predecessors, was an illiterate Türkman shaykh who seems to have inclined more to a pastoral than an urban existence. He often went out into the wilderness to hunt, and in the course of these trips, made his followers remain for long periods in isolated places. Once, according to Cemâl's own account, he nearly died from hunger because his shaykh refused to end one of these long periods of isolation without food or water, despite the fact that all of his followers save Cemâl had disobeyed his orders and departed to seek sustenance. While Cemâl's courage and perseverance may have earned the respect of his stern taskmaster, he ultimately benefitted little from it in the practical sense, as Tâhîrzâde died shortly thereafter.⁴⁸ Cemâl then decided that rather than seek out yet another shaykh in the cities and towns of

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 383 and 393-394. For more on Zeyneddîn Hâfî's activities under the Timurids and the spread of his order from Herat, see Reşat Öngören, *Tarihte Bir Aydın Tarikatı Zeyniler* (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2003), pp. 14-23.

⁴⁶ Mecdî, p. 284; Lâmi'î Çelebi (d. 933/1532), *Nefahâtü'l-Üns: Evliyâ Menkıbeleri*, ed. Süleyman Ulu-dağ and Mustafa Kara, 2nd ed. (İstanbul: Marifet Yayınları, 1998), p. 706.

⁴⁷ Hulvî, p. 407-408. See also Lâmi'î Çelebi, p. 704 (where the name is mistakenly given as 'Alî Halvetî) and Mecdî, p. 281.

⁴⁸ Lâmi'î Çelebi, pp. 706-707. Lâmi'î met Cemâl el-Halvetî at least once and likely had access to sources who could relate Cemâl's accounts, if not Cemâl himself, see p. 707.

central Anatolia, he would travel far to the east to seek guidance from the most noted Halvetî leader of his time: the aforementioned Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî of Baku.

However, Cemâl's plan to join this distinguished group was not to be realized. On the way to Baku, he passed through the eastern Anatolian city of Erzincan, and encountered Muhammad el-Erzincânî (d. 878/1474), one of Yahyâ's successors.⁴⁹ Their initial meeting did not strike a chord with Cemâl, but the older and wiser Erzincânî tacitly implied that Cemâl would soon return to him nonetheless. When Cemâl continued his journey in the direction of Baku, he was informed by travelers two or three days' journey from Erzincan that the great Yahyâ had recently died. Recognizing Erzincânî's spiritual power in being able to predict this event in advance, Cemâl then returned to acclaim him as his chosen shaykh.

However, it is interesting that at this point in the narrative, our first discrepancy appears in the various sources that discuss Cemâl's life. One of Cemâl's subsequent Halvetî hagiographers, writing a century after these events, explained that Cemâl had, in fact, arrived in Baku itself, but only the day after Yahyâ's death and burial. After deciding to sleep at the foot of the newly-built grave in hope of gaining additional guidance on the next steps to take, Cemâl saw a vision of Yahyâ commanding him to return to Erzincân to complete his training with Muhammad el-Erzincânî instead, so Cemâl returned there.⁵⁰ This type of narrative most likely reflected later concerns within the order over those who questioned the legitimacy of the Halvetî path. Some accused the order and its leaders of having their origins in a milieu that came to be dominated by Safavid Persia shortly after Cemâl's death. The narrative may also seek to reinforce Cemâl's Halvetî pedigree by linking him directly to the spiritual founder of the Halvetî order, rather than linking into the chain of authority solely through one of his lesser-known followers. It is notable that Muhammad el-Erzincânî goes largely unmentioned in the biographical works of both Lâmi'î Çelebi and Taşköprüzâde, a fact that may reflect his obscurity.⁵¹

Regardless, Cemâl el-Halvetî's career would ultimately outshine that of his lesser-known master. At some point around the time of Erzincânî's death in 1474, Cemâl was sent to Amasya as his successor. Probably due to his connections with the influential Cemâlî family, who at this time had prominent members in Konya, Amasya and Egypt, Cemâl subsequently became one of the many notables that caught the attention of the court of the governor of Amasya and future sultan, Bayezid II. One source suggests that he was granted

⁴⁹ Once again, Hulvî's dating continues to be unreliable in his entry with Muhammad el-Erzincânî, as he gives the date of death as identical with that of Yahyâ-yı Şîrvânî, which would not have left much time for guiding Cemâl el-Halvetî given the tenor of this narrative. Given Cemâl el-Halvetî's appearance in Amasya by the mid-1470s, the terminal date of 1474 is more accepted.

⁵⁰ Sinaneddin b. Yusuf b. Ya'kub (d. 1581), *Tezkiretül-Halvetîyye*, fol. 11a. Compare this to the simpler narrative that Cemâl simply heard about Yahyâ's death two days' journey from Erzincan, and thus returned, in Lâmi'î Çelebi, p. 707.

⁵¹ See, for example, Martin, "A Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes," pp. 277-279 and 284-285. It is also worth noting that Mecdî Efendi's translation of Taşköprüzâde's biographical dictionary of Ottoman 'ulema refers to Cemâl's teacher only very briefly as "Mevlana Pirî," suggesting that he was not well-known among later circles of Ottoman intellectuals; Mecdî, p. 285.

a position in the Hoca Sultan Tekke after it was built by Şemseddîn Ahmed Çelebi, one of Bayezid II's tutors, in 1475.⁵² As noted in the case of Pîr İlyâs el-Amâsî, previous Halvetî shaykhs had established knowledge of the order in the region, and Cemâl found fertile ground for his activities. Perhaps via his connections with the tutor Şemseddîn Ahmed, he became increasingly tied to the Şehzade Bayezid's court in Amasya.

It is worth pausing here for a moment to consider what our sources do not openly discuss, which is the historical context in which Cemâl's early career and training as a leader of the Halvetî order took place. In the course of his career that we have examined so far, he had moved between the fluid boundaries that defined several different political entities in the region. He had started his career within the weakened structure of the Karamanid Beylik that would fall victim to Ottoman-Mamluk intrigues after 1468; many of his closest family connections lay within that region. He was also linked, however tacitly, with the following of a shaykh, 'Alâuddîn el-Halvetî, who had broken with the Ottoman state and chosen to live instead in the land of one of their rivals. Yet by the end of his work with Muhammad el-Erzincânî, he had shifted his reference point to that of a figure settled on the margins of an Ottoman prince's court in Amasya, much further to the north.

A third boundary that Cemâl and his contemporaries would have contemplated during this time was that of the great Akkoyunlu expanse that stretched from eastern Anatolia off into Iran and the east. In fact, during the time of Cemâl's training with Tâhirzâde and Erzincânî, the power of the Akkoyunlu Sultanate under the formidable figure of Uzun Hasan had been rolled back by their defeat near Erzincan in 1473. As seen previously in the hagiographical accounts of both Muhammad el-Erzincânî and his follower Pîr Ahmed, the Halvetî leadership may have played roles in mediating the conflict and the eventual concessions that were made to Sultan Mehmed II. The memory of these contemporary shifts in the political balance, and the growing military expansion of the Ottomans under Sultan Mehmed II may have influenced Cemâl's thinking about the future of his order. He also held an advantage in this rapidly-changing environment by being an ideal recruit for the cause of any Ottoman elite figure. He was able to straddle the uneasy divide between the newly-annexed Karamanid (1468) and Akkoyunlu (1473) provinces and populations and the Ottoman rulers, having lived and worked in both of them before their integration into Ottoman domains. Moreover, as Mehmed II begin to show his age, the succession struggle between his sons, especially Bayezid and Cem, began to heat up in the latter half of the 1470s just as he entered the scene. It is worth noting that Bayezid's court in Amasya was counterbalanced by that of his brother Cem in Konya in the heart of the newly-conquered Karamanid lands.

A substantial number of sources that give biographical information about Cemâl el-Halvetî stress his participation in the events that would catapult Bayezid II to the Ottoman throne in the wake of his father's death in 1481. Leaving aside the hagiographical sources, Ottoman histories note that Sultan Mehmed II's grand vizier, Mehmed Paşa (d. 885/1481),

⁵² Hüseyin Hüsameddin Abdizâde, *Amasya Tarihi* (İstanbul: Dersaadet Necm-i İstikbal Matbaası, 1330/1912), vol. I, p. 230-231; see also Öngören, *Osmanlılar'da Tasavvuf*, p. 44.

had sided with Bayezid's brother and rival, Cem Sultan, and was working to undermine Bayezid's position with his father at the court in Istanbul in the latter years of his reign. According to the hagiographies, Bayezid sent an emissary to Cemâl el-Halvetî to seek his blessing in the hopes of countering Mehmed Paşa's activities against him. At this point, it is interesting to note the intersection and tension once again between the Halvetî and Zeyniyye orders, for multiple accounts stress that Mehmed Paşa always wore a magic-square talisman (*vefk*) to protect himself, which had been drawn up for him by a prominent Zeyniyye leader, Shaykh Vefâ (d. 896/1491).⁵³ Cemâl warned Bayezid that he could not directly challenge the spiritual power of such a notable Sufî as Shaykh Vefâ, but that if the Sultan would wait for thirty-three days, an important event would take place that might help in resolving his problems. In accord with Cemâl's advice, news of Sultan Mehmed II's death arrived at the court in Amasya after one month, and the various contenders to the throne began to mobilize their forces for the succession struggle. During the critical days of preparation that followed, the vizier Mehmed Paşa accidentally rubbed off some of the writing on his *vefk* talisman, and had to give it to one of Shaykh Vefâ's dervishes for repair. After relinquishing this protection, however, the janissaries rose up and murdered the unfortunate Mehmed Paşa, clearing the way for Bayezid's eventual accession to the throne and the flight of his brother Cem into exile.⁵⁴

Leaving aside the miraculous, albeit well-known and widespread story of the damaged talisman, however, the sources also suggest that Cemâl el-Halvetî's contribution to Bayezid's victory may have had a more practical and political side to it as well, in that Cemâl likely had the connections within the circles of mystics and *'ulema* in the region of Karaman who might be persuaded to rethink their support for Cem and his partisans. Cemâl was a natural choice for Bayezid to help advance his cause in this way. With his family connections and years of travel in the regions of the former Karamanid provinces, his connections to the region were most likely still strong. Still, this did not mean that Cemâl's work on behalf of Bayezid met with immediate success, and some hagiographies indicate this by a curious set of references to a set of supernatural encounters.

Hagiographical sources that discuss the issue naturally raise skepticism on account of the otherworldly context in which the debate between Cemâl el-Halvetî and his Karamanid counterparts takes place. Yet given the conjunction of factors related above, it may indicate a very real process of assistance that Cemâl rendered on behalf of Bayezid in reaching out to potentially hostile religious figures on the other side of the only recently-consolidated internal frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. The narrative goes on to relate that after acquiescing to Bayezid's pleas for help, Cemâl entered the unseen world and sought out the Karamanid shaykhs to try and turn them against the plans of Cem Sultan and his

⁵³ For an extended discussion of the life and career of Shaykh Vefâ that includes a discussion of this anecdote and Vefâ's relations with Sultan Mehmed II and Sultan Bayezid II, see Reşat Öngören, *Tarihte Bir Aydın Tarikatı Zeyniler* (Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2003), pp. 130-154.

⁵⁴ This narrative appears in the *Tezkiretü'l-Halvetiyye*, fols. 11a-12a; and Lami'i Çelebi, pp. 707-708; and Gelibolulu Mustafa 'Ali, (d. 1011/1601) *Künhü'l-ahbar* (Istanbul: Süleymaniye Lib., MS Es'ad Efendi 2612), fols. 177b-178a.

vizier. However, his initial attempt to sway them was unsuccessful, and the Karamanid shaykhs responded by throwing flaming embers at him. Cemâl escaped this initial otherworldly encounter unscathed; sadly, he also witnessed that one of his daughters was hit with an ember during his visions in the world of the unseen. Two days later, the young girl contracted a high fever and died.

Despite this devastating setback, Cemâl once again relented to Bayezid's pleas for continued assistance, and once again confronted his tormentors. This time, he was more aggressive in his approach. Accusing the Karamanid religious elites of supporting an oppressor, he pointed out that Mehmed Paşa had, as vizier, refused to respect the inviolability of the pious foundations (*vakıflar*) under his administration, and instead had confiscated a number of them for the royal treasury in order to help pay for Sultan Mehmed II's campaigns. This argument may well tie into the deep and growing unpopularity of Mehmed II's incessant military activity by the closing years of his reign, and could reflect a highly successful argument that was employed to win the support of Sufis and scholars alike in undermining Cem's candidacy for the throne.⁵⁵ According to the hagiographies, the persuasiveness of Cemâl's arguments led all of the shaykhs, albeit with the notable exception of the Zeyniyye leader Shaykh Vefâ, to withdraw their support from Cem and his vizier.⁵⁶

The story raises a number of questions about the role that the Sufi leaders like Cemâl el-Halvetî and Shaykh Vefâ played in the succession struggle that followed the death of Mehmed II. The central role that these events played in the various narratives about Cemâl's life indicate that his contemporaries saw him as an important player in the events of the succession. After all, the original source of the aforementioned anecdote come from Tâcizâde Ca'fer Çelebi (d. 920/1514), who served as both an Ottoman *kaz'asker* and the keeper of the royal seal (*nişancı*).⁵⁷ Despite the otherworldly aspects of the narratives surrounding Cemâl's participation in the events in question, it seems that he played at least some role in helping Bayezid's partisans undermine Cem's support in the region of his base. In addition, the dispute over the pious foundations can be corroborated by other historical sources as an important element in the outcome of the struggle. Many of the religious scholars, Sufî or otherwise, depended on these types of revenues for the support of their institutions and families.⁵⁸ The ramifications of Shaykh Vefâ's "defeat" at the hands of the Halvetî leader, however, is not so clear; in fact, this conflict may have something to do with the reasons why Hulvî and his contemporaries introduced a narrative component

⁵⁵ For a revisionist view on the activities of Mehmed II in regard to pious foundations and the question of unpopular fiscal reforms in the years before his death, see Oktay Özel, "Limits of the Almighty: Mehmed II's 'Land Reform' Revisited," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42: 2 (1999), pp. 226-246.

⁵⁶ Mecdî Mehmed Efendi, *Hadâ'iku's-şakâ'ik*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989), p. 285; see also a similar variant of this tale in Hulvî, p. 432.

⁵⁷ *Nefehâtü'l-Üns*, p. 707.

⁵⁸ See, for example, the remarks of Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The Structure of Power* (London: Palgrave, 2002), p. 37; Halil İnalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Phoenix Press, 1973), p. 30; this interpretation has also been suggested by Küçükdağ, p. 22.

that suggested Cemâl el-Halvetî was initially a devotee of the Zeyniyye order. Halvetî narratives compiled nearly a century after the event seem at pains to emphasize that there was a reconciliation between the two saintly figures later in Istanbul, where they had both migrated in the aftermath of Bayezid's accession to the throne. However, a recent study of the Zeyniyye order notes that Shaykh Vefâ frequently rejected Sultan Bayezid's attempts to meet with him or invite him to prominent functions. While an avoidance of political connections is often invoked in Sufi teachings, given the existence of such connections as a matter of course in other context, it is not outside the realm of possibility that Vefâ's earlier position in the succession struggle may have been a source of political tension even years after the succession struggle had been decided.⁵⁹

The victory of Sultan Bayezid paved the way for the Halvetî to become one of the most prominent orders in the Ottoman Empire. Following good Sufi doctrine, the hagiographies indicate that Cemâl el-Halvetî and his followers were initially hesitant about their new patron's entreaties to join him in the capital. Only after a number of years did Cemâl and his followers eventually make the journey, and in gratitude for their arrival, they were given the area occupied by a former Christian church. Cemâl and his followers subsequently converted this structure into a mosque (known today as the Sünbül Efendi mosque in the southwestern district of old Istanbul) under the direction of Bayezid's grand vizier Koca Mustafa Paşa.⁶⁰ Although Cemâl later died on the pilgrimage at some point during the 1490s, an event which may have been tied to outbreak of plague, the activities of himself and his successors would guarantee a long and prosperous future for the Halvetî order in the Ottoman domains.

One final source for Cemâl el-Halvetî's life and times remains untapped, and that is his scholarly writings, which survive in a number of manuscripts. Perhaps the best known of these is the *Risâlah fî tahqîq al-wudû' al-bâtinî* ("Treatise on the Explanation of the Inner Ritual Ablution"), in which Cemâl re-interprets the ritual process of washing before prayers into a mystical framework aimed at cleansing the heart and spirit, as opposed to just the body.⁶¹ Other writings suggest an intersection between his mystical teachings and the philosophical and theological heritage to which he was an heir, such as a commentary on Avicenna's theological ideas.⁶² Although our sources on his life and personality stress his use of Turkish, what stands out about his surviving intellectual production is its universal use of Arabic and Persian as the language of choice. In addition, a basic knowledge of the canon of Islamic religious and theological tradition is often assumed. This suggests that

⁵⁹ Öngören, *Zeyniler*, p. 140-143.

⁶⁰ For more on the history of this structure, see Ayvansarâyî, pp. 220-227.

⁶¹ The best preserved copy is Cemal el-Halvetî (d. 905/1499), *Risâlah fî tahqîq al-wuzû' al-bâtinî* (Istanbul: Atatürk Kitaplığı Lib., MS Osman Ergin 1683/1); its continuing influence throughout the Ottoman period is attested to by its translation into Turkish; see Veliyüddîn Maraşî Emirzâde, *Vuzû'-ı bâtinî ve gusul hakkında risâle* (Istanbul: Atatürk Kitaplığı Lib., MS Osman Ergin 1740).

⁶² See, for example, the survival of a commentary on Avicenna's theology; Cemâl el-Halvetî (d. 900/1494 or 905/1499), *Şarh kalâm İbn Sînâ* (Bursa: Bursa Eski Eserler Lib., MS Genel 1460/3). Unfortunately, due to bureaucratic obstacles at the time research was being carried out, I was unable to examine the manuscripts in which these sources can be found.

the inner circle of Cemâl's followers, to whom these texts were most likely addressed, was most likely a scholarly and intellectual class of people familiar with the basic outlines of the Islamic historiographical tradition in their original languages. While this does not preclude a body of more casual, Turkish-speaking followers in his proximity, it does suggest that he viewed a basic knowledge of the Arabo-Persian linguistic heritage of Islam as being a necessary pre-qualification to advance to the more complex teachings of the Halvetî order. His successor, the well-known Sünbül Sinân Efendi (d. 936/1529), left a limited number of works for posterity, but it is telling that the best known one, the *Risâlat al-tahqîqiyyah* dealing with a defense of the Halvetî practices of the *semâ'* and *devrân*, was written in Arabic and only later translated into Turkish, often in a much-abridged format.⁶³ Only in the mid-sixteenth century would a movement toward greater accessibility in Turkish to the teachings of the order, at least in written form, become a priority for the successors of Cemâl el-Halvetî in Istanbul and elsewhere.⁶⁴

Conclusion

The available sources suggest that Cemâl el-Halvetî did, in fact, play an important role in the political events of his times, and that his branch of the order benefitted substantially from his activities. Still, a tacit failure to integrate the hagiographical elements of Cemâl's life directly into the broader framework of Ottoman historical recollection during the events of Bayezid's sultanate still raises questions about the value of hagiography as a historical source. For example, the story of Cemâl el-Halvetî's contribution to the accession of Bayezid II usually appears in the biographical notices of prominent people contained at the end of the reigns of the Ottoman rulers in Mustafa 'Alî's *Künhü'l-Ahbâr*.⁶⁵

The narratives that claim to explain the personalities and events that led to the origin of the Halvetî order in the region of Azerbaijan and northwestern Iran are not without their problems and difficulties on account of chronological gaps, or didactic, literary and ideological strategies. Yet this survey of some of the works that preserve this literature suggests that such accounts can still be set within a broader framework to elicit important information about the evolution of Islamic mysticism between the Mongol conquests and the rise of the Ottomans that allowed Cemâl el-Halvetî to seize the moment and inject the mystical traditions of those regions into the Ottoman context. The origins of the Halvetî order were accompanied by critical tensions that had to be worked out over time. These included conflicts between the followers and their own leaders; or between Sufi shaykhs contesting for the mantle of authority left by a deceased mentor. It could also include tensions inherent in the activities of some Halvetî notables in support of rulers who were clearly opposed to the Ottomans during the period of their expansion. Finally, there were signs of growing

⁶³ A facsimile and translation of this document can be found in Yusuf Sünbül Sinân (d. 936/1529), *Sünbül Efendi: Risâle-i Tahkîkiyye*, ed. Müfti Yüksel and Ali Toker (Istanbul: Fulya Yayınları, 2001); for a full accounting of the various manuscript copies of Sünbül Efendi's letter, see the dissertation of Curry, "Transforming Muslim Mystical Thought," pp. 405-406.

⁶⁴ Curry, "Growth of Turkish Hagiographical Literature," pp. 912-918.

⁶⁵ Gelibolulu Mustafa 'Alî, *Künhü'l-Ahbâr*, fols. 177b-178a.

tension between the mysticism of the Sufi shaykhs and those who were skeptical of their powers, or even felt they engaged in heretical practices. Even a formidable Halvetî figure like Cemâl el-Halvetî was not immune from this final set of tensions; he engaged in a running conflict with a jurist by the name of Molla Vâ'iz 'Arab over the legitimacy of Halvetî practices.⁶⁶ Moreover, his teacher Muhammad el-Erzincânî reportedly died during an earthquake that destroyed the mosque in which he and some of his followers were staying. The hagiographer Mahmud Hulvî took great pains to rework this unfortunate event into a paradigm of the great shaykh sacrificing his own life, along with seven of his most trusted followers, to avert the destruction of God's wrath upon the rest of the population. When skeptics questioned whether a chosen one of God would have really been killed in such a manner after their bodies had been recovered from the wreckage, disembodied voices sternly rebuked them from beyond the grave.⁶⁷

The existence of these tensions and tradition within the order clearly influence the historiography that they produced. Nevertheless, what makes the Halvetî tradition interesting is the degree to which they do not seek to repress or strike out potentially embarrassing or inconvenient parts of their legacy, but seek to explain them away instead. This process is of great potential value for the historian; notably we can gain glimpses at a distant historical past from a post-Mongol historical period that is difficult to recover. Yet even when they cannot do so, historians can also examine the strategies and tactics that a later generation of Ottoman thinkers, who had inherited the order's old tensions in addition to confronting new threats, chose to present their historical legacy to defend it from internal opposition.

⁶⁶ See the discussion of Molla 'Arab's interactions with the early Halvetî order in Curry, "Transforming Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire," pp. 283-289.

⁶⁷ Hulvî, pp. 413-415. It is also noteworthy that these accounts are followed by an amusing narrative of how Erzincânî's tombstone attacked and killed a Kızılbaş leader who tried to wreck his tomb!