

Autobiographical Elements in the Book “Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī fī Fayḍ Sīdī Abī al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī” by ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm

Dr. Raziqa Rouigui

Faculty of letteres and languages, Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi university Tebessa, Algeria

Email: raziqa.rouigi@univ-tebessa.dz

Received: 03/03/2025 ; Accepted : 01/08/2025 ; Published : 07/12/2025

Abstract

The Sufi movement in Algeria was flourishing during the Ottoman era and spread widely, recording some of the most illustrious names among Sufi orders. Perhaps the most prominent figures as the scholar Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī (d. 1230 AH), the founding father of the Tijānīya order in the region. His book “Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī” is considered the most important source for his Sufi order, and one of his most important scholarly works. It falls within the circle of Sufi biography, for the book was dictated by Shaykh al-Tijānī, which places it within the sphere of Sufi biography, while it was written down and compiled by his disciple, the eminent ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm, which makes it intersect with the data of biography written by another. From here came our scholarly article, which traces the features of autobiography in this exceptional book by focusing on the fragrant life of the Shaykh and the most important stations of his journey in the world of Sufism and spiritual ecstasy.

Keywords: autobiography; Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī; Sufism; unveiling; miracles.

Introduction

Algeria witnessed a broad Sufi religious movement during successive historical periods as many countries, from which emerged a constellation of scholars and ascetics who contributed to improving morals, spreading the teachings of religion, and rejecting deviation and manifestations of disobedience. Thus, “no two people differ regarding the important role Algeria played in enriching the Sufi experience in the Islamic world, and its contributions in this field are no less than those of major Islamic countries such as Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, and other countries that had an active and important role in founding this knowledge, theorizing it, adding to it, developing it, and serving it” (Abdelmoneim , 2005, p. 08). It is worth mentioning that the enrichment of Sufi life in Algeria was not restricted to its own scholars who were born and raised there, but also included those who came to it from different lands, as well as those who settled there for varying periods of time. (Abdelmoneim , 2005, p. 09)

If we return to the history of Sufism in Algeria and the Maghreb in general, we find that most Sufi roots extended to before the tenth century AH. Algeria witnessed a remarkable abundance of ascetics and Sufi men before the coming of the Ottomans, such as ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Tha‘ālibī,

Muḥammad al-Hawwārī, Ibrāhīm al-Tāzī, and Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī, among others. This indicates the flourishing of the Sufi movement in the Islamic world and the Arab Maghreb before the arrival of the Ottomans in Algeria. (Abu al-Qasim , 1998, p. 459)

With the advent of the Ottoman era in Algeria, the Sufi movement became even more prominent and widespread. Sufi history records the most famous names of Sufi orders during this period, including the Sufi scholar Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī, founder of the Tijānī order in Algeria. In this article, we shall attempt to shed light on one aspect of his fragrant biography through his famous book *Jawāhir al-Ma‘ānī wa Bulūgh al-Amānī*, written and compiled by his disciple ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm ibn al-‘Arabī Barādah, tracing the stations of Sufi autobiography with which the book abounds, derived from the Shaykh’s dictation and the disciple’s observations.

From here, we are obliged to raise a set of problems, the most prominent of which are:

- What are the limits of autobiography as a literary art?
- How did the turns of Shaykh al-Tijānī’s autobiography become manifest in the book *Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī*, especially in its Sufi aspect?

01. Biography between autobiography and biography by another: a terminological reading

The term rests on a principal lexical component: *sīrah* (biography), and the word in linguistic dictionaries signifies method, manner, or practice. (Ibn Manzur, 1956, p. 390) As for biography in the terminology of critics and writers, it means that literary art concerned with presenting the life of a person, relying on various literary and written methods, foremost among them the narrative style. (Sharaf, 1998, p. 02)

Biography as a literary genre is divided into two kinds: autobiography and biography by another. Autobiography, as Philippe Lejeune states, is “a retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person about his own existence, when he places the emphasis on his individual life, and particularly on the history of his personality” (Lougou, 1994, p. 08). On this basis, the term biography is connected with several meanings, among them:

- A. The history of a human being (generally well known), narrated by another person.
- B. The history of a human being (obscure), orally narrated by him to another person, who writes this history down for study.
- C. The history of a human being narrated by him to another person or persons who help him, by listening to him, to orient himself in his life. (Lougou, 1994, p. 10)

Autobiography is “a portion of the life of an individual human being, whose subject is written by the person himself... It is a literary biography in which the human being records his own life”. (Sharaf, 1998, p. 29) From this standpoint, the recording of biography is connected to the self of the individual or person who is its subject, so that he becomes the sole speaker within the biographical work.

As for biography by another, it is a literary genre in which the writer presents the life of a distinguished or exceptional person through the various stages of his life, the circumstances he lived through, his scholarly and artistic influence within his surroundings, and what he left for others (Sharaf, 1998, pp. 03-04). Hence biography by another has an other-directed character; it is

the transmission and translation of the lives of others by means of evidence, documents, and the testimonies of those connected to the biographical subject. Autobiography, by contrast, is dominated by a subjective character from which the writer is seldom stripped, just as it is a direct transmission. (Sharaf, 1998, pp. 04-05)

The researcher ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sharaf adds, saying: “The qualities that make an autobiography great are not the same qualities that make a biography by another great. Chief among those qualities is that the writer of the latter be objective, quick in observation, firm in understanding, comprehensive in gathering facts and judging them, blending them into a balanced and harmonious whole, and shaping them in his own style. As for the autobiographer... The biographer of another stands in the position of a witness, not a judge; but the translator of himself combines the two qualities. The former must step back in order to convey the image of the figure as it was known among his contemporaries”. (Sharaf, 1998, p. 06)

The motives of autobiography are many: among them are confessional motives, whose principal driving force is the feeling of guilt and the attempt to lighten it. It may also serve as a defense of the writer’s positions, whereby he justifies the course of his life; or it may satisfy a curiosity within the writer. Biography may also be a valuable guiding proof for morals and customs, whether for a nation or for a particular group. (Sharaf, 1998, pp. 45-46)

This is perhaps what we perceive in Sufi biographies, where the predominant character is instructive and exhortatory, whether they are autobiographical or biographical by another, through the life of the Sufi and his spiritual experience.

The art of biography acquired a great status in our Arabic literature, and Muḥammad ibn Ishāq is considered the earliest to have used the word “sīrah” in his book about the Messenger Muḥammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Thus, the biography of the Noble Prophet was the widest of Islamic biographical writings and the earliest to appear, and writers and historians made it among their foremost concerns (Sharaf, 1998, p. 48). Biography in Arabic literature “acquired objectivity in treatment and investigation, and other biographies of classes of men sharing one field of knowledge, art, or craft then appeared, such as classes of the Companions, Qur’ānic exegetes, poets, grammarians, and others” (Sharaf, 1998, p. 48).

02.Sufi biography

The concept of Sufism became associated with renunciation of this world; that is, devotion to worship and the abandonment of the pleasures and temptations of life. Ibn Khaldūn defined the meaning of Sufism in his statement: “Adhering to worship, devoting oneself to God Most High, turning away from the adornment and ornament of this world, renouncing what the masses pursue of pleasure, wealth, and status, and withdrawing from creation into seclusion for worship... The more apparent derivation, if one speaks of derivation, is from wool (ṣūf), because they were mostly distinguished by wearing it, due to their مخالفة of الناس in abandoning luxurious garments and wearing wool instead” (Ibn Khaldun., 2014, p. 989). Accordingly, it appears that the current of asceticism preceded the current of Sufism in emergence, especially since the term asceticism was connected to the form of religiosity that existed in the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and

his noble Companions. As for Sufism, it is a movement that exaggerated and claimed for itself miracles and sayings not transmitted from our righteous forebears.

Sufism is a spiritual intellectual current: “It begins with practical exertions in acts of worship, followed by moral ascent that results as the fruit of those exertions, and may go beyond the moral aspect to other gnostic matters, such as annihilation and spiritual bliss” (Aït Issa, 2020, p. 124) [16]. Scholars also transmit a set of concepts about Sufism suggesting depth of understanding and precision of experience. Al-Qushayrī recorded a group of texts concerning the meaning of Sufism and the Sufis, among them (Al-Qushayri, 1994, pp. 441–442):

- Al-Junayd was asked about Sufism and said: It is that the Truth causes you to die to yourself and brings you to life in Him.
- Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Qaṣṣāb said: Sufism is noble character appearing in a noble time from a noble man among noble people.
- Ruwaym ibn Aḥmad al-Baghdādī said: Sufism is built upon three qualities: adherence to poverty, neediness before God, realization through giving and altruism, and abandoning self-exposure and choice.
- Al-Junayd also said: Sufism is remembrance with gathering, ecstasy with listening, and action with following.
- Al-Kattānī said: Sufism is character; whoever surpasses you in character surpasses you in purity.

In the book that is the source of the present study, *Jawāhir al-Ma‘ānī wa Bulūgh al-Amānī*, it is stated that: “The science of Sufism is a science kindled from the hearts of the saints until they were illumined by acting upon the Book and the Sunnah. Whoever acts by them, knowledge, manners, secrets, and realities are opened to him—things which tongues are unable to express—similar to what was kindled for the scholars of the Sharī‘ah from rulings when they acted according to those rulings. Sufism is but the purest essence of the servant’s acting according to the rulings of the Sharī‘ah, when his action is free from defects and the shares of the self” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 13). It is a degree in knowledge grasped only by one who has experienced the path and lived the sweetness of worship, cutting himself off from the ways and pleasures of this world and all its doors except the door of heaven, which is the refuge of the worshipper and the seeker.

As for Sufi biography, it is a type of Arabic literary art falling within the sphere of artistic prose, in which the Sufi writer records or dictates the biography of his Sufi life, beginning with his birth and family upbringing, passing through his learning and receiving from Sufi shaykhs, and arriving at the luminous thought where the true life of his Sufism and his miracles begin. In most Sufi biographies, autobiography and biography by another overlap in one and the same text, as happens when a shaykh dictates his biography to his disciples, or when a disciple compiles the biography of his shaykh from his dictation, his company, and also from the testimonies of those close to him and his companions among the Sufi class.

03. Manifestations of autobiography in the book *Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī*

The book “*Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī*” is one of the most important works transmitted from the shaykh of the Tijānī order, Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī. The book was compiled by the eminent disciple ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm through the dictation of Shaykh al-Tijānī, and it is an important source for the Tijānī order. In addition to the many stations of his Sufi life, it devotes chapters to the interpretation of the Noble Qur’ān and the explanation of the noble Prophetic hadiths (Zizah , 2024, p. 74).

Within this book, autobiography and biography by another intertwine at various levels. Very often, the personality of the writer, ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm, appears as narrator of the biography of his noble shaykh, and at other times he transmits what he heard from Shaykh al-Tijānī so that the selfhood of the shaykh becomes dominant. Because the topics of the book branch out and multiply, we shall attempt to summarize the most important matters connected with the presence of biography and the journey of the Shaykh’s Sufi life.

1. The biography of the Shaykh’s birth and upbringing

The eminent ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm, the disciple of the Shaykh and compiler of the book, affirms in his introduction that everything contained in the work is what was soundly established for him and had become well known among people in that era. Nothing of it remained hidden from anyone who knew the Shaykh, heard him, and kept his company. He says: “Here I am mentioning for you, God willing, that by which eyes are gladdened and every sorrowful one finds consolation—what was established for me and confirmed, and what suffices the one who understands and reflects—because the merits of this Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, cannot be counted, nor can his virtues be fully encompassed. Reports of them have spread wherever day and night go, and no limit or measure can be found for them; we shall only mention a small draught of them and a tiny fragment of their number” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 09).

What confirms our view that the two kinds of biography overlap in the book is what the author ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm explicitly states later when he says: “I mention to you a collection pleasing to the ear of the listener, drawing tears from the eyes, and beneficial, God willing, to both sinner and obedient one, from words that I heard from him, or wrote from his handwriting, or reports from his conduct that I received from his companions and those who remained close to him, and some of it I witnessed myself, and some of it from the writing of others. I did not write anything from anyone until I verified it and sought truth regarding what he narrated” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 09). Thus, the book brings together the Shaykh’s account of himself at various stations of his life and states, as well as what was copied from his handwriting and rewritten, in addition to what the writer received of the Shaykh’s fragrant biography from his companions and close disciples. Hence the two selves—“I” and “he”—intertwine to weave the world of Sufi biography for the shaykh of the order.

Shaykh al-Tijānī is the firm proof, Shihāb al-Dīn, our master Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad. He was born in 1150 AH in the village of ‘Ayn Mādī, where he received a deeply religious upbringing. He was greatly diligent and industrious, inclined toward right guidance and solitude. He memorized the

Glorious Qur'ān at the age of seven, as he himself reported. Then he engaged in the pursuit of the foundational, derivative, and literary sciences until he mastered them and acquired their meanings. He continued seeking knowledge in his homeland for a period until he obtained from the sciences that by which he benefited. He taught and spread knowledge, and then, may God be pleased with him, inclined toward the Sufī paths and inquiry into divine secrets, until he became deeply versed in understanding their sciences, states, stations, causes, and conditions, until he came to guide to God, advise the servants of God, and support the Sunnah of His Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. Through him God revived people and benefited both town-dwellers and desert-dwellers. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 23-24)

His father was the famous scholar and proof of the acting scholars and guiding path of those who seek guidance: Abū 'Abd Allāh Sīdī Muḥammad al-Faḥ ibn al-Mukhtār. His mother was the virtuous lady, the noble, precious, pious, obedient 'Ā'ishah, daughter of the master Abū 'Abd Allāh Sīdī Muḥammad ibn al-Sanūsī al-Tijānī al-Maḍāwī. As for his paternal grandfather, he was al-Mukhtār ibn Aḥmad, one of the eminent notables and the excellent men of his age. As for his lineage, according to what appears in the biography, it is a verified noble lineage ascending to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Muthannā ibn al-Ḥasan al-Sibṭ ibn 'Alī, may God be pleased with them. This lineage is mentioned in their recorded genealogy among their forefathers. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 25-26)

The writer added: "He grew up, may God be pleased with him, between his two righteous and eminent parents in a sound upbringing; they disciplined him, raised him, and instructed him with the upbringing appropriate to people of their insight. Thus he was raised in chastity, protection, piety, and religion, proud in soul, lofty in aspiration, pure in morals, guarded by providence and surrounded by care. People did not know of him the customary excesses upon which they themselves had been raised. From his youth, may God be pleased with him, he was resolute in determination, firm in what he undertook in all his affairs: he desired no matter except that he began it, and began nothing except that he completed it... He possessed natural courage and strong valor. Among the traits upon which he was reared were great generosity, abundant spending, fulfilling the rights of his relatives and kin, consoling those he knew and those allied to him, kindness to the poor, and endearment toward the people of religion" [24]. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 27)

The recorder of the biography deliberately relays all the information he registered and received directly from the Shaykh, as in his statement: "as he himself told me," realizing the importance of the information received by the recipient or reader. Autobiography in the book Ma'ānī al-Jawāhir thus takes on a serious character and shows concern for recording everything connected with the context of the Shaykh's social life and the extent to which it was linked to his religious formation and family upbringing, including what relates to the life of his parents, those close to him, then his shaykhs and peers.

The biography begins with the Shaykh's birth in his native place, 'Ayn Mādī, within a religious family known for its scholarly provision, piety, and God-fearingness. The writer also indicates that

the Shaykh's life was earnest from his earliest years, and that nothing was known of him except piety and good character, which prepared him to become a knowing shaykh and a caller to God with insight. On another level, the disciple-biographer resorts to providing an external formal description of the person of his teacher, or what is known as the physiological description of the character: "...or a description of his noble self and the image of his majestic form, distinguished by his visible presence just as he is distinguished by his description. May God preserve and guard him: fair-complexioned with a reddish tinge, of moderate stature, radiant in grayness, possessing a resonant voice, a majestic silence, elevated worth, sweet speech, eloquent tongue, expressing what he intended with the utmost clarity". (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 28)

In all places in which he portrays the personality of al-Tijānī, the writer seeks to present the most beautiful image of his shaykh, combining what is spiritual and moral with what is bodily and physical. He also frequently prays for the Shaykh, expands in venerating him, and praises him with the loftiest qualities. This is the way of the Sufis in writing and glorification.

2/ The Sufi biography: the turning point of divine guidance, the supreme unveiling

There is no doubt that guidance, or what is known among the Sufis as al-faṭḥ, is the true beginning for the knower when his paths with the masters of the orders are cut off, and he finds no path to God except through the Master of Creation, peace and blessings be upon him.

Shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Tijānī, when he was twenty years old, turned toward Morocco, specifically toward Fez. There he received from a number of scholarly shaykhs, among them the shaykh of the Ṭayyibiyyah order, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Tazānī, known as al-Rifī, the principles of the Nāṣiriyyah path. He also met many poles and saints such as Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ṣaqlī. Thereafter he moved repeatedly between the desert, Tlemcen, and his birthplace. On his way to the pilgrimage, he passed through Zwāwah and took the Khalwatiyyah path from Shaykh Abū ʿAbd Allāh Sīdī Muḥammad al-Faṭḥ ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Azharī; then he passed through Tunis and Egypt and received from some of their shaykhs. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 36-38) He returned to Tlemcen after the pilgrimage and finally settled with his family in Fez until death overtook him in the year 1230 AH. (Abu al-Qasim , 1998, p. 510)

The great unveiling befell him in the village of Abī Samghūn when he resided there. There, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, granted him permission while awake and not in sleep to cultivate people in a general and unrestricted manner. In the year 1196 AH, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, appointed for him the litany that he should impart, beginning with seeking forgiveness and prayers upon him, completed by the word of sincerity. Thus the pure Muḥammadan path was given to Shaykh al-Tijānī, and he was commanded to leave all other paths and to suffice himself with the Aḥmadiyyah path from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, without seclusion or withdrawal. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 40-41)

The stage of unveiling represented an important and foundational turning point in the life of the Shaykh. From it his new Sufi journey began after his noble station and the particularity with which the Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings be upon him, singled him out became manifest. ʿAlī

Ḥarāzīm says: “From that time onward, praise be to God, lights, secrets, manifestations, ascents, and the perfection of lights followed one after another upon him. From that time onward, delegations came to him from all directions and regions to receive from him, to visit him, and to take the secrets”. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 41)

The turning point of guidance, which represented the Shaykh’s supreme unveiling, remained a beacon for everyone who visited him and received from him. As for his disciples who remained with him in residence and travel, as was the case with the writer ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm, they drew from his effusions and witnessed his miracles, thereby attaining the greater fortune in knowledge and guidance. The writer remained with the Shaykh in the village of Abī Samghūn, then traveled with him to the land of Morocco until reaching Fez, where the Shaykh asked his disciples to collect what they had received from him in a written work by command of the Master of Messengers, peace and blessings be upon him, so that the saints after the Shaykh might benefit from it and preserve it. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 41-42) This became the greatest glad tiding for the writers who strove to gather all his teachings without neglect.

The Shaykh’s concern to dictate his biography, his Sufi knowledge, and his celebration of that is a rightful duty upon the knower who perceived and became certain that preserving this knowledge is the preservation of spiritual Sufi biography more than it is the preservation of a personal life. Thus writers on autobiography in the domain of art and literature saw that the autobiographical book “is not merely stations and memories, but is rather a biography of art more than a biography of the self”. (Pasternak, 2015, p. 10)

Sufi biography differs from artistic biography in that the latter is interwoven with imagination and creativity in producing visions and ideas, even if its starting point is reality, which is the mark of literary art. The Sufi vision, by contrast, is constituted from a spiritual world in which the knower disappears toward a world more real. Even if the miracles that befall the shaykh and the Sufis generally bear a fantastical character in the eyes of the common people, for the Sufis they represent the source of light and divine support.

The turning point in the life of Shaykh al-Tijānī, the supreme unveiling, represents a luminous path sketched for every Muslim who chooses the way of guidance and uprightness. Therefore, Sufi autobiography differs from other autobiographies, because biography ordinarily proceeds from growth to completion and then annihilation, ending with the death of its proponent. (Abbas, 1996, p. 90) Its effect either remains or itself comes to an end. Sufi biography, however, is an unveiling and a path prepared by its proponent so that it may be taught to others and continue to circulate as knowledge, understanding, and practice after his death. It is therefore greater than the life of its proponent and longer-lived, because the path of knowledge of God does not end with the death of the human being; rather, it is another station in a life that does not end. The writer of this type of biography is “close to our hearts, because he wrote that biography in order to create some bond between us and him, and to speak to us about the depths of his soul and the experiences of his life in a discourse that finds in us an attentive ear, because it arouses in us a desire to uncover a world we do not know and places us, in relation to its proponent, in the position of the trustee over his

secrets and hidden matters” (Abbas, 1996, pp. 93-94). The writer of Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir confirms in every situation that what he writes comes from the dictation of Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī and from his own preservation. Without doubt, the recording of the dates of the stations of the Shaykh’s life is among the clearest properties of autobiography, through which events are subjected to a successive construction and proceed in a direct line from the beginning of the صاحب’s birth to the final event of his life (Abdulkakim Muhammad, 2015, p. 169). Thus the biography of his guidance and supreme unveiling was the most important station of his fragrant biography; from it his spiritual journey began, and from it the lights of guidance never departed from him.

3/ His luminous biography: his morals, his manners, his knowledge

The compiler says in this section concerning the Shaykh: “God enabled him to follow to the furthest limit of enablement, and God lodged him in the firm station. Thus, may God be pleased with him, in agreement with the Sharī‘ah and adherence to the Sunnah he is a sign; he reached the utmost limit in preserving them... He made the Sunnah the judge over himself and his household, and made it his emblem in all his acts and states” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 58). Like the shaykhs and scholars of Sufism, the Shaykh followed the Sunnah of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, in his words, acts, and states. The character of Abū al-‘Abbās was derived from the Glorious Qur’ān and the guidance of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him: he obeyed the command of God and was content with His contentment, commanded by His command, and warned by His warning. Thus his conduct and traits became beautiful (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 59).

The Shaykh was also known, and the situations of his biography made plain, for his intense love for the Household of the Prophet and his exaltation of them—an exaltation the like of which had not been seen in anyone of his time. He was singular in this Sufi love, and it was realized in him with certainty. It is among the fruits and results of true faith, and among all the traits of the Muḥammadan biography that the Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, followed (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 63-64). Gathered in his noble person were the assemblies of luminous morals indicating glorious qualities and praiseworthy behaviors: intelligence, acumen, courage, compassion, mercy, humility, courtesy, generosity, and altruism, among other traits with which he was formed since childhood, so that after the unveiling he became nearness to God and a link to His presence. Among his great morals was the humility with which he adorned himself as with a striped cloak that never left him until death. It is said: “I never saw one of better character, nobler soul, more tender heart, more faithful to covenant and affection, or greater in knowledge and understanding than him; and despite the loftiness of his station he stood with the young, honored the old, sat with the weak, and humbled himself before the poor, in imitation of the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 65-66).

Out of humility, he did not accept the kissing of his hand; and despite the loftiness of his rank, he considered himself unworthy of anything. Through the gathering of qualities of الخیر and beneficence in him, refined adab was realized in the Shaykh. He was cultured, and the cultured

person among the Sufis is “the one in whom the qualities of *الخير* are gathered... The servant reaches Paradise by his obedience, and by his adab in that obedience he reaches God” (Al-Qushayri, 1994, p. 445). The adab of Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās was elevated, attaining the utmost goals inwardly and outwardly. Among his outward adab was his observance of Prophetic manners in all his states—standing, sitting, eating, and so on. Among his inward adab, indicated by his words and states, was that he did not choose alongside God, nor plan alongside His planning. If he supplicated regarding a matter, he sought from God the better choice (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, pp. 65-66). Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās says: “I do not supplicate except with my tongue, while my heart is surrendered to God Most High,” and he says: “I desire nothing and ask nothing—do what You will and decree what You want” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 66).

The author of a Sufi biography seeks to highlight the virtues of the Sufis, who surpass ordinary people in their knowledge, refinement and love for God and His Messenger, and so they attribute to them the perfection of qualities and the beauty of morals, indeed assigning to them states unknown even to those nearest to them. The compiler says: “As for what lies beyond that in the observance of his inner thoughts, his breaths, his shifts, and his adab with God in all of that, these are matters to which we have no access. There may be there inward manners whose signs appeared upon him, yet we did not know what they indicated, and adab is according to knowledge”. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 67)

Knowledge is the summit of knowledge. His knowledge, may God be pleased with him, was vast and subtle: “No one intended to oppose him in any of the sciences except that he silenced him, leaving him bewildered and astonished at the strange sciences and understandings God had gathered for him of knowledge, action, and supreme sainthood, and he rose in that to the ultimate end” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 65). He gathered an abundant share of the sciences and became deeply grounded in the sciences of divine unity, exegesis, hadith, biography, Sufism, states, and the sciences of language. He shared with the scholars in their outward sciences, and in the inward sciences he surpassed the jurists with rare additions such as the solving of difficulties and what arises of problematic doubts. His true inward sciences, drawn from divine lights, have their place in the heart, and none knows their sweetness except one who has tasted them and been characterized by them. Thus the Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, preferred the love of his Mighty Master above all else, and found intimacy only in nearness to God Most High. For this reason he fled often to retreats where the marvels of secrets were unveiled to him and the lights manifested themselves before him (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 68).

Among the matters with which the book *Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī* abounds within his fragrant biography are his firmly grounded scholarly answers in mentioning Qur’ānic verses and Prophetic hadiths, as well as his juristic questions, legal opinions, lofty indications, and solutions to their difficulties. Because these texts are many and expansive, we shall suffice with one of his answers to his disciple regarding the meanings of noble verses. The writer says: “I asked him, may God be pleased with him, about His saying, Most High: ‘And I did not create jinn and mankind except that they worship Me’ [Qur’ān 51:56]. He answered, may God be pleased with

him, saying: It is a divine address in the carpet of wisdom. Then His address in the carpet of reality and will is His saying, Most High: ‘And they will not cease to differ except whom your Lord has mercy upon, and for that He created them’ [Qur’ān 11:118–119]. This is the reality, because the address of will does not admit negation, whereas the address of wisdom may be absent in some existents, because the command of God is driven by will, not by wisdom, and wisdom is but a veil over will” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 146).

The Shaykh’s speech is precise, extended, and deep, indicating his firmness in the science of exegesis and understanding, as well as in explaining the hadiths of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and interpreting the Qur’ān through the Sunnah and the Sunnah through itself. The Shaykh’s insistence on dictating his knowledges, sciences, states, and stations to his disciples and having them written down in a spiritual, scholarly Sufi biography was, as stated in the biography, firstly by command of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. Secondly, this biographical work enters among the books of biography that are classified “in response to the request of some of their disciples and followers so that people may benefit from them” (Yaqoub al-Sayyid, 2018). There is no doubt that in this lies great benefit for the writer and the receiving reader who is passionately attached to this pure life.

4/ The biography of the miracles of Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās

Miracles constitute a vast Sufi chapter expressing the states of the Sufis and the extent of the truthfulness of their paths and beliefs. A miracle is an act contrary to custom during the time of religious responsibility, manifest upon the one described with sainthood—that is, the saint—as a sign of the truthfulness of his state. In other words, the appearance of a miracle upon the truthful saint indicates his truthfulness and the truthfulness of his states. Whoever is not truthful, miracles do not appear upon him. A miracle differs from a prophetic miracle: prophetic miracles are divine support reserved for prophets alone, and are the proof of their prophethood. Saints, by contrast, possess miracles that resemble answered prayer (Al-Qushayri, 1994, p. 520).

In the biography of Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī there is much indicating the miracles of this Shaykh and his station. God brought forth through him miracles too numerous to be counted. Everyone who remained with him, accompanied him, and lived with him perceived that and witnessed his miracles with their own eyes, until for them they became a necessary matter and certain knowledge from which they felt no astonishment. These miracles took different forms, including acts of intervention such as warding off calamities, helping the oppressed, answering prayers, curing defects, multiplying food, and others. These fall under the category of outward miracles, that is, the sensible or extraordinary acts that God causes to appear at the hands of His righteous servants. As for the other type of miracles, they are inward, meaning spiritual: the hidden gifts God bestows upon His servants such as knowledge of God, reverential fear, trust, and understanding from God. Fear of God, trust in Him, and understanding of Him are, in the eyes of the righteous, more noble and more valuable than tangible miracles. (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. , 1997, p. 394)

Through these miracles, “when the Sufi becomes established in the station of truthfulness in knowledge of God, understanding from Him, subsistence through Him by annihilation from what

is other than Him, gathering for Him and separation from what is other than Him, he enters the fields of union and connection, and at that point he is named one joined to the Truth because of his separation from all besides Him” (Al-Salmi, 1992, pp. 384, 385). Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās had in his states miracles visible to the eye and others inward, which he concealed and did not display. Abū al-‘Abbās said concerning miracles: “The true disclosures are that one is disclosed to God and His Messenger and understands their speech and what it contains of rational secrets and unitive lights, of hidden sciences, subtle understandings, and lordly realities” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. , 1997, p. 395).

Among the many miracles gathered in his autobiography, we find what he said regarding the miracle of being given the Greatest Name of God. The Shaykh says: “I was given many formulations of the Great and Greatest Name of God, and I was taught a manner by which I could derive from its combinations what I wished. He, peace and blessings be upon him, informed me of the immense merit within it, which has no limit and no end, and informed me of its tremendous properties, the manner of supplicating by it, and the way of traversing by it. This matter has not reached us of anyone who attained it other than our master, peace and blessings be upon him” (Ibn al-Arabi Barada A. H., 1997, p. 53). The spiritual miracle becomes manifest in the Shaykh’s access to one of the firmly grounded sciences, namely knowledge of God Most High. He was taught the Greatest Name of God and the manner of worship by it and by its tremendous properties. This belongs to the lights with which God endowed him. Thus the Shaykh’s foot remained firmly planted on his Sufi path to God Most High, with the doors of knowledge and inward miracles continually opening before him until he became a pole.

Conclusion

In conclusion, after this enriching journey through the Sufi autobiography of Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī, through the book he dictated to his disciple ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm, we have been able to arrive at a number of the following results:

- Autobiography is a literary art concerned with the life of the human being from the moment of his birth to the final station of his life, thereby drawing a scholarly, literary, and religious history of the life of a person who chose to immortalize his biography for a scholarly, educational, or pedagogical purpose.
- Sufi biography is a literary prose form in which the Sufi writer records or dictates the biography of his Sufi life, the course of his formation, and his reception of knowledge until reaching the moment of unveiling and station.
- Autobiography in the book “Ma‘ānī al-Jawāhir wa Bulūgh al-Amānī” is centered on the person of Shaykh Abū al-‘Abbās al-Tijānī, the devout Sufi worshipper, whom the writer positions as one of the paths of guidance and the way.
- The compiler employed, in many stations of the biography, the pronoun “he,” referring to the Shaykh, and also the pronoun “I” when presenting the group of texts the Shaykh dictated and

narrated to his disciples, which makes the Shaykh's autobiography in many places embrace biography by another.

- The courses of the Shaykh's life—from his birth and upbringing, through his guidance, then the supreme unveiling, and on to his miracles—revealed an Algerian Sufi figure who deeply influenced the Sufi current in Algeria and left behind a great intellectual heritage crowned by the Tijānī order, moderate in belief and conduct.

Bibliography

- Abdulhakim Muhammad, S. (2015). *The Autobiography in Modern Arabic Literature (A Critical Perspective)* (01 ed.). Amman, Jordan: Al-Waraq Foundation.
- Abbas, I. (1996). *The Art of Biography* (01 ed.). Amman, Jordan, Dar al-Shorouk,.
- Abdelmoneim , a.-Q.-H. (2005). *Leading Figures of Sufism in Algeria from its Beginnings to the First World War (An Analytical Statistical Study)* (01 ed.). M'sila, Algeria: Dar al-Khalil al-Qasimi.
- Abu al-Qasim , S. (1998). *A Cultural History of Algeria, Vol. 1, 1500–1830* (01 ed.). Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami.
- Aït Issa, A. (2020, May 15). Religious Tendencies in Sufi Discourse in the Light of Reception Theory: Al-Hallaj as a Case Study. *Journal of Interpretation and Discourse Analysis*, 01.
- Al-Qushayri, A. a.-Q. (1994). *Al-Risala al-Qushayriyya, ed. 'Abd al-Halim Mahmoud and Mahmoud ibn al-Sharif* (Vol. 01). (02, Ed.) Cairo, Egypt: Dar al-Ma'arif.
- Al-Salmi, M. (1992). *Nine Books on the Origins of Sufism and Asceticism, edited and annotated by Selman Ibrahim Ateş* (01 ed.). Turkey: Dar al-Nasher.
- Ibn al-Arabi Barada, A. (1997). *The Jewels of Meaning and the Fulfilment of Aspirations in the Abundance of Sidi Abu al-Abbas al-Tijani, edited and corrected by Abd al-Latif Abd al-Rahman* (01 ed., Vol. 02). Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah.
- Ibn al-Arabi Barada, A. H. (1997). *The Jewels of Meaning and the Fulfilment of Aspirations in the Abundance of Sidi Abu al-Abbas al-Tijani, edited and corrected by Abd al-Latif Abd al-Rahman* (Vol. 01). (01, Ed.) Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah.
- Ibn Khaldun:, a. (2014). *The Muqaddimah*, , supervised by Dalia Mohamed Ibrahim, edited and published by Ali Abdul Wahid Wafi. *Nahdat Misr Publishing House*, 02(07).
- Ibn Manzur, J. a.-D. (1956). : *Lisan al-Arab, (entry: Sirah)* (01 ed., Vol. 04). Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Sadir.
- Ihsan , A. (1996). *The Art of Biography* (01 ed.). Amman, Jordan: Dar al-Shorouk.
- Lougon, P. (1994). *The Autobiographical Charter and Literary History*. (O. Ali, Trans.) Casablanca, Morocco: Arab Cultural Centre.
- Pasternak, B. (2015). *Sketches of a Life: Men and Situations, trans. Idris al-Miliyani* (01 ed.). Cairo, Egypt: Dar Ru'ya.
- Sharaf, A. (1998). : *The Literature of Autobiography* (01 ed.). Cairo, Egypt: Al-Ahram Foundation.

Yaqoub al-Sayyid, W. (2018). *The Image of the Self and the Other: A Study of Autobiographical Patterns* (01 ed.). Egypt: Dar al-Bashir.

Zizah , S. (2024, November). The Tijaniyyah Order: Origins and Development. *Journal of Social Sciences*(19).