MUHAMMAD IBN HAMİS AND HIS TREATISE
"AL-MUNTAQÂ MIN KALAMI AHL AL-TUQÂ"

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ÖZET
Muhammed İbn Hamiş ve “el-Müntekâ min Kelämi ehl’ütt-Tükâ”

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Anahtar Kelimeler: İbn Hamis, el-Müntekâ, akl, zühd, tasavvuf.

ABSTRACT

İbn Hamis had composed his own sufi discipline. He benefited from philosophical and theological discussions of his time. Reason and asceticism are important parts of knowledge. His treatise Al-Muntaqâ min Kalami Ahl al-Tuqâ is not mentioned in any bibliography including Khasî al-Zunan, Kâtîb Çelebi and GAL, Brockelman. It only mentioned in al-Gunya for Kadi Iyaz, and al-Tukmîla for İbn al-Abbâr. This treatise is the first to mention the concept of “fılaşaﬁ al-din”.

Keywords: İbn Hamis, Al-Muntaqâ, reason, ascetism, sufism.
1. Introduction*

Muslims who were under the leadership of Târîq b. Ziyâd conquered the Iberian Peninsula in 92/711. Islam established itself here between the years of 92-139/711-756. However, while the Umayyad prince ‘Abdurrahman b. Mu’awiya (138-172/756-788), after a persevering campaign to gain mastery over different social groups (Baladi Arabs, Berbers, Syrians, Mozarabs and Jews) and to structure them within an Arab Islamic monarchy, established the political and social bases of Islam in Andalusia, the antagonism between the Umayyads of Cordoba and the Abbasids of Baghdad ensured that the former would always view with suspicion anything coming from East.

Asceticism as a philosophy which is refraining the material world in one’s heart and life had also appeared around II/VIIIth century in Andalusia. Asceticism had been known among the Eastern Muslims for a long time. This practice had been conveyed to the Western Muslims in Andalusia. Scholars, pilgrims, ascetics and traders who bring books carried wisdom from the East to the West. This knowledge had been derived from the rich Eastern heritage. Then, Andalusia’s had gained new ideas and practices in eastern schools. Asceticism became quite popular and then was developed towards sufism, due to spreading of thoughts about Gnosticism and love of God. This prepared the dawn of sufism in Andalusia, as it happened in other regions, for instance in Syria, Iraq and Egypt. It

* An Obligatory Explanation: I had a work in 1998 entitled: Ibn Meserre’nin Tasavvufı Düşünsesi Tarihindeki Yeri ve al-Muntaqâ min Kelâmi Ehl’Tûkâ Adh Eseri Ispanya 1998 (The Place of Ibn Masarra in History of Sufist Thought And his Treatise al-Muntaqâ min Kalamı Ahl al-Tuqâ). On page 1a of the manuscript of al-Muntaqâ min Kalamı Ahl al-Tuqâ which is at Kutahya Vahid Pasha Library, which was the main subject of this study, Abu Abdullah ibn Masarra al-Kurtubi (d.319/931) was shown as the author. Even though there is no work of ibn Masarra under this name, the ideas at al-Muntaqâ was parallel with the ideas that could be found at his other works. During my research I could not reach any information that this work belonged to another author. Since the author’s name was written by copier on the cover page of hand-written copy of the work and due to the similarities of Ibn Masarra’s thoughts in this work with the other works of him, I had thought that the author of al-Muntaqâ was Ibn Masarra. I reached this new information at the last phase of preparation for publishing al-muntaqâ in Spain. I learned that Abu Abdullah Muhammed ibn Hamis had a work titled “al-Muntaqâ min Kalamı Ahl al-Tuqâ” that had never attracted my attention. This new knowledge made my former conclusion that al-Muntaqâ min Kalamı Ahl al-Tuqâ belongs to Ibn Masarra vanished. In the light of new knowledge, I consulted with the academicians from different universities in Turkey who are interested in sufism in order to find out if there is anything that I should do about it. I reevaluated my works with a thought that returning from mistakes is wisdom. I concluded that it is the best thing to declare that al-Muntaqâ min Kalamı Ahl al-Tuqâ is the work of Muhammed ibn Hamis. The only original manuscript of al-Muntaqâ is available in Vahid Pasha Library in Kutahya, Turkey. Finally this manuscript was published in Universidad de Extremadura in Spain 2010 (Ibn Jamîs de Evora, Kitâb al-Garîb al-Muntaqâ min Kalamı Ahl al-Tuqâ, Presenter: Pilar Garrido Clemente, editor: Mehmet Necmeddin Bardakci, Universidad de Extremadura, Caceres 2010)
was a mixture of asceticism and sufi life. Some felt that they needed deeper emotions than just asceticism and they find this passion in sufism. Therefore, simple ascetic life is developed towards more philosophical and sophisticated understanding and practice in sufism.

There was a tendency towards personal ascetic life and more sophisticated sufi understanding. Although these ascetic sufi scholars were quite important for sufi movement, Ibn Masarra (d.319/931) is a turning point in this process. He can be considered as a founder of philosophical sufism in Andalusia.\(^1\)

The roots of Ibn Massara’s philosophy can be found in sufism and Islamic culture. The *Qur’an* and *Hadith* are quite essential sources for Ibn Massara’s philosophy. The heavy influence of Hasan al-Basrî can be seen on his treatises. He quoted from Basrî and praised him. Hakîm al-Tirmizî, the first sufi scholar who is called philosopher, his commentator Sahl ibn Abdullah al-Tustarî, Abu Yakub al-Nahracurî, Junayd al-Baghdadi are the most effective scholars for framing Ibn Massara’s thoughts about philosophical sufism. He also used terms of kalam and bridged between two disciplines, kalam and sufism, but he was accused of being Mutazili by doing so.\(^2\) He had the knowledge of the Ancient Greek philosophy including Empedocles, Plato, and Aristotle.\(^3\) He was contemporary with early Muslim philosophers al-Kindî and al-Farabî, and great mutakallimîns al-‘Ash’arî and al-Mâturîdî. In his journeys, he met sufi scholars ‘Amr ibn Osman al-Makkî, Abu Yakub al-Nahracurî and Abu Said ibn al-Arabî.\(^4\)

In his life time Ibn Masarra was not known by everyone in Andalusia. Later on, his students followed and spread his ideas especially during the time of Hakem II\(^5\) who was keen on science and philosophy. Muhammad b. Hazm al-Tanûhî (d.?), Ahmad b. Ganîm al-Cordoba’s (d.?), Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Khâlvânî (d.380/990), Muhammad b. Mafarraj al-Ma’âfîrî (d.371/981), Ahmad b. Walid Avsaca al-Ansârî (d.376/986), Aban b. Osman (d.377/987), Muhammad b. Amr b. Hayr al-Qayṣî (d.382/992), Abd al-‘Azîz b. Hakam (d.387/997) Kasîm b. Asbag

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(d.?) and Munzir b. Sa‘id al-Ballūti (d.355/966) are among them. Especially, Ballūti has re-organised ibn Massarra’s sufi system.5

In the V-VI/XI-XIIth century there were new sufi schools in Almaria, which was the great sufi centre in Andalusia like there were many similar schools in the Eastern Islamic world. This school was founded by Abu al-‘Abbas ibn al-Arif (d.536/1141).6 This school attracted many Muslim students from Maghrib and Andalusia. Three distinguished sufi scholars, ibn Barrajān (d.536/1141) from Sevilla, Abu Bakr al-Mayūrqi (d.537/1142) from Granada, ibn Kasi (d.546/1151) from Portugal were graduated from Almaria school. Ibn al-Arabī (d.638/1240) and ibn Sabin (d.668/1269) also benefited and quoted these sufi scholars as they quoted from ibn Masarra.7

As happened in the other regions of Andalusia, the movement of asceticism and sufism was alive at Evora (Albira), where Muhammad ibn Hamiš was born. Those Sufis and pious living in X-XIth centuries, who were from Evora (Elvira-Albira) and to whom we can regard as a pioneers of ibn Hamiš, are the representative of the Sufi thought at the Western Andalusia: Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Fāris al-Fāfiqī al-Albīrī (d.319/931),8 Abu Said Osman b. Said b Kulayb (d.340/951-952),9 Abu Gālib b. Tamām b. Gālib (d.347/958),10 Abu Bakr al-Albīrī (first half of IV/Xth centuries),11 Abu al-Hasan Ali b. Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Yahya al-Qušāibī (d.369/979-980),12 Abdullah Muhammad b. Ahmad known as ibn Turās (d.373/983-984),13 Abu Osman Said b. Musa b. Mihās al-Gassānī (d.393/1003),14 Abu Omar Ahmad b. Isa al-Albīrī (d.416/1025),15 Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Abdullah b. Abī Zanayn al-Albīrī (d.399/1008-1009), with whom sufist thought had been reached to many societies,16 Ahmad b. Ayyūb b. Abī al-Rabī’ al-Albīrī, one of the students of Abu

15 al-Baylī, p. 166.
Zamanayn (d.?)\textsuperscript{17} and Abu Ishak Ibrahim b. Mas’ud al-Albiri (middle of XII\textsuperscript{th} century),\textsuperscript{18} who had a Diwan (collection of poems) that consisted of poems about asceticism and sufism.

2. The Life of Ibn Hamis

There has been no sufficient knowledge about Muhammad ibn Hamis in the existing literature. Kadi Iyaz (d.544/1149), one of his students, mentions briefly about him on his work entitled al-Gunya.\textsuperscript{19} Ibn al-Abbâr also repeats this knowledge in his work, al-Takmilâ li Kitâb al-Sîla.\textsuperscript{20} Some contemporary works have also used this knowledge.\textsuperscript{21}

It is quite hard to determine the Muhammad ibn Hamis’s place in sufism and his importance in Andalusian sufism with this limited knowledge. However, we have to be contented with the limited knowledge given by Kadi Iyaz.

The exact name of Muhammad ibn Hamis is Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Hamis al-Sûfi al-Saikh al-Sâlih. He was born in Evora (Elvira/Albira), west of Andalusia. His date of birth is unknown. He spent most of his life in Sevilla. His single aim was to get the acceptance of God’s consent and abundance. He traveled modestly, looking always down in order to carry out his thought. He refused to take advantage of opportunities that came one’s way, and choose to live in hardness and poverty.\textsuperscript{22}

Muhammad ibn Hamis knew very well the calamity of religious acts. He was known fastidiousness about belief and slenderness in remarks. He was an honest man and had a style that gave the impression of being trustworthy to the people speaking to him. Aware of these characteristics, he had lived a virtuous and mature life based on the principle of honesty by keeping himself away from dissension and sedition. According to him, heart also has religious acts as organs do. There are some certain conditions, practices of ascetic austerities and endeavors to make the religious acts of hearts correct. With these principles, hearts escape from any kind of disasters. He cares the religious acts of hearts to correct with these methods.\textsuperscript{23}

Muhammad ibn Hamis was an expert on Hâris al-Muhâsibî’s (d. 243/867) works. In his speeches, he quoted some remarks from Muhâsibî’s

\textsuperscript{17} Abdusselam al-Garmini, \textit{al-Madâ‘ris al-Sûfiyya al-Ma‘âribîyya va ‘l-Andalusiyya}, Casablanca/Morocco 2000, p. 91.

\textsuperscript{18} Garmini, p. 98-100.


\textsuperscript{22} Kadi Iyaz, p. 91; Ibn al-Abbâr, Vol. I, p. 197, no: 1226.

works namely *al-Riáya*\(^\text{24}\) and *al-Wasáyá*\(^\text{25}\) without giving any name, and explained what Muháşíbi meant. He gave permission to his students, Kádi Iyáz, to narrate *al-Riáya*, one of Háris al-Muháşíbi’s works.\(^\text{26}\)

Ibn al-Abbár describes Ibn Hamís “as Sufi sheik of his time.”\(^\text{27}\) Ibn Hamís has contributions to the formation of Súfí thoughts of Kádi Iyáz, one of his distinguished students. Kádi Iyáz learned about theoretical and practical principles of sufism from Muhammed Ibn Hamís and the other sufiists. He obtained the happiness by learning and maintaining the sufistic teaching of Háris al-Muháşíbi.\(^\text{28}\)

According to the information given by Kádi Iyáz, Muhammed Ibn Hamís has a book about sufism entitled “*al-muntaqá min Kalámi Ahlí al-Tugá*.” Kádi Iyáz, who had attended many talks of Ibn Hamís, listened to some part of this book from Ibn Hamís as stating that “I had some talk with him several times. He wrote a book entitled *al-muntaqá min Kalámi Ahlí al-Tugá*. I heard some part of this book from Ibn Hamís: May God’s mercy be on him. He gave me permission to relate to the Háris al-Muháşíbi’s book entitled *al-Riáya*. I could not remember chain of narration.”\(^\text{29}\)

Muhammed Ibn Hamís had a close and special friendship with Kádi Abu Abdullah Ibn Shibrín (d. 503/1109) one of Andalusian scholars and at the same time amongst the teachers of Kádi Iyáz.\(^\text{30}\) Ibn Shibrín, like Ibn Hamís, lived in the west of Andalusia. This is the origin of their friendships.\(^\text{31}\)

Muhammed Ibn Hamís, whose birth date is unknown, died probably at the first half of XII\(^\text{th}\) century. His student, Kádi Iyáz, does not give any information about it. However, we can think that Ibn Hamís was alive at the time Kádi Iyáz was writing his work, *al-Gunya*. While he gives the date of some of his teachers’ death date at *al-Gunya*, he does not give the others. Those whose death dates are not given were probably alive at the time that the book was being written. Considering that Kádi Iyáz’s teachers from whom he had taken classes and joined their talks died between the years 498-539/1104-1144 we might say that he was dead then.\(^\text{32}\)


\(^{28}\) al-Bahlí, p. 86.


\(^{31}\) Kádi Iyáz, p. 75.

\(^{32}\) Pilar Garrido, who wrote a presentation to the publication of *al-Muntaqa* in Spain, gives mistakenly the death date of Kádi Ibn Shibrín as the death date of Ibn Hamís. According
During the X-XIIth centuries Andalusian intellectuals did not think sufism separate from the theology (kalam) and philosophy together. The ideas and works of Ghazzâli (d.505/1111) were also known at Andalusia. Therefore, ibn Hamis, who had been under influence of Hâris al-Muhâsibî, one of the distinguished sufist and theologians in the IXth century, cannot be thought that he was far from theology and philosophy. The fact that Ibn Hamis analyses the concept of theology and philosophy as well as the concept of ascetic and sufism in Al-Muntaqâ is an indication of this.

3. Ibn Hamis and Sufism

Ibn Hamis had composed his own sufi discipline. He benefited from philosophical and theological discussions of his time. Reason and asceticism are important parts of knowledge. Knowledge can be divided as ‘prophetical’ and ‘philosophical’ that meet finally at the same ‘ultimate truth’. For one to have responsibility, reason is primary condition. Heart is taken as the centre of the body and the controlling system. One has to follow inner abilities of heart such as ‘sabr’, ‘tawakkal’, ‘takwa’, ‘wara’, while he has to observe practices of the religion such as praying, fasting and paying alms. Self or ego (nafs) is the centre of senses, desires, and the origin of evil doings. Certainly senses provoke many mistakes; therefore nafs has to be controlled by reason.33

At this point some certain concepts of sufism need to be elaborated from Ibn Hamis’s point of view: Repentance (tawbah) is a deep regret for one’s wrong-doings and decision not to repeat them again. In order to reach salvation through repentance, one has to give up all behaviours forbidden by Islam and anything against Islamic ethics. Repentance is a chance which is given by God’s mercy until the day of judgement. If one is sincere in his repentance, God gives wisdom to him and wakes his God consciousness in his heart.34

Asceticism is a fundamental characteristic in his philosophical sufi system. A truly ascetic is the one who has no space in his heart for worldly desires, benefits and status in the way of reason and knowledge. The truth can only be known through search not through people. Blind obedience does not lead the truth itself. According to Ibn Hamis, there is a need for committing ‘sin’, because the Lord is the most compassionate, and then this has to be applied in

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33 Ibn Hamis, 9b, 10a, 13ab,14b-16a, 18a-19b, 31b-32a, 37a, 65a, 42a, 69b, 82a.
34 Ibn Hamis, 24b-25a, 54ab.
the world. When one commits sin, he ought to regret and seek forgiveness, then he is subject to the Lord’s compassion.\textsuperscript{35}

Hasan Basrî’s thought about fear of God was an important point in his understanding of ascetism. Ibn Hamîs believed that being fond of the material world must not be in the heart of the believers. Fear of God prepares a way for the consent of God and \textit{m’arîfatullah} (gnosis). This keeps the believers away from sins. But the final aim is to worship God not from fear, but because God deserves to be worshiped. Whoever reaches that understanding is given deeper knowledge and goodness by God.

Remembrance (\textit{zikr}) is remembering God’s existence and ignoring anything else. Ibn Hamîs thought that nothing should come between God and the believer. Remembrance is the means of achieving that. If one keeps performing the remembrance of God, he enjoys his worship and gets closer to God. Remembrance can be done in two ways: Remembrance through fear of God and remembrance in ignorance. The former way of remembrance does not allow any space for demonic whispering while the latter one is open to this kind of interfering. Remembrance must be sincere and conscious, particularly the one done in the heart.\textsuperscript{36}

Sincerity (\textit{ikhlas}) is the biggest enemy of the ego (\textit{nafs}). It is to worship without any expectation from anybody and anything including God himself. Ibn Hamîs used the metaphor of slave-lord relation. If slave behaves with the fear of his lord, this is not sincerity. But, if he serves without any expectation and fear, then he is a sincere man. Similarly, if one worships with the fear of hellfire or expectation of heaven, he is like a non-sincere slave. One who is sincere in his worship avoids wrong doings. He wants for others what he wants for himself.\textsuperscript{37}

Patience (\textit{sabr}) is not to complain in the case of troubles or disasters. According to ibn Hamîs, patience is to resist against the troublesome problems and accept whatever outcome is. The real patience is to accept whatever God provides in front of a person. Patience is needed either in times troubles or when beloved things are taken away. Because, everything comes from God the almighty.\textsuperscript{38}

Reliance (\textit{tawakkul}) or trust in God is to do whatever man can do and then leave the rest to God. This should not be mistaken. This is a state of the heart; therefore this does not stop the person from action. Ibn Hamîs thought that \textit{tawheed} is knowledge of heart, reliance is a state of the heart. One has to invest a trust only in God. The rest is only an illusion, like a rich man trusts his richness, a powerful trusts his power. Man reaches the consent of God (\textit{rizâ}) only through reliance to God and his sincerity.\textsuperscript{39}

\begin{flushleft} \footnotesize
\textsuperscript{35} Ibn Hamîs, 9a, 41b, 46b, 56a-57b.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibn Hamîs, 33b, 78b.  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibn Hamîs, 8a, 52a, 75a, 79a.  
\textsuperscript{38} Ibn Hamîs, 8a, 12a, 20a, 58b-59a.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibn Hamîs, 8b-9a, 22a, 77a. \end{flushleft}
Consent of God (rizq) is a state of acceptance of God’s destiny and not to rebel against what is given to him. The consent of the person towards God is to see God’s will over him as the best choice. Meanwhile God’s consent towards a person is one’s actions in his path. God gives his consent and his almighty love to those who are patient against difficulties.

Ecstasy (wajd) is the state of being joyful and forgetting his existence in front of Divine Manifestation. It is an attempt to reach understanding of ultimate existence and its joyful and exciting state through a person’s high state of heart. This might cause some misinterpretations. Ibn Hamis preferred that one has to observe general rules of Qur’an and Sunnah even in the state of ecstasy.  

Knowledge is the understanding of meaning of things. Knowledge can be gained by personal effort; therefore it is different from gnosis. According to Ibn Hamis there are three types of knowledge, namely revelation (wahy), five senses, and inspiration. Revelation is a kind of knowledge which is given to prophets, but the ordinary gain knowledge through their reason and mind. Meanwhile, sufis reach the knowledge through inspiration with special training. Three of them with different methods meet at the same point to know and reach God.

The notion of ‘ilm is a very complex one, which has, over the ages, been used to describe very different forms of “knowledge”. It remains, nevertheless, strongly affected by the use made of it in the Qur’an, where it implies the knowledge of God and of religious matters, as opposed to other forms of knowledge arising out of experience and reflection.

According to ibn Hamis knowing comes before faith. If there is no knowledge of God, one cannot believe in reality and perform worship sincerely. Believing in God does not give the knowledge of God but only separates him from non-believers. In this content, knowledge means the knowledge of God in hearts.

Gnosis (m‘arifatullah) is the grasp of the reality of God directly. One experiences divine knowledge and reality. This state can be reached only through uplifted hearts such as worship and abstaining from the world. God exalts his fellows by His gnosis. Ibn Hamis thought that gnosis of God is certain knowledge of faith. Everything in religion, worship and actions should be performed through gnosis of God. The level of a believer before God is his consciousness of gnosis. Closeness of God is the result of knowledge of God, distance from God is the result of not knowing of it. God gives sincerity, ability of realisation of reality, wisdom and rhetoric through knowledge of God.

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40 Ibn Hamis, 85ab.
41 Ibn Hamis, 7b, 47a, 49ab, 59b, 69b-70a.
42 Ibn Hamis, 7b, 20a, 47a, 84b-85b.
43 Ibn Hamis, 57ab, 68b, 79b, 80a,b 82a, 85b.
Knowledge and gnosis of God are not contradictory. Assuming that they are contradictory is a false claim. Both can only be thought two sides of reality. From this point of view sufí must try to reach and hold both sides.44 These concepts of repentance (tawbah), ascetism (zuhd), remembrance (zikr), sincerity (ikhlás), patience (sabr), reliance (tawakkul), consent of God (rizq), ecstasy (vájd), knowledge and gnosis of God (m’arifatullah) are the basis of Ibn Hamís’s sufí philosophical thought.

4. Al-Muntaqá min Kalami Ahlí al-Tuqá

The future of a society rests on its cultural heritage. The chief guides of the culture and civilisations are philosophers, scholars and mystics, and their treatises. Great thinkers spread the light of knowledge all around the world. In this study we discover and evaluate the treatise of Muhammad Ibn Hamís, al-Muntaqá min Kalami Ahlí al-Tuqá. The treatise Al-Muntaqá min Kalami Ahlí al-Tuqá is not mentioned in any bibliography including Khasf al-Zumun of Katip Celebi and GAL of C. Brockelman. It was mentioned in al-Gunya of Kadi Iyaz, and al-Takmilá of Ibn al-Abbár. It is very important to bring to light such an essential, forgotten and unknown treatise. This treatise is the first to mention the concept of ‘Falasafa al-Dín’ The treatise also allows us to evaluate the thoughts of Ibn Hamís about philosophical sufism from the original source.

Muhammad Ibn Hamís wrote treatises about sufism, but only one of them was mentioned in literature. This is al-Muntaqá min Kalami Ahlí al-Tuqá.45 The book al-Muntaqá min Kalami Ahlí al-Tuqá which we have discovered is not mentioned in any resources and literature. But only Kadi Iyaz mentioned in his book al-Gunya.46 And Ibn al-Abbár mentioned it in al-Takmilá li Kitab al-Sila.47 This book is annotated and for the first time printed and published in this scholarly study. The Arabic original copy of the book is registered in Kuthayya Wahid Pasha Library with number 349. Our researches show that there is no other copy of this manuscript in hand. As I checked with Libraries in Turkey, Moscow, Berlin, Cairo, Tehran and British Library records, they do not show any registration of another copy. This single copy of al-Muntaqá’s manuscript is quite unique and very much valuable and important for researchers.

There is no record how the book al-Muntaqá reached to Wahid Pasha Library in Kuthayya. However there are some notes on the book showing that it has been examined by Muhammad ‘Ulwaňi and ‘Abdulqâdir b. Yusuf al-Mawáziní. According to library records Wahid Pasha had bought it from ‘Abdulqâdir ibn Yusuf al-Mawáziní and donated to library. It seems that the book had a long

44 Ibn Hamís, 78a, 81b, 82a, 84b, 86a.
journey from Cordoba to Kutahya, like some other books that came from Aleppo, Istanbul where Wahid Pasha worked and brought some books from Beirut.

The manuscript is 140x203 mm. The cover is made of leather; the side back is brown gazelle leather. The cover is beautifully designed with interesting geometric figures. Script is 105x160 mm and composed of 98 papers. The paper is champagne colour and originated from the East. The papers are 19 lines without any frame. The script is written in a nasih style with special black and red ink. There are some noted comments around the main text. The stamps of Wahid Pasha’s personal sign and library are both on the first and last pages. First stamp states: “This book is registered as a donation by ex-foreign minister Muhammad Anin Wahid, for students of the city of Kutahya, this cannot be taken out of the library. May Allah bless him and his parents.”

The full name of the author and the title is recorded on the first page. The author is described as “al-Imam al-‘ārif al-‘āmil al-‘āmil al-rabbānī al-kāmil” on the first page al Muntaqā min Kalamī Ahl al-Tuqā. Ibn Hamis mentions the title al Muntaqā min Kalamī Ahl al-Tuqā in 1b and 2a.

The manuscript was written by Muhammad Ibrahim b. Muhammad and completed at 681 AH. 4th Zilhicce (6 March 1283, Saturday). The author’s name was written and hidden mistakenly as “Abu Abdullah Ahmad ibn Masarra al-Kurtubi” on the first page. But there is no work of Ibn Masarra under this name.

al-Muntaqā has a style demonstrating the characteristic problems of the Xth and XIth centuries. The style is similar to al-Riāya and al-Wasāyā of Hāris al-Muhāsibī, Maktubats of Junayd Baghdādi and al-‘Iqdu al Fārid of ibn Abī Rabbīhi. al-Muntaqā has many vague and ambiguous expressions. This might be a problem related to his era when the academic style and concepts were not established at the time.

5. The Content of al-Muntaqā min Kalamī Ahl al-Tuqā

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Hamis began to write his book with an introduction and a long pray. He explains why he needs to write this book. He believed that previous books had guided people and he wanted to pass this wisdom and knowledge. He praised God with his names, and glorified him for his wisdom and justice and thanked him for all creation for his mercy and blessing. God needs nothing but everything needs God.48

Ibn Hamis prays to Lord to guide him to be in front of the good obedient people, and to be leader of the discoveries of the secrets of the unknown mysteries. He takes refuge from his ego and the devil to the most merciful and the most gracious God. He begs not to be taught by the punishment of God and to be forgiven by the most pardoner Lord. He wasted whatever God granted him, but still hopes God shows mercy on him. He fears to be punished for the sake of

48I  Ibn Hamis, 1b-2a.
illustration for others. Ibn Hamis in this prayer continues to plea for mercy of the God and increases his knowledge and obedience (takwa), beautifies his character not to be spoiled by his ego. He sees that the fear of God and love of God are equally important for the heart. He wants to purify his heart from worldly desires. He asks strength for his obedience. He prays that God does not take away the blessing from him because of his disobedience and lack of gratitude. If Lord does not accept my prayers there is no one for him to cry out. He requests not to be turned down. The Lord’s mercy covers not only believers but also covers disobedient people. If God does not forgive the sinners, the meaning of ‘the mercy’ would not occur in the world.\(^49\)

After offering a deeply touching prayer, Ibn Hamis presents his epistemology and the important concepts tawakkul, iḥlās, sabr and rīḍa.\(^50\) After giving brief information about these issues, he asserts the relevant issues and problems about zuhd (asceticism) at length. Zuhd is a quite important concept and practice for Ibn Hamis. Because the world is not a place for rewarding, but is rather a place to be patient for troubles and suffering, and then reach the highest levels before the God, one needs to purify his heart from the worldly desires in order to keep himself in the straight path.\(^51\)

Ibn Hamis’s thoughts about philosophy are as follows: Everybody is created in the same way whether he is a prophet, scholar, philosopher or a layman. But “mind” or “reason” (‘aql) occurs in different ways. Application of reason is the essential difference for mankind. One needs to have ‘aql to know God. If there is no sign or indication of ‘aql, one cannot be called reasonable and mindful in the sense of intellect (‘aqlīl and nāṭiq). Reason has to control ego, otherwise man is not much different from an animal. Man as a vulnerable creature has to cut himself from worldly belongings and desires in order to get closer to the God almighty.\(^52\) The prophet Muhammad (S) is a role model. When a believer involves too much in worldly pleasures, forgets his real responsibilities and then sins, he starts carrying some signs of the infidelity in his actions and behaviours. Some people resemble wolfs in their action or monkeys in their behaviour in attaining their worldly ambitions. If one does not fear of God and lacks moral values, he should not be counted as man, because they abuse their intellect and reason which were given for good deeds.\(^53\)

According to Ibn Hamis, knowledge can be divided into three categories: Religious, philosophical and professional ones. Religious knowledge is the highest

\(^{49}\) Ibn Hamis, 2a-7b.
\(^{50}\) Ibn Hamis, 8a-9a, 22a.
\(^{51}\) Ibn Hamis, 9a, 41b, 46b, 56a-57b, 60b.
\(^{52}\) Ibn Hamis, 9ab, 10a, 13a-14b.
\(^{53}\) Ibn Hamis, 16a, 17b, 20b, 42a, 69b, 82a.
category of the knowledge. One has to choose the religious knowledge and the most useful knowledge at his time for the all world and religion.  

Five senses are the windows of the body to the outside world. They have to be controlled and protected. They should not be spoilt at all. Eyes are the primary parts of the body which have to be protected from looking at forbidden things. After that, ears are very provocative senses. Egos are stimulated by eyes, and ears can direct a man to sins and abusing of moral values. A devout man is in command of his ego and controls his life in the straight path. A pious man takes a lesson from the days bygone and enlightens himself with Qur’an and Hadith. Foolish man becomes a slave to his ego and desires, and cannot give up this habit, he neither enjoys the pleasures nor gives them up. 

There are three absolute capabilities: “Intellect”, “sexuality”, and “vengeance”. Intellect can be used both ways either in the way of the God or in wrong doings. Sexuality may be directed in permissible ways which allows continuations of the generations or in adultery. As for the vengeance, it could be a disaster when it is used for the sake of the worldly objectives, or could be utilized for the protection of one’s life and religion. One has to improve and control them. Abuse or excessive usage of these capacities leads man to an imbalance. The straight path is to keep them in balance. Ghazzālī had repeated the same thoughts about utilization of these capabilities of man. 

There are physical responsibilities of the body such as praying, fasting or helping each other along with the heart which also has responsibilities such as truth, modesty and honesty. Both are equally important for man. If one fulfils both responsibilities, he becomes a fellow of God. One has to behave consciously and sincerely in his action. This is a condition to be a fellow of God, but this is not always easy. Because external worship or actions are more appreciated by people than contemplating and experiences of the internal world. This led people to give more emphasis to external worships and behaviours. In fact moral values and wisdom are far more important than anything else for man. Heart is the centre for moral values and wisdom. One reaches higher levels of gratitude of the God, eternal goodness and happiness. 

Ibn Hamīs thought that Gnosis (m‘arifatullah) is crucial for man. Knowing God requires fulfilling certain conditions. One only can reach that level with fulfilling his responsibilities. If one recognises God, he cannot disobey him, and contemplate and remember the God. One has to continuously be aware of being a servant of God with honour and modesty. Then God brings these kinds of people close to himself. Before the Angel of Death comes, one has to fulfil all responsibilities and life should not be wasted. Heart should not be involved too

54 Ibn Hamīs, 11b.  
55 Ibn Hamīs, 14b-16a, 18a-19b, 21ab.  
57 Ibn Hamīs, 22a, 31b-32a, 34b, 36b-37a, 64a-65b.
much in the world; otherwise he could not have the pleasures of worshipping God.\(^58\)

According to Ibn Hamis whatever we gain with struggle is more important than whatever we gain as a blind follower. Therefore search and contemplation is not like stubbornness. The symbols and narrations in the Qur'an have to be understood properly. The greatness of God has to be comprehended. If one believes in God without knowing God and his words, he is distant from the essence of Islam.\(^59\)

Qur'an is the guidance for humankind. ‘There is no doubt in the book which is guidance for God conscious people’\(^60\). This is an essential principle for Muslims. Moderation in every action, being in balance in daily life is important in the Muslim life. One should be careful to understand and interpret and then in their applications. Emotions and desires are more effective in youth; however this period does not last forever. Examples from prophets, companions, scholars, sufis and great pious peoples have to be shown to young generations in order to keep them outside of the world’s distractions. There is no alternative to holding tight to Qur'an in the time of corruption.\(^61\)

There are positive and negative worships. Some are actively performing worships such as praying and fasting, others are not performing a sin following his desires. The world is a stage or arena to perform both of them. One faces all sorts of changes in his life. Generally in every new phase the prior one is forgotten. When one is fed, he forgets he was starving or vice versa. When one suffers, he forgets his blessed hours or vice versa. One dies as if he never lived. Man forgets that life is temporal. One has to be aware of the fact that God is watching over him and his behaviours.\(^62\)

Everything in life is either a mirror or an obstruction to come close to God. Arrogance is an evil-doing and mostly attached to ignorance and blindness. A blind follower tries to observe whatever the descendants hold as religion and tradition without contemplating. This becomes his religion in time. One, who is a blind follower of his tradition, gives them up when he gains the knowledge of God. Thus the habits turn into their real character.\(^63\)

Everyone is on different levels in terms of belief, religion, behaviour, patience, gratitude, relying on God. The friends of God (Wali) are at the top of people. They observe to clean their heart and struggle to edify their egos. There are innumerable ways to reach the God. When one reaches the God in these ways there is no fear for him any more. He does not rely upon anybody and does not

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\(^58\) Ibn Hamis, 39a, 57ab, 68b, 69b-70a, 79b-80a, 82a, 85b.

\(^59\) Ibn Hamis, 20a, 47a, 59b, 69b-70a.

\(^60\) “Hudun lil muttaqin”, The Holy Qur’an, Surah al-Baqara 2/2.

\(^61\) Ibn Hamis, 18b-19a, 25b, 26b-27a.

\(^62\) Ibn Hamis, 21b-22a, 44b.

\(^63\) Ibn Hamis, 22b-23a.
praise anything else but God. Increase in knowledge and in action increase consciousness of God. Sincerity (ikhlâs) produces God consciousness (takwîî). Patience (sabr) brings about modesty and humility (hilm). Relying on God (tawakkul) or acceptance of everything which comes from God (rizâ) takes to Gnosis (m'arifetullah). These are the highest qualities of humankind shown by the God. Weak people claim to obtain these qualities without acquiring them in their actions or worship, unfortunately this illusion leads them to astray.\textsuperscript{64}

Regret for sins and sincerely asking forgiveness from God (tawhâb) is distant from devil. Tawhâb entails giving up sins and being distant from immoral behaviours, and it is a hope for mercy from God and refuge for Muslims until the judgement day. Ordinary Muslim makes tawhâb because of his wrong doings and sins while the prophets perform tawhâb either to be an example for believers or for their previous situations when they reach higher levels.\textsuperscript{65}

The humankind is created in order to know God by God. The God taught them who is their Lord and made them His witnesses. Love and hatred is part of man, but ego likes forbidden desires and does not like responsibilities. One has to start something confidently and finish off carefully. Life has to be in balance between hope and fear (khayf and rejâ). One should not behave just depending on God’s mercy as if he has an agreement with God. Mercy of God covers everything but he is just as well as punishes the guilty ones mightily.\textsuperscript{66}

God is closer to man than his jugular vein. There is no medium between God and his servants. If anyone wants to get closer to God, he has to spend some effort himself. If anyone puts anything between God and himself in order to get closer to God, obviously he is completely mistaken. Not knowing God is the only obstacle between God and man. The punishment of not knowing God is being distant from God himself. The reward of being in the way of God is to reach higher and blessed levels. Whoever loves God, God loves him.\textsuperscript{67}

Learned man knows what he means by his concepts. Knowing the meanings of the definitions is a preliminary request for the concepts. The knowledge of the definitions brings about the truth. If one does not know the definitions he cannot differentiate the right from the wrong and cannot separate knowledge from ignorance, and then he may follow or fall in the falsity. If one knows God, he cannot behave badly, rudely and intolerantly. They face the wrong doings against themselves patiently and mercifully. Whatever God puts upon him, he welcomes everything from God.\textsuperscript{68}

Ibn Hamis in this treatise uses the concept and the word ‘Falâsafâ al-Dîn’ and defines the limits of its subjects for the first time in history. Ibn Hamis sees

\textsuperscript{64} Ibn Hamis, 23b-24b.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibn Hamis, 24b-25a, 54ab.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibn Hamis, 58ab, 74b.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibn Hamis, 68b-69b.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibn Hamis, 70b-72b.
the thinking of a pilosopher and the perception of natural intelligence (fitnat) as the field of philosophers of religion. According to him, God gave them high honours in the worlds of God’s highest heavens (worlds of malakut and jabarut).69 This is an original contribution by Ibn Hamis.

Knowledge is composed of external (outward) and internal (inward) sides (zāhir and bātin). Both sides are not contrary but supportive to each other. Not only zāhir has to appropriate to bātin, but also bātin without zāhir is meaningless. Bātin without zāhir is just a useless claim. Bātin as internal expressions and interpretations has to be in the line of Qur’an and Hadith. Any bātin which is contradictory to Qur’an and Hadith is originated from devil. Whoever praises the bātini knowledge while discriminating prophetic knowledge is far from God.70

In the light of above mentioned facts, we can say that ibn Hamis quoted some passages from Muhasibi’s work al-Riāya. In addition to this, he gives space for the wise words and points of some great sufis and scholars such as Hasan al-Basri, Malik ibn Dinar, Rabia al-‘Adawiyya. Furthermore, some sufis scholars were quoted without mentioning their names such as Hakim al-Tirmizi, Sahl ibn Abdullah al-Tustari, Junayd al-Baghdadi and Abu Yakup al-Nahracuri.71

According to our researches, there is one single copy of manuscript of al-Muntaqā min Kalami Ahl al-Tuqā in the world. We hope that this preliminary research about Ibn Hamis and this important book for the first print and publication of the original Arabic text will be very beneficial for researchers and scholars. Also we wish this study would contribute to understanding of Ibn Hamis’s philosophical sufism.

Bibliography


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69 Ibn Hamis, 76b. Although the writer uses this term only in one place in his work, he does not give more information on it.

70 Ibn Hamis, 77a-86a.

71 Ibn Hamis, 87a-98b.


