

## AL-QĀDIR' S ROLE IN THE SUNNITE RESTORATION

### Abstract:

*During al-Qādir's reign, the political power was in the hands of the Buwayhid's amīr al-umarā', Bahā' al-Dawla. The latter was the strong supporter of the Shī'ites who flourished during this time. Realizing that he only held the religious power and wishing to be a champion of the Sunnites, the caliph embarked on a famous endeavor which can be called as the Sunnite Restoration. With this he tried to counter the increasing ascendancy of the Shī'ites and existing influence of the Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites. He took up a leadership of politico-religious party against the Shī'ite, Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite movements. In addition, he issued the Risāla al-Qādiriyya (Al-Qādir's Epistle), containing the Sunnite creed based on the ideas of the Ḥanbalite scholars. The main issues he dealt in the Risāla al-Qādiriyya were the unity and absolute power of Allāh, the uncreatedness of the Kalām (Word of Allāh), Allāh's real attributes and the acknowledgement of the excellence of the Khulafāur Rāshidin according to the chronological enumeration. Finally, the Muslims should not discredit the companions of the Prophets.*

**Key Words:** *al-Qadir, Kalam, role, sunnite, restoration*

### A. Introduction

Al-Qādir billāh was the 27<sup>th</sup> caliph of the 'Abbāsids. Even though his reign and that of his successor, al-Qā'im bi Amrillāh, were in decline due to the rule of the amīr al-umarā' over Baghdād beginning from the reign of al-Rādī, he had reigned the 'Abbāsīd caliphate for forty one years, a quite long reign. During al-Qādir's reign the Shī'ites were at the peak of their power and influence because they got support from the Buwaihid amīr al-umarā' who were actually hold the rein of the 'Abbāsīd power. It was the Buwaihids who invented the Shī'ite festivals of the Day of 'Āshūrā' (tenth day of Muḥarram) when Ḥusain ibn 'Alī was murdered by Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah, and the Day of Ghadir Khum to commemorate the day when 'Alī, according to the Shī'ite belief was chosen by the Prophet Muḥammad as his successor. It was also during the Buwaihid's rule many great Shī'ite scholars appeared. They developed the Shī'ite doctrine and wrote many

works on various branches of Islamic knowledge which showed their tendency. Two of the great Shī'ite scholars who lived during al-Qādir's reign were Sharīf al-Rāḍī and his brother al-Murtaḍā. The famous work of the former was *Nahj al-Balāgha*, while for the latter was *al-Shāfi fi al-Imāma*.

Realizing the threat of the Shī'ite ascendancy and the need to defend the Sunnite caliphate, al-Qādir launched the movement which some scholars called as the Sunnite restoration. This paper will discuss his attempt at this Sunnite restoration. It covers the beginning of the Sunnite restoration, the Risāla (Epistle) of al-Qādir (Risāla al-Qādiriyya), the profession of the Risāla al-Qādiriyya, the meaning and scope of the Epistle and the conclusion.

## **B. The beginning of the Sunnite restoration.**

G. Makdisi and Henry Laoust maintain that the Sunnite restoration began during the reign of al-Qādir (381/991-422/1031). However, a sign of the movement had emerged as early as 364/975, following the forced abdication of the caliph al-Muṭī'. The Sunnites launched a rebellion against the Buwayhid's rule led by the Turk Sabuktigin, a previous chamberlain of Mu'izz al-Dawla with the support of the amīr Alftakin. For fifty days, in Baghdād the *khuṭba* on the name of the caliph al-Ṭā'i' was terminated. The threat to the Buwayhids was so great that 'Aḍud al-Dawla had to come from Shīrāz to help Bakhtiyār and succeeded in crushing the rebellion.<sup>1</sup>

The movement of Sunnite reaction, stirring shortly in Iraq, developed in Damasqus under the leadership of Alftakin, who led a force comprising of the Daylamites, the Turks and the Bedouins of Palestine and succeeded in establishing his authority over Sidon, a part of Libanese side of Tiberiade. In 368 Alftakin was defeated at Ramla by the Fāṭmids, but in Damasqus, for twelve years he succeeded in holding the advance of the Fāṭmids with the help of the local militia of self defense (*ahḍāth*), which took control over peasantry of Ghouta and Qassām Turāb, before the Fāṭmids took over Damasqus and occupied Homs, Hama and Chayzar in 378/988.<sup>2</sup>

A new crises, however, helped the caliphate. In 381/991 a violent conflict broke out between al-Ṭā'i' and the Buwayhid Bahā' al-Dawla, whose soldiers removed the caliph and imprisoned him in the palace of their

master. The palace of the caliph was in part pillaged by the soldiers. Bahā' al-Dawla forced the caliph to abdicate in favour of al-Qādir, a grand son of al-Muqtadir. The notables of Baghdād with the *ashraf* and the *qādīs* were invited to witness the act of abdication.<sup>3</sup>

With the accession of al-Qādir billāh (381-422), an active movement of Sunnite restoration began to be visible under his leadership. In 382/923, the day following his ascension to the caliphate, al-Qādir founded a new mosque, the Ḥarbiyya, and the *khutba* was delivered in his name.<sup>4</sup> Al-Qādir's initiative to build the mosque, seems to have been a reaction of the foundation of the House of Knowledge, *Dār al-'Ilm* by Sābūr b. Ardashir, the vizier of Bahā' al-Dawla in the same year.

Al-Qādir's attempt at the Sunnite restoration was not through material power, but through religious, juridical and moral forces. He presented himself as the holder of the sovereignty and the true successor of the Prophet. He knew how to defend the essentials of his prerogatives: the mention of his name in the *khutba*, the nomination of the *qādīs*, the investiture of the governors of the provinces and the Buwayhid *amīrs*, and in the general way, the preeminence of the caliphate as source, at least in theory, of religious and temporal matters.<sup>5</sup>

It was in the framework of this politics that the caliph sent sometimes recommendations (*waṣīyya*) to some of his agents, or he himself gave lecture in the palace of the caliph and in the mosques, concerning the interference of the caliphate in the fundamental problems of the creed. This attitude brought him to establish constant collaboration with doctors of the Law and the organization of Sunnite *da'wa* (missionary) in which the caliphate found its most effective agents among the theologians, jurisconsults and popular preachers.<sup>6</sup>

The politics of the caliph al-Qādir benefited from the support of Sulṭān Maḥmūd b. Sabuktagin, who had overthrown the Sāmānids of Bukhārā' and Samarqand in 389, and who, in 392 endeavored to conquer the North India. In 408 Maḥmūd b. Sabuktagin took Khiwa, and at the end of his reign attacked the Buwayhids, pushed them up to Rayy and Iṣfahān.<sup>7</sup> He presented himself as a defender of Sunnism against Mu'tazilism, Imāmism and Ismā'īlism, and mentioned the name of the caliph al-Qādir in the (Friday) *khutba*.<sup>8</sup>

The first action of al-Qādir's independence took place in 394 when

he refused Bahā' al-Dawla's nomination of the Sharif Abū Aḥmad al-Mūsawī (d. 400), the father of al-Raḍī and al-Murtaḍā to the post of the *qāḍī al-quḍāt*.<sup>9</sup> Abū Aḥmad al-Mūsawī had been nominated by Bahā' al-Dawla's as head of pilgrimage, tribunal court, *niqāba* (agency of the 'Alids) and *qāḍī al-quḍāt* (chief *qāḍī*). Al-Qādir, gave his agreement for the pilgrimage, tribunal court (*mazālim*) and the *niqāba* (agency of the 'Alids), but he refused for al-Mūsawī's judiciary post.<sup>10</sup>

Al-Qādir's rejection of al-Mūsawī's appointment as *qāḍī al-quḍāt* has several meanings. First, as maintained by H. Laoust, he feared the loss of his right to appoint the grand *qāḍī*, and most importantly, his caliphal power. Because it is very probable, once an 'Alid gained the highest position in the court, his next move, was to oust him from the caliphate. Second, the caliph realized the significance of the function of the *qāḍī al-quḍāt* and this was a very important privilege of him as caliph. The *qāḍī al-quḍāt*, besides dealt with religious issues, also acted as spokesman of the caliph to the people. The relationship between the *qāḍī al-quḍāt* and the caliph, therefore, was close. If this very important position taken by a Shī'ite, any religious decisions would be taken for the advantages of the Shī'ite community, and this, no doubt, would not be accepted by the majority of the Sunnite community and the caliph would lose their sympathy. And finally, the caliph's measure in this issue, was one of his attempts to defend Sunnism.

In 398 when violent fights broke out in Baghdād between the Sunnites and Shī'ites, the caliph reacted vigorously to establish the order. He repressed the insurrection and succeeded in removing the theologian Ibn al-Mu'allim (Shaikh al-Mufīd), the leader of the Shī'ites, for a brief exile.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the caliph took up the leadership of a politico-religious opposition party and found himself at the vanguard of the ideologies which were developed for a defense of Sunnism. He represented a challenge against Shī'ism and the Mu'tazilite *kalām*.<sup>12</sup>

From what has been explained above, H. Laoust is right when he maintains that there are three factors which contributed to the Sunnite restoration. The first factor of the Sunnite restoration should be sought in the politics of Maḥmūd b. Sabuktigin, who, in 387, overthrew the Sāmānid dynasty, he then took the control of Khurāsān, and claimed as a defender of the Sunna. His early conquests in India, in 392, were presented as a brilliant victory of Sunnism. When the news reached Baghdād, the populace attacked

the Christians and seized the Jews for they were accused of being the beneficiary of the Shī'ite regime. Sultān Maḥmūd also appeared in the traditional historiography, as a model of the sovereign whose only political goal was the triumph of the Sunna. He delivered *khutba* on the name of the 'Abbāsīd caliph in all pulpits of the mosques in the regions under his control.<sup>13</sup>

The second factor of this movement of the restoration lay in the upsurge of the popular agitation which manifested in Iraq with extraordinary violence. Already in 389, the bloody fight broke out in Baghdād at the occasion of the celebration of 'Āshūrā'.<sup>14</sup> The new and grave war broke again in 398 when the Shī'ites made publicly a case of the Qur'ānic recension of Ibn Mas'ūd: a committee of Sunnite jurists under the leadership of the Shāf'ite Abū Hāmid al-Isfaraynī, condemned the recension as against that of 'Uthmān, but the resentment was then felt among the Shī'ites, that they were without doubt insufficiently protected by the Buwayhids in their decline, causing them to shout in Baghdād the name of the Fātimīd caliph al-Ḥākīm, "Yā Ḥākīm Yā Maṣṣūr."

It was above all began from 406 that the situation in Baghdād developed to an exceptional gravity; the Sunnites stopped the Shī'ites to celebrate their feast, leading to violent fight between both. In 407 a series of fires was set simultaneously and mysteriously at the mausoleum of al-Husein in Karbala; in Baghdād, at the great mosque of Sāmarrā' and the battles broke out in Mecca, Medīna and Jerusalem. The disorder reached such a violence in 408 that this year was called, by the Sunnite historians as the year of *fitna* and also considered as a beginning of the great movement of the Sunnite restoration which witnessed the arrival of the Seljuqs in Baghdād in 447, and the re-establishment of the 'Abbāsīd *khutba* in Egypt in 567.<sup>15</sup>

The last factor which explains the first success of this restoration should be sought in the politics of the caliph al-Qādir, who tried to get rid of the tutelage of the Buwayhids and to take a positive personal authority. The *waṣīyya* recommendation which he addressed in 390 to the new *qādī* of Jīlān was only a gesture, but the gesture which revealed a wish of the head of the empire who was anxious to remind his agents of their responsibilities and obedience to the caliph.<sup>16</sup> In 394, as mentioned above, he refused the nomination, made by Bahā' al-Dawla, of a Shī'ite for the post of the *qādī al-quḍāt*. At the same time he carried a battle against the Fātimīds. The

Mu'tazilite, 'Alī b. Sa'īd al-Iṣṭakhri (d.404) composed for him, a refutation of the Bāṭiniyya, and the Ash'arite al-Bāqillānī (d.403) had also attacked the Fāṭimids in his *Kashf al-Asrār*,<sup>17</sup> and in his *Tamhīd*, he defended the caliphate of the Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn against the attack of the Shī'ites.<sup>18</sup> The *qāḍī al-quḍāt* 'Abd al-Jabbār wrote in his *Mughnī* a section defending the right of the Qurayshites to the caliphate and the position of the Rāshidūn Caliphs.<sup>19</sup> Abū Maṣṣūr al-Baghdādī in his *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, defended the legitimacy of the 'Abbāsids.<sup>20</sup> In 408 the caliph sent a representative to the Sulṭān Maḥmūd, demanding him to fight the Bāṭiniyya and the Mu'tazilites. In 409 he read a document in the caliphal palace condemning the thesis of the Mu'tazilites and the Rāfidites and making the definition of the doctrine of the *Sunna wa al-Jamā'a*. This document or decree, which was known later as the *Risāla al-Qādiriyya* became officially the creed of the caliphate. It was actually a profession of the Ḥanbalite creed in which one will find the theses defended by Ibn Baṭṭā in his *Ibāna*.<sup>21</sup>

The death of the caliph al-Ḥākim in 411/1021, marked the beginning of the Fāṭimids decline. In one letter which reached Baghdād in 418, Sulṭān Maḥmūd, who placed his conquests in India under the standard of Sunnism, declared himself as a protector of the 'Abbāsīd caliph, and in 420, in a new message, he expressed his intention to lead the war against the Bāṭiniyya and the Rāfidites. In response to this letter, the caliph al-Qādir took severe measures, in particular in Baṣra, where he exiled the Shī'ite preachers. When Maḥmūd b. Sabuktagin died in 421 and the caliph al-Qādir died in 422, the idea of the Sunnite restoration had already taken shape. The new lecture of the Qādiriyya was made in the palace by the caliph al-Qā'im, al-Qādir's successor, at the time when the new Sunnite dynasty, that of the Saljuqids began to extend its domination on the oriental provinces of the caliphate.<sup>22</sup>

The *Qādiriyya* (will be discussed later) remained in the eyes of the most moderate Ḥanbalite doctors as the model *par excellence* of the Sunnite 'aqīda (creed) which they claimed to be a lecture and application. This attachment of the Ḥanbalites to the *Qādiriyya* was understood without doubt, first of all, as a reaction against Shī'ism and Mu'tazilism, but also against the growing rise of Ash'arism, and an expectation to make it an official credo of the empire, especially since the foundation of the Niẓāmiyya in 459.<sup>23</sup> Ḥanbalism, on the other part, represented then in Baghdād, under the

caliphate of al-Qādir, al-Qā'im and al-Muqtadī, a party of 'Abbāsīd legitimism anxious to defend the caliphal authority as well as the established authority against the numerous infringements that the caliphs became victims. The Ḥanbalite theologian Ibn al-Baqqāl (d.440) was proud to compare the 'Abbāsīd caliphate to a tent whose most solid stakes were the Ḥanbalites.<sup>24</sup>

### C. The epistle of al-Qādir (al-Risāla al-Qādiriyya)

According to Makdisi, in the first years of the fifth/eleventh century, before the decline of the masters of the Buwayhid palace, there was a first sign of official Sunnite restoration, when the caliph al-Qādir issued the decrees. This was in 408/1017 and in 409/1018.

In 408/1017, the caliph demanded the Ḥanafite-Mu'tazilite jurisconsults to make public renunciation and banned them to hold public discussion on Mu'tazilism, Rāfidism and all doctrines considered as anti-Islam. He asked them to sign a pledge to this effect under the punishment of corporal chastisement and for exile in case of the recidivist. The Ghaznavid Maḥmūd b. Sabuktagin followed the example of the caliph. This prince pursued the Mu'tazilites, Rāfidites, Ismā'īlites, Qarmaṭians and the anthropomorphists, *mushabbiha*. He crucified some of them, imprisoned others or sent them into exile. He gave also orders to curse these heretics from the pulpits of the mosques under his dominion. The same condemnation was also launched against Ash'arism on the pulpits of Nīsābūr under the orders of the first Saljuq Sulṭān Tugril Beg.<sup>25</sup>

The demand to have public retraction was not the only official act of the caliph al-Qādir in the Sunnite restoration of Traditionalist Sunnism. The event of year 409/1017, (on 17 Ramḍān), an epistle which he composed was read publicly in the Dār al-Khilāfa (caliphal palace), in the solemn occasion. The epistle adopted the Traditionalist Sunnism, according to the chroniclers, who cite the following passage, "Who says that the Qur'ān is created is an infidel whose blood is allowed to shed."<sup>26</sup>

It is worthy to note that the Bahgdānian Mu'tazilites who were obliged to make public retraction were mostly the Ḥanafite jurisconsults. This happened probably because most Ḥanafite jurisconsults tended to use, to a greater degree, reason or *'aql* when they dealt with the Islamic law, as the Mu'tazilites used it with liberty in theological issues. Therefore many

Ḥanafite scholars were inclined to Mu'tazilism. One great Ḥanafite jurisconsult, Abū 'Abdillāh al-Saymarī on becoming a legal witness in Rābī' II 417, was demanded by the *qāḍī al-quḍāt* Ibn Abī al-Shawārib to make a public renunciation of Mu'tazilism, of whom he was accused. The chroniclers had thus, the reason to say that the public retraction became a rule.<sup>27</sup>

In 420/1029 the caliph al-Qādir wrote three epistle in the same genre of which we are going to cite. This epistle was read in the palace of the caliph. According to Ibn al-Jawzī's account in *al-Muntaẓam*, there are three independent epistles, which seem to show some differences of composition or style, yet in the main points are the same.<sup>28</sup>

The first cited epistle was read on Monday 19, Sha'bān. There was a convocation of the notables, judges, witnesses and jurisconsults in the palace of the caliph. Ibn al-Jawzī, says that the epistle was long; it contains the remarks of admonition, on excellence of the Sunnite orthodoxy, a condemnation of Mu'tazilism, and to support this, citations of numerous Ḥadīths were referred to the Prophet and his Companions.<sup>29</sup>

The second epistle was read by his vizier Abū al-Ḥasan b. Ḥājib al-Nu'mān in similar audience which took place in the next month, Thursday 20 Ramaḍān. It contains Prophetic traditions, traditions on the death of the Prophet, and those which were transmitted of his remarks on the main questions of the religion and its prescriptions; a condemnation as *fāsiq*, one who professed the creation of the Qur'ān. And then came to the conversation which took place between 'Abd al-Azīz al-Makkī and Bishr al-Mārisī on the subject of the creation of the Qur'ān. The conclusion of the epistle was an admonition and an appeal to the application of the principle: "ordering the goods and preventing the evils." Those who were present at the convocation attested their presence through their signatures and written declaration to have heard the lecture of the epistle.<sup>30</sup>

A third convocation was held on Monday 1, Dzul Qa'da. Ibn al-Jawzī says that the epistle of al-Qādir which was read this time was very long. The audience remained there up to the fall of the night for attending the lecture completely, after they affixed at the end of the document their signatures attesting their presence during the lecture and acknowledging their understanding of the content of it. The content of the document is more or less similar to the second one.<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately we do not have the integral texts of these epistles read by orders of the caliph al-Qādir. All of the epistles seem to have been named at the end: "The Profession of al-Qādir," (al-I'tiqād al-Qādirī ). We will cite the epistle according to the text.

#### **D. The profession of the Qādirite creed (al-Risāla al-Qādiriyya)**

This profession of the Qādirite faith came down to us through the traditions of the Ḥanbalites. It is Ibn al-Jawzī who conserves it in his *Muntaẓam*. According to the authority of his teacher, the great traditionist Muḥammad b. Nāṣir, who had learnt from Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Farrā', son of the great master of the Ḥanbalites, the qāḍī Abū Ya'lā al-Farrā',<sup>32</sup> the author of *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya* and *al-Mu'tamad*.

The text of this profession of faith was cited by Ibn al-Jawzī among the events of the year 433/1041-42.<sup>33</sup> In the *Ṭabaqāt* of Abū al-Ḥusayn Ibn Ya'lā', the original transmitter, "It was the preceding year (432) which was given the date of the lecture."<sup>34</sup> In all cases, this profession of faith of al-Qādir was read frequently under the reign of al-Qā'im.

The profession of faith of al-Qādir was presented in the following way, by its original transmitter Ibn Abi Ya'lā': "The Imam al-Qā'im bi amrillāh proclaimed after the year 430, the profession of the Qādirite faith which had been read by al-Qādir himself. It was read in the *dīwān* (caliphal palace) in the presence of ascetics and '*ulamā*'. There had been a great Traditionist among those who were present, the Shaikh Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Umar al-Qazwīnī. He refused first to sign, but then accepted after some jurisconsults told him with the following remark, "It is the profession of the faith of the Muslims: whoever opposes it becomes sinner and infidel."<sup>35</sup> The following is the text of the Qādirite creed:

"It is necessary for man to know that there is one God who has no companion, who neither begets nor is begotten, who has no equal and has accepted none as His son or companion and who has no co-ruler of the universe with Him. He is the first and, as such, He has always been. He is the last for He will never cease to exist. He is all powerful (He needs nothing). When He wishes a thing, He has only to say, "Be" and it is there." He needs nothing. There is no God save Him, the Living, the Eternal. No slumber, neither sleep overtakes Him. He gives food but does not take it

Himself. He is alone and yet never feels lonely. He is the self-sufficient of anything. He is friendly with none. Years ago He is not! and how can they affect Him for He is, indeed, the Author of the year and time, day and night, light and darkness, heaven and earth, and all the creatures that are therein, of land and water and all that is within them and, verily, of all things, living and dead or inanimate being. Our Lord is unique, there is nothing beside Him. No space encloses Him. By His power He has created every thing. He has created the throne though He does not need it. He is on the throne because He so wills it, and not like human beings, to rest on it."

"He is the Director of heaven and earth and of all things there and of all things on land and water. There is no director save Him and no protector either. He provides them (with the means of subsistence). He makes them ill and well again, makes them die or keeps them alive. All creatures are weak, including Angels, Prophets and Apostles. He is powerful through His power. He is knowing through His own knowledge. Eternal and incomprehensible is He. He is the hearer who hear through His hearing and the Seer who sees through His sight. He knows Himself the qualities of these both attributes. There is none of His creatures who attained the knowledge of these two substances."

"He speaks (with word) but not with (created) organs like those of human beings. Only those attributes should be ascribed to Him which He has Himself ascribed or those which His Prophet have ascribed to Him and everyone of the attributes which He has Himself ascribed is real attribute of His being, not metaphorical one."

"Man should also know : the Word of God is not created. He has spoken through Gabriel and has revealed it to His Prophet. After Gabriel had heard it from Him - he repeated it to Muḥammad, Muḥammad to his Companions, his Companions to the community. And, therefore, mere repetition by man does not make "the Word" created for it is the very Word of God and the Word of God is not created. And it remains "uncreated" whether repeated or retained in memory, written or heard. He who asserts that it is in any way "created" is an unbeliever whose blood it is permissible to shed - should he refuse to repent of his error when called upon to do so."

"One should also know that Faith is speech, action, and thought: Speech with the tongue, action with the members (*arkān*) and the limbs (*jawāriḥ*) and internal confirmation (*taṣdīq*). Faith may become greater or smaller -

greater (increase or decrease) by obedience, smaller by disobedience. It has different stages and divisions. The highest is the confession: "There is no God but Allāh!" and the lowest is preventing a danger in the street. Self-control is part of faith and patience is to faith what the head is to the body. Man knows not what is recorded about it with God and what is sealed there with Him. And for this reason precisely we say: "He is believing if God wills: and I hope, I am believing." There is no other resource save hope. Let him not, therefore, despair because he is striving for something which lies hidden in the futures. He should honestly carry out all laws and directions and do acts of supererogation for all these are part of faith. Faith never reaches an end, since supererogatory works never attain a limit."

"One must love all the Companions of the Prophet. They are the best of human beings after the Prophet. The best and noblest of them after the Prophet is Abū Bakr as-Ṣiddīq, next to him ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, next to ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, and next to ‘Uthmān ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. May God bless them and associate with them in paradise and have compassion on the souls of the Companions of the Prophet. He who slanders ‘Āisha has no part or lot in Islam. Of Mu‘āwiyya we should only say good things and refuse to enter to any controversy about him. We should invoke God's mercy for all. God has said: "And they who have come after them into the faith say, O, our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in the faith, put not into our hearts ill-will against them who believe. O, our Lord! Thou verily art kind and merciful." And He said of them: We will remove what is in their breasts of rancor as brethren face to face on couches. We should declare no one an unbeliever for omitting to fulfill any of the legal ordinances except the prescribed prayer; for he who neglects to pray without due cause is an unbeliever even though he does not deny the duty of praying as the Prophet said: Neglect of prayer is of unbelief, whoso neglects it is an unbeliever, and remains so until he repents and prays. And were he to die before repentance he will awake on the day of judgment with Pharaoh, Hāmān, and Korah. The neglect of other injunctions does not make one unbeliever even if one is so criminal as not to admit the duty. Such are the doctrines of the Sunna and of the community! (*‘Aqīda Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā‘a*). He who stands by them stands in the clear light of truth, is under right guidance and on the true path. For such an one we may hope for immunity from hell-fire and admission into paradise, God willing. Some one asked the Prophet: towards

whom one should be of good will? And he said: Should a warning come from God to man through religion - it is but an act of God's mercy. Should he pay heed to the warning - it will be profitable to him - Should he not - it will be a witness against him. But by refusal (to pay heed) he multiplies his sins and draws down upon him the wrath of God. May God make us thankful for his favors and mindful of His mercies! Let Him make us defenders of pious practices and let Him forgive us and all the faithful." <sup>36</sup>

### E. The meaning and scope of the profession of al-Qādir

If one studies the Qādirite profession closely, one will find that it does not oppose uniquely the Mu'tazilites, but also the Shī'ites and the Ash'arites, among others.

To decide the character we only have to survey it. First, the question of the throne and the *istiwā'* was presented against the anthropomorphists (*mushābiha*), notably the Karrāmiyya. Since the attributes of God (*Ṣifat*) is presented on the point of view of those who affirmed it (*ithbāt al-ṣifat*), and against those who annulled it, such as those of some Imāmites and the Ismā'ilites, who say that God knowing without knowledge, powerful without power, subjected to rational interpretation (*ta'wīl*), the latter returned to simple mitigation or denudation (*ta'fīl*). The problem is also posed against the Ash'arites who distinguished between the real attributes (*Ṣifat haqīqa*) and the metaphoristic attributes (*Ṣifat majāziyya*), whereas the profession of the Qādirite qualified as real all the same attributes or what His Apostle attributes Him.

The opposition of anti-Mu'tazilites and anti-Ash'arites appears clearly concerning the very controversial attributes of the *kalām* of God. First, against the Mu'tazilites, it affirms that the *Kalām* of God is uncreated, and then comes later the elaboration of anti-Ash'arite: the *Kalām* of God is uncreated under all aspects: recited, retained in the memory, written or heard. Thus there is no Ash'arite distinction here between the *Kalām* of God uncreated and its created "expression." Also in the Qādirite creed there is a condemnation of the Mu'tazilite thesis and that of the Ash'arite under the punishment of death, unless he made a public retraction.<sup>37</sup> However, we have no account of the public retraction made by the Ash'arites.

The excellence of the companions after the Prophet was put in the chronological enumeration beginning with Abū Bakr, followed by 'Umar,

after that by ‘Uthmān and finally by ‘Alī is evidently against the Shī‘ites who accorded the excellence of ‘Alī after the Prophet. In the same manner, there was a prohibition to slander ‘Āisha, the daughter of the Prophet who married to ‘Alī, and to slander Mu‘āwiyya. And the definition of the unbeliever (*kāfir*) is directed towards the Shī‘ite extremists, the Rāfidites and the Ismā‘īlites, who rejected the value of the ritual obligation.<sup>38</sup>

To look at the significance of the Qādirite creed, it is worthwhile to recall the history of the reign of the caliph al-Ma’mūn (813-833) and the inquisition (*miḥna*)<sup>39</sup> of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. As we have already seen, the caliph al-Qādir wrote four epistles: the first in 409, and three others in 420, all within four months (from Sha‘bān to Dzul al-Qa‘da). Likewise, two centuries before, al-Ma’mūn had written four epistles, all in one period. The epistles of al-Ma’mūn preached a doctrine essentially Mu‘tazilite, the famous doctrine of the creation of the Qur’ān, demanding the adherence (to the doctrine) of the scholars of the period; thus it was a Mu‘tazilite movement, but it was favorable to Shī‘ism in its public declaration of the superiority of ‘Alī over Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. The epistles of al-Qādir preached a doctrine not only diametrically opposed Mu‘tazilism and Shī‘ism, but also every movement whose principles opposed those of the Traditionalists. Thus they represented a victory of the traditionalist movement to which Ḥanbalism belonged and the Traditionalists were its *avant-garde*. It was for this, that we find again the profession of al-Qādir proclaimed in the later period not only against the Mu‘tazilites, but also against the Ash‘arites, on the other word, against the *Mutakallimūn*

But there is an important distinction to make regarding the two periods, that of al-Ma’mūn and of al-Qādir. During the period of al-Qādir and his son al-Qā‘im, there was a dynasty of Sulṭān, which undermined the caliphate and reduced the caliph to be a mere weak head of the community. But at the time of al-Ma’mūn, the Sulṭān ate dynasty had not yet existed. Therefore, it is easy to understand that al-Ma’mūn with liberty led a Mu‘tazilite-Shī‘ite politics; afterward al-Mutawakkil, on the contrary, led a policy of rigid orthodoxy. The success of the *miḥna* was owed to the existence of independent caliphate and the caliph himself was the master. While in respect to the Qādirite creed, the appearance of a Sunnite movement being intransigent, daring, and, in particular, anti-Shī‘ite was due to the challenge against the Buwayhid dynasty which reigned in Baghdād

and appeared as traditional champion of Shī'ism.<sup>40</sup>

## F. Conclusion

From what has been explained above, it is clear that the Sunnite restoration began with the reign al-Qādir in the fifth/eleventh century, not with the Saljuqids, as some historians have long time attributed. The fact that the Saljuqids only appeared on the scene in the later half of the century, when the restoration had been accomplished in the first years (of this century). The presence of the Saljuqids in the 'Abbāsīd empire was only felt from their victory in 431 against the Ghaznavids who had already been champion of Sunnism.<sup>41</sup> The Sunnite restoration, therefore, can be explained by the decadence of the Buwayhid dynasty and by a great movement of the Sunnite traditionalism. As for the Saljuqids, they were totally absent in this period.<sup>42</sup>

The success of the Sunnite restoration was due to the presence of the three factors: the support of the Ghaznavid Maḥmūd b. Sabuktāgin, who proclaimed himself as defender of Sunnism and executed all deviant sects under his dominion; the existence of the Ḥanbalite movement who was behind the upsurge of the conflicts between the Sunnites and the Shī'ites, and finally the policy of the caliph al-Qādir who presented himself as champion of the Sunnite Tradisionalist.

The *Risāla al-Qādiriyya*, was actually the Ḥanbalite creed, which was hostile to the Mu'tazilite, Shī'ites and Ash'arites. The Ḥanbalite attitude was taken advantage by the caliph, who was anxious to get rid of the Buwayhid tutelage. Since the latter was also champion of the Shī'ites, it is understandable that the caliph made the decrees which attacked the Shī'ite as well as the Fāṭmids.

## Endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Henri Laoust, *La Pensée et l'action politiques d' al-Māwardī*, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 51; see Ibn al-Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, vol. 10, 282 and 292-293.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>4</sup> Henri Laoust, *Le Hanbalisme*, 87.

<sup>5</sup> Idem, *La Pensée*, 52.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 64-65.(see Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam* , vol. 7. 237-238); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* , vol.I I, 338-339.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. , 87.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Baṭṭa, *Sharḥ al-Ibāna*, introduced by Henry Laoust, xcii-xciii.

<sup>14</sup> The celebration of ‘Āshūrā’ took place on the tenth of Muḥarram, which was first sanctioned by Mu‘izz al-Dawla in 352/963. On this day the Shī‘ite commemorated the death of al-Ḥusayn, son of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who was killed in Karbala by the caliph Yazid b. Mu‘āwiyya in 69/680. This event became a day of great mourning for the Shī‘ite who celebrated it by performing pilgrimage to their sacred places, particularly in al-Hā’ir, where the tomb of al-Ḥusayn was found in Karbala.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., xciv.

<sup>16</sup> In this letter the caliph asked the *qāḍī* Ibn al-Kajj to mention the name of the caliph in the Friday *khuṭba* and remind the people of Jilān to pay allegiance to the caliph al-Qādir

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Baṭṭ, *Sharḥ al-Ibāna* , xciv.

<sup>18</sup> H. Laoust, *La Pensée*, 58.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Baṭṭa, *Sharḥ al-Ibāna* , cxiv.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., xcvi.

<sup>23</sup> Nizāmiyya was a series of theological schools or seminaries named after Nizām al-Mulk, the vizier of the Sulṭān Saljuq Malikshāh (see M.Fakhrī, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, 218).

<sup>24</sup> Ibn Baṭṭa, *La Profession* , xcix.

<sup>25</sup> G. Makdisi, *Ibn Aqil* , 305

<sup>26</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam* , vol. 7, 289.

<sup>27</sup> G. Makdisi, *Ibn Aqil* , 300-301

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 301

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam* , vol. 7, 289.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya* , vol. 12, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 8, 109.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* , vol. 2, 197.

<sup>35</sup> G. Makdisi, *Ibn Aqil* , 304.

<sup>36</sup> A. Mez, *The Renaissance of Islam*, 207-209; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam* , vol.8, 108-111.

<sup>37</sup> G. Makdisi, *Ibn Aqil* , 309

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 310.

<sup>39</sup> The *mihna* was promulgated by al-Ma‘mūn in 827. He proclaims the theological teaching of the Mu‘tazilites, which founded speculative dogma in Islam

to be binding, the government taken side the "createdness of the Qur'ān," (see G.E.V. Grunebaum, *The Classical Islam*, 205).

<sup>40</sup> G. Makdisi, *Ibn Aqil*, 312.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

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