Abstract: The article provides a study of the use of ḥadīth in the works of al-Jīlī, the author of, e.g., al-Insān al-Kāmil. The article offers a fresh look on the use of ḥadīth in pre-modern Sufi writings. Esp., al-Kahf al-Raqīm a less studied work of al-Jīlī is analyzed. The study will help to precise analysis of ḥadīth in pre-modern times among Sufis. The study is not focused on the criticism of the way Sufis use ḥadīth by ḥadīth scholars. It is a reconstruction of one aspect of the thought and works of al-Jīlī as an exponent of the later school of wahdat al-wujūd. Thus, it widens the field of ḥadīth studies to other approaches than those shared by ḥadīth scholars. It is the praxis of ḥadīth in Sufi writings that can be studied this way and not claims for authority.

Keywords: al-Jili, sufism, ḥadīth, Waḥdat al-Wujūd

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READING ḤADĪTH is often focused on the authenticity of ahādīth and implies a juridical normative view.¹ The discussion may be focused on the criticism of Sufi approaches to the ḥadīth by ḥadīth scholars or on the study of the approaches of Sufis to the ḥadīth and explorations into the writings of Sufi authors for a thorough understanding of these approaches. This study focuses on a specific case of these discourses. A study of the complex of the study of ḥadīth would have to include both aspects: criticism and Sufi praxis. Since the study of Sufi use and perception of ḥadīth is still in its beginnings (see below), this study is a first step into this direction. This respects the specific logic of Sufi discourses and is not following claims of authority and normativity.

¹ Thanks to the two anonymous reviewers who helped to improve the text.
This study begins with an overview of Western studies of the hadīth as used by Sufis, esp., of the school of waḥdat al-wujūd, the oneness of being, surveying the state of this field. As stated before, Islamic studies would prefer a focus on a critical analysis of the use of hadīth by Sufis. The second part discusses the specific studies on the approaches of Ibn ʿArabī and al-Jīlī. The third is the main part of this study, elucidating al-Jīlī uses of hadīth.

Western Studies of Sufi Approaches to Ḥadīth

Research on hadīth in European languages in recent years discusses the process of canonization and in recent times the commentaries on hadīth collections,² the paradigms of Oriental Studies and Islamic theology,³ and a detailed analysis of the corpus of hadīth literature in all its varieties.⁴ Very few studies are devoted to the role of hadīth in tasawwuf.⁵ Even less studies are

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discussing the role of *ḥadīth* in the writings of Ibn ‘Arabī. The study of *ḥadīth* in the school of *wahdat al-wujūd*, the oneness of being, is deplorably limited.

On a more general plane, Knysh assesses the importance of the Qur’an and *ḥadīth* literature for *tasawwuf* and Sufis: “Its importance for Sufi thought notwithstanding, the *ḥadīth* corpus (*sunna*) still takes a back seat to the Qur’an that has served as a principal starting point and frame of reference for Sufi disquisitions about God, the cosmos and the vicissitudes in this world and in the hereafter.”

Hence, the study of *ḥadīth* in the writings of Sufis and, esp., in the school of *wahdat al-wujūd* is still in the beginning. Our contribution aims at exploring in this field. Furthermore, the first study of this aspect of the writings of ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī is intended.

**Ḥadīth, Ibn ‘Arabī and al-Jīlī**

A great impact on the Western study of *ḥadīth* in the work of Ibn ‘Arabī has two recent articles by Denis Gril. Gril stresses the

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importance of ḥadīth in the education of Ibn ʿArabī living in a context that encouraged these studies: al-Andalus and the Maghrib under the rule of the Almohads and the Mashriq under the rule of the Ayyubids and the Seljuks.

Gril mentions the collections of ḥadīth compiled by Ibn ʿArabī, most of them disappeared. But there are some specialized works on ḥadīth by Ibn ʿArabī that are extent, leaving aside the other works with many references to ḥadīth. Generally speaking, Ibn ʿArabī accepts aḥādīth from different origins insofar as these ḥadīth convey an undeniable truth.10

“His Mishkāt al-anwār fīmā ruwiya ʿan Allāh min al-akhbār is a collection of ḥadīth qudsi, of which the first forty are preceded by an isnād, while for the others the reference is generally indicated. Another work should also be noted, al-Mahajjat al-baydāʾ fi al-akhkām al-sharʿiyya, written in the style of aḥādīth al-akhkām. […] we can assume that the author, who was in Mecca in ah 600, intended to compose for himself a vast collection of ḥadīth, serving as a reference in matters of jurisprudence.”11

Ibn ʿArabī in the last work refers to a ḥadīth transmitted via – we may assume – an ijāza ʿāmma received through an intermediary he does not mention. At the same time, it is a work dedicated to the needs of juridical thought.

Ibn ʿArabī especially considered the ḥadīth directly received from the Prophet in dreams as a highly valuable source for those who are favored by it. This seemingly not coherent way of coherent way may be considered deficient. Recent research on non-modern Islamic thought, however, allows for a different understanding making it possible to leave a homogenizing Salafi style approach and adopt another one more in line with traditional Islam.12


11 Gril, “Ḥadīth in the Work of Ibn ʿArabī.”
Comparing Ibn ‘Arabī and al-Jīlī Claude Addas writes in her article on the figure of the prophet in the work of al-Jīlī:

“I would stress that Ibn ‘Arabī himself never refers to any of the many traditions which have flourished on the subject of the nur muhammadī, deriving from the hadīth reported by Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh (“The first thing God created was my light...”), or traditions which appear even in the writings of certain ‘ulamā’, stating, in one form or another, that “If not for you, I would not have created the universe” (law lāka...).

On the other hand, Jīlī makes abundant use of these traditions without calling their validity into question in the least. In the field of ‘ilm al-hadīth he certainly did not benefit from as solid an education as that of Ibn ‘Arabī.13 We may remember that this science was especially in evidence in Andalusia during Ibn ‘Arabī’s time and that he also pursued the study of it throughout his life to the degree that it imbued him, literally, with a holy character. Whatever it might have been, one can pick out several traditions in Jīlī’s writings, the authenticity of which is somewhat suspect. This can be said of the two above-mentioned hadīths, and equally of two other hadīths relating to the cosmic function of the Prophet. According to the first, the Prophet is said to have added:

“I come from God and the believers come from me” (anā min Allāh wa al-mu‘minīn minnī), a tradition that Jīlī quotes on several occasions, particularly in the Kamālāt ilāhiyya14, the Qāb qawsayn and al-Kahf wa al-raqīm.”15

Nevertheless, a thorough study of the use of ahādīth by al-Jīlī is still missing. A thorough study may rectify some ideas presented by Addas. Interesting studies analyzing single works of al-Jīlī do not focus on the role of hadīth in it.16 Few studies analyze the use of

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13 Cf. the conclusion of this article for an assessment of these views.
hadiths in *al-Insān al-kāmil*. We will only give some references for the sake of focusing on the analysis of all aspects of al-Jīlī’s approach to hadith.

**Al-Insān al-Kāmil**

In *al-Insān al-kāmil* of ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī, we read references to the Prophet without direct quotations from hadith literature. On the other hand, we find hadith to be found in well-known hadith collections like the *Saḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī saying “Everyone of you is a herdsman and all of you are responsible for your herd.” Or Muslim’s *Saḥīḥ* saying “God has some seventy covers (ḥijāb) of light (nūr),” and “The people of the Qur’an are the people of God and his chosen one (khāssatuḥu).” Other hadiths of the Sharḥ in ‘Abd al-Karīm bin Ibrāhīm al-Jīlī, *al-Manāẓir al-Ilāhiyya*, ed. Āṣīm Ibrāhīm al-Kayyālī al-Husaynī al-Shādhilī al-Darqāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2009), 85–153; The same holds true for a recent study by the author Rüdiger Lohlker, “‘Abd Al-Karīm al-Jīlī, Waḥdat al-Wujūd, and Reconfiguring Epistemology,” *Ulumuna* 23, no. 1 (June 27, 2019): 1–23.


Cf. ibid., 59.

Cf. ibid., 129, and 130; Contrary to Nicholas Lo Polito, *‘Abd Al-Karim al-Jili: Tawhīd, Transcendence and Immanence* (Diss. Phil.: University of Birmingham, 2010) fn. 169. there is a reference in one of the main Ḥadīth collections having exactly this word of the Prophet (cf. Abū ‘Abdullāh Ṭāḥīth Ibn ’Abdullāh Ṭāḥīth ibn Ṭāḥīth)
quoted by al-Jīlī are to be found in other collections, e. g., “I saw my Lord in the form of a beardless (amrad) young man,”24 or not at all: “The alms given fall at first in the palm of the All-Merciful and then in the palm of the beggar”.25 Some are shortened: “The angel (malak) split up his heart (qalb), took out some blood and cleansed the heart.”26

Sometimes al-Jīlī is quoting – again in abbreviated form – hadiths from minor collections: “In the thin clouds. What is above it there is air (ḥawā’) and below it there is air.”27

This overview over some selected hadiths allows for first insights into al-Jīlī’s approach to hadiths in al-Insān al-Kāmil that may help us to understand the approach used in other works. At least at this stage of analysis, we may say that al-Jīlī does not follow the conventional paths of the specialists of hadīth but integrates the hadith he refers to in one way or the other in his arguments much more than using them as a kind of proof external to his argument. He cares for the spirit not the text of the scripture (see below).

Qāb Qawsayn

Although a study of the veneration of the Prophet Muḥammad is not intended, we have to turn to a text by ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī dedicated to the study of the example of the Prophet. Before anything else, following the Muhammadan model28 is a keystone of the belief of Muslim believers. As Claude Addas writes:

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Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya), 358 Ḥadīth No.12613; cf. Ibn Māja.) adding one question and one sentence.


25 Cf. al-Jīlī, al-Insān al-Kāmil, 67 the text is not to be found in any collection, only similar wordings.


27 Ibid., 85, and 88 to be found, e. g., in the Sahīh of Ibn Hibbān or in al-Jāmiʿ al-Sahīh of al-Tirmīdhī.

“It is that the Qāb Qawsayn by’Abd al-Karīm Jīlī […] - a brief pamphlet which is to be the subject of this study – attempts to demonstrate. Innumerable texts belonging to the literature of tasaawwuf deal with the prophetic following, so much so that the idea of the exemplary nature of the Prophet, which is at the heart of the process for spiritual Muslims, is also part of the common inheritance of the umma and participates in the genesis of Islam.”

As to the use of ḥadīth in this work references to the Prophet are current without referring to specific ahādīth saying e. g., that he was ”singled out by God with His all-encompassing great self-disclosure (tajalliyāt) with was not received by anybody else in this world or the other.” Later on we read: ”However, he was an intermediate reality (barzakh) between the realities of the non-contingent (ḥaqqīyya) and the realities of the contingent (khalqīyya) because he is the true reality of all realities (ḥaqīqat al-ḥaqā’iq).” This may be classified as a reference to the Prophet as part of the narrative on him in this book.

Al-Jīlī directly quotes ḥadīth and we read: ”He said: I am from God, I am from God, the believers are from me.” This ḥadīth is embedded in a discussion on the self-disclosure of God and the Muḥammadan reality (ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadiyya) and is a kind of conclusion to this argument.

This ḥadīth is not listed in the standard ḥadīth collections. It is regarded as dubious by some authors, variations are noted. Thus,


32 al-Jīlī, Qāb Qawsayn, 49.

33 Ibid., 39.

this hadith is part of an argument about the role of the Prophet, but not embedded in a technical discussion on hadith.

Another hadith that is generally accepted reads: “Nobody of you will be a believer unless he loves me more than his soul, his property, and his offspring.”

The hadith is to be found in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī. The version given by al-Jīlī is a shorter one. In this case, the hadith is part of a narrative on the love to the Prophet, not embedded in a technical discussion on hadith.

Al-Kahf wa al-Raqīm

Let us turn to another work of al-Jīlī! A popular work of al-Jīlī is al-Kahf wa al-Raqīm fi Sharḥ bismi Allāh al-Rahmān al-Raḥīm, the cave and the inscription. The text of this work – not the commentary – has been studied by Lo Polito in his thesis and Ridha Atlagh in an article. Unfortunately, in these studies there is no thorough discussion of the use of hadith in this work. Thus, we will give some insights into this aspect of the Kahf by discussing several selected hadiths.

The first relevant and famous hadith reads in the reading of al-Jīlī: “I was a hidden treasure (kanz makhfiyy) and I desired to be known. I created the creatures (khalq) and I introduced Myself to

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35 al-Jīlī, Qāb Qawsayn, 46.
38 Following the translation of Lo Polito (see below).
40 A thorough discussion of all Ḥadīths in the Kahf would need a book-length study.
them so they recognized Me.”41 This ḥadīth is not to be found in any collection but common knowledge among Sufis.

The text of the Kahf starts with a lengthy ḥadīth saying “It has been reported in the tradition (khabar) following the Prophet - may God bless and grant salvation to him - that he said, “All that is contained in the revealed books is contained in the Qur’an, and all that is contained in the Qur’an is contained in the fātiha, and all that is contained in the fātiha is contained in the words In the Name of God the All-Compassionate and Most Merciful” (bism Allāh al-Rahmān al-Raḥīm). It has also been reported that “all that is contained in [the formula] In the Name of God the All-Compassionate and Most Merciful is contained in the [letter] bāʾ42 and all that is contained in the bāʾ is contained in the dot (nuqta)43 that is under the bāʾ.”44 From the point of view of ḥadīth studies the main problem of this text is that there seems to be no authoritative source in the canon of collections of ḥadīth. Nevertheless, al-Jīlī is inscribing himself in a tradition: the tradition of Ibn ʿArabī. Thus, he claims an added legitimacy by joining the shaykh al-akbar as an authority more important than any reference to the six or nine books of ḥadīth. He stresses the superior knowledge gained by Sufī practice and knowledge.

41 al-Ḥaǧǧ, al-Kaḥf, 31; al-ʿAjlūnī al-Jarāḥī, Kashf al-Khaṭāʾi, 1:155 Ḥadīth No.2016 there is another version of the text. Al-ʿAjlūnī says that there is no reliable Ḥadīth source for this saying but there are similar wordings related to this saying. The version in the reading of al-Ḥaǧǧ is a common saying al-ʿAjlūnī says. Cf. for the translation Lo Polito, ʿAbd Al-Karīm al-Ḥaǧǧ, 206.


43 Al-Ḥaǧǧ has written a treatise on the dot, cf. al-Ḥaǧǧ, Qīb Qawṣayn, 55–114.

44 Slightly adapted version of the translation in Lo Polito, ʿAbd Al-Karīm al-Ḥaǧǧ, 172; This author does not provide any discussion of Ḥadīth-related issues. al-Ḥaǧǧ, al-Kaḥf, 13; al-Ḥaǧǧ, al-Kaḥf, 13.
Al-Jīlī quotes another hadīth of Jābir ibn ʿAbdallāh⁴⁵: “God - may He be exalted - created the Prophet’s breath of life (rūḥ) - may God bless and grant salvation to him and his family - from His own being (dhāl).”⁴⁶ He created the world in its entirety from the soul of Muhammad - may God bless and grant salvation to him and his family.” Al-Jīlī continues saying that the Prophet is created as an outward appearance of the creation in His name.

Another hadīth⁴⁷ says: “I saw my Lord in the form of a beardless youth wearing a golden garment instead, and on His head, He had a golden crown, and on His feet two golden sandals.”⁴⁸

Sometimes al-Jīlī quotes a hadīth available in the main collections. Thus, he says: “The people of the Qur’an are the people of God and his chosen one (khāssatuhu).”⁴⁹ But he also quotes other ones that are not part of the main collections: “I am from God and the believers are from me.”⁵⁰

In his commentary⁵¹ there are similar types of reference to hadīths. The commentary to the Kahf has not been thoroughly

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⁴⁸ Lo Polito, ʿAbd Al-Karim al-Jīlī, 179 fn. 43.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 208 fn. 169 there is a reference in one of the main Ḥadīth collections having exactly this word of the Prophet. fn.169 (cf. Ibn Ḥanbāl, Musnad, 5:358,. Ḥadīth No.12613) adding one question and one sentence.

⁵⁰ al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 33; al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 27. There is no reference in the major Ḥadīth collections. But Ibn Taymiyya states: “This word (laẓ) is not known to be on the authority of the Prophet.” See, Taqī al-Dīn Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya, Ahādīth al-Qussās, ed. Ahmad ʿAbd Allāh Bājūr (Cairo: Dār al-Misriyya al-Lubnāniyya, 1993), 36 Ḥadīth No. 7. But he mentions several ahādīth with similar wordings.

⁵¹ Lo Polito, ʿAbd Al-Karim al-Jīlī.
studied yet. Hence, this analysis may be the first look at this interesting part of the works of al-Jīlī.

Another ḥadīth52 quoted also in other works of al-Jīlī is: “My earth (ard) is not wide enough for me nor is my heaven (samāʾ). But there is enough space i the heart of my believing servant (ʿabdī al-muʿmin).”

Again there is a reference to a ḥadīth that may be regarded as dubious by ḥadīth specialists53 but in Sufi milieus, it is understood as a ḥadīth expressing a true meaning of Islam beyond any words.

A shortened version of a ḥadīth reads “We are the last (ākhirūn) and the first (awwalūn).”54 This ḥadīth is in the usual collections related to the day of resurrection but shortening allows for recontextualizing it in a way referring to the double nature of the Prophet Muhammad and Ādam representing the inner and outer aspect of existence. It is a reference to standard collections reframed to be part of the author’s argument.55

Another ḥadīth reads: “Salmān is from us, the people of the house [of the Prophet].”56 This popular ḥadīth refers to Salmān al-Fārisī, the Persian convert to Islam and companion of the Prophet57, as an example to be followed. This statement is supported by another ḥadīth58: “My companions are like stars (nūjūm). You are following them and you are rightly guided by

52 al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 66.
53 al-ʿAjlūnī al-Jarāhī, Kashf al-Khafāʾ, 1:116–117, Ḥadīth No.1885 and 1884. These entries do have some different wording; al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 66 has only Ḥadīth no. 1885.
54 al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 92.
58 al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 114.
Both ḥadīths together are part of a larger argument of al-Jīlī on models to be emulated. The ḥadīths are to be found in minor collections or regarded as dubious even faked ḥadīths by some ḥadīth specialists. Al-Jīlī put them in a context of models to follow and being rightly guided by them.

Other aḥadīth are used by al-Jīlī not referring to any ḥadīth collection at all: “My God, make us understand You since we will not understand You without You.” This ḥadīth may be read as a paradoxical argument transcending conventional thought and enabling to grasp an understanding of God. This paradoxical approach is followed in the next ḥadīth we quote.

Sometimes al-Jīlī refers to ḥadīths explicitly: “My God, I seek protection by your favor from Your anger. I seek protection by Your willingness to pardon from Your punishment, and I seek protection by You from You.”

Here is one of the few occurrences of an explicit reference to a ḥadīth to be found in one of the standard ḥadīth collections albeit a little bit shortened. Thus, assuming al-Jīlī was not well trained in the discipline of the ḥadīths, ignores his ability to follow the usual way of referring to ḥadīths. He evidently did not deem it necessary in all cases when his quotations capture the spirit of the model of the Prophet. The last ḥadīth of our selected number of ḥadīths from the Kahf is: “He created Adam in the form of the All-Merciful.”

This ḥadīth is well-known and quoted in several collections. This time it is framed in an argument being a reference to the ḥadīth literature not understood as a proof for some truth but as part of the discourse of al-Jīlī.

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60 al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 121 The editor mentions that he was not able to find any reference.

61 Ibid., 155, and 233.


63 al-Jīlī, al-Kahf, 250 Al-Jīlī has some other wordings of this Ḥadīth, too.

64 There are several collections having this Ḥadīth, cf. for a discussion of this Ḥadīth from a ḥadīth specialists point of view Saʿd ibn Daydān al-Sabīʿī, Ithāf al-Kalām Kalām ʿala al-Ḥadīth khalaqa Ādam ʿalā Sūrat al-Raḥmān (s.l.: s. publ., 1430).
Marātib al-Wujūd

The last work we will refer to is Marātib al-Wujūd, the levels of existence. Just looking into two examples of hadīth that are available in this work, we will gain additional insights into the way al-Jīlī uses ahādīth and how he refers to the Prophet Muhammad. The first example reads:

“Therefore the messenger of God called it thin clouds (ʿamāʾ) when somebody asked him: ‘Where was God?’ In a hadīth narrative (riwāya): Where is our Lord before he created the creation (khalq)? The messenger of God answered: In the thin clouds. What is above it there is air (hawāʾ) and below it there is air.”

This is a hadīth referring to the creation of the throne (ʿarsh) above the waters. Again the hadīth is integrated into the narrative of al-Jīlī on the question of where the location of God may be.

The second example refers to the Prophet without any quotation of a hadīth. Al-Jīlī simply mentions that the Prophet indicated the expression “the merciful self” (al-nafs al-raḥmān).

Thus, we may identify the same paradigms used by al-Jīlī before.

Conclusion

We may distinguish three ways of referring to the Prophet and hadīth followed by al-Jīlī. The first way is referring to the Prophet without providing a hadīth. The second one is using a hadīth embedded in the narrative produced by the author, esp., ahādīth not listed in the standard collections of hadīth. The third one is using hadīth to be found in the standard collections – sometimes

65 ʿAbd al-Karīm bin Ibrāhīm al-Jīlī, Marātib al-Wujūd wa Haqīqa kull Mawjūd (Cairo: Maktabat al-Jundī, n.d.), 13; ʿAbd al-Karīm bin Ibrāhīm al-Jīlī, Marātib al-Wujūd wa Haqīqa kull Mawjūd (Cairo: Maktabah al-Qāhira, 1999), 16; ʿAbd al-Karīm bin Ibrāhīm al-Jīlī, Marātib al-Wujūd wa Haqīqat Kull Mawjūd (Cairo: Muntadā Sūr al-Azbakiyya, 1999), 41; to be found, e.g., in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Ibn Hibbān.


68 We do not claim it is the general approach used by Sufis. A study enabling us to understand the Sufi approaches in general is still to be done.
another version than the usual one, often shortened, also embedded in the narrative of the author.

These ways of using hadīth are followed to add additional aspects to the narratives of the author.

Hadīth is not used by al-Jilī as a “proof” (dalīl) for an argument, but it helps to give the arguments of the author additional power by referring to the common knowledge of the Islamic community embodied in the Prophet, his actions and words. Thus, al-Jilī’s does not subscribe to claims of authority and is not trying to enter into a competition with hadīth scholars, not because of a lack of knowledge or interest in hadīth studies (see below). He follows a different logic based in his experience as a Sufi.

Using hadīth this way is part of the pre-modern Islamic scholarly discourses. The knowledge and preeminence of the Prophet is the focus of the argumentation of al-Jilī and the community he was raised in, not obeying to narrow rules of hadīth scholarship, al-Jilī knew well (contrary to Addas as mentioned above) since he was educated in a community influenced by the ruling dynasty of the Rasulids in Yemen who tried to bolster their image by supporting renowned Sunni scholars like the commentator of the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 1449 CE).

Thus, hadīth is for al-Jilī a tool created to help other Muslims understand what means wahdat al-wujūd and the experiences it expresses. Reading hadīth only through the lenses of the technical disciplines related to hadīth sprouts a misunderstanding of the role of hadīth in pre-modern Muslim societies. We may assume giving priority to the categories of hadīth scholars is misleading as to the structure pre-modern Islamic thought. The attempt to

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69 This may be the characteristics of Salafi and Wahhabi thought making Ḥadīth part of the theological goods available for any purpose, i. e., the commodification of Ḥadīth.


71 Misleading is also following the dichotomy of the formal aspects of Ḥadīth and its content. This dichotomy means subscribing to an idea that is privileging the though of Ḥadīth specialists by accepting their worldview. Cf. For this
understand the spirit of the Prophet has been dominant, esp., in Sufi circles, i.e., the majority of pre-modern Islamic communities. As Morrissey puts it:

“While al-Jīlī, probably mindful of the attacks upon him and the Ibn ʿArabian Sufis by their aforementioned critics in Yemen, displays a certain defensiveness with these remarks, and while the sentiment expressed here may also be something of a trope in Sufi writing, nevertheless they do reflect how in much of his writing he uses the Qurʾan and ḥadīth as hooks upon which to hang his ideas. This Qurʾan- and ḥadīth-centredness accords with his view that the knowledge attained through religious experience gives insight into the inner meaning of scripture.”

For the theology of waḥdat al-wujūd the literature of aḥādīth is a resource for interpreting the Sufi experience following the model of the Prophet as a total human (insān kāmil). Comparing it to modern trends it is an approach to ḥadīth differing from the reifying approach of modern Salafism, Deobandi approaches like that of Ashraf ʿAli Thanavi and, e.g., of Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾūt.

References


72 Morrissey, Sufism and the Perfect Human, 17.

73 Cf. for this translation Lohlker, “ʿAbd Al-Karīm al-Jīlī, Waḥdat al-Wujūd, and Reconfiguring Epistemology.”


75 A study of his approach (and other approaches) is about to be published.
Ahmad al-‘Aynî, Badruddin Abû Muḥammad Maḥmûddîn.


