

# FUTUWWAH: CODIFYING YOUTH ETHICS FROM THE SUNNAH WITH REFERENCE TO SULAMI'S *KITAB AL-FUTUWWA*

RECEP ŞENTÜRK\*

## ABSTRACT

*Futuwwah* genre on youth ethics has a rich literature in prose and poetry in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. It started emerging about a thousand years ago and spread around the Muslim world as a response to a need for an Islamic youth ethics to educate new generations of Muslims according to Sunnah. The ummah as a whole regards the *Futuwwah* as the highest ethical ideal as it crosscuts all theological, jurisprudential, philosophical, ethnic lines. *Futuwwah* genre produced a practical narrative ethics. It presents the chain of Prophets from Adam up until the Prophet Muḥammad, and his Companions as the best examples of applied *futuwwah* ethics and the role models for the young generations to come. Presently, a well-formulated Islamic youth ethics is dearly needed. This paper explores the work of 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī of Niṣṣ ḥ āpūr (325-412 AH / 936-1021 CE), the great scholar of hadith, who authored the first known *Kitāb al-Futuwwah* and codified the ethical principles of Islamic chivalry. In this presentation, I will analyze the genre of *futuwwah* with a focus on al-Sulamī's book to address the following questions: Why did the genre of *futuwwah* emerge? What is the role of narrative and hadith in *Futuwwah* ethics? What are the core values of *futuwwah* ethics? Who are the role models of *futuwwah*? And finally, how can *futuwwah* be implemented in today's world as a youth ethics?

**Keywords:** *Futuwwah*, Islamic ethics, al-Sulamī, *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*, *tasawwuf* metaphysics, *muruwah*

\* Recep Şentürk, Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul, Turkey senturkrecep@gmail.com  
I thank Moutaz al-Khātib who gave me the opportunity to present my work in the CILE workshop at Qatar Foundation. I also thank Qayyim Naoki Yamamoto, Mustafa Karapınar, Savaş Tali and Muhammad Ali Koç who contributed in the final draft while writing this article.

*Futuwwah* is the practical ethics and the altruistic morality embodied in the lives of Prophets, from Adam to Muḥammad (pbuh), and their followers in all ages. It is the most wholesome personality (*murūwwah*) and the highest level of morality (*makārim al-akhlāq*) originating from the teaching and practice of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). There are many definitions of the *futuwwah* with reference to its origin, method, purpose, and key elements. This is how al-Sulamī defines it in the introduction to his *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*:

[O my son], may Allah accord you His pleasure. You asked about *Futuwwah*. Know that *Futuwwah* means following the ordinances of perfect devotion, leaving all evil, and attaining in action and in thought the best of visible and hidden good conduct. Every condition and every moment demand from you one aspect of *Futuwwah*. There is no state or time without that demand. There is *futuwwah* fit for your behavior toward God, another toward the Prophet, and others toward his companions; yet others toward the pure ones of the past, your sheikh, your brotherhood, and the two angels on your shoulders who keep the accounting of your deeds (al-Sulamī 1991: 36).

Good conduct, ethics and morality are variably defined in different cultures, religions and civilizations. Al-Sulamī clarifies his source of their definition as follows: “I shall here describe some of these and support them by the Sunnah of the Prophet (s.a.w.s) and the declarations, actions, conduct, and virtues of our Elders” (al-Sulamī 1991: 37).

It may be misleading to think that *futuwwah* means youth because as a concept it refers to a moral quality rather than age. The *futuwwah* ethics is not only for the youth but it is for all ages and walks of life because it is used synonymously with *murūwwah*, the wholesome personality. Also, *futuwwah* is not only for men but also for women, because good morality cannot be thought to be exclusively for young men. In sum, it is a universal morality for all regardless of age and gender.

It may even be said that the core values of *futuwwah* are universal even regardless of religion and civilization. J. von Hammer-Purgstall observes that Chivalry in the middle ages followed the example of *futuwwah* which Crusaders took to Europe (Hammer 1849). By codifying ethics, what Suhrawardi did for the *Futuwwah* organization at a request from the Caliph of the time, al-Nāṣir Li-Dīn Allāh, is what Saint Bernard later tried to do at the request of

the Templars<sup>1</sup> (Chodkiewicz 1991: 18-19). Likewise, Qayyim Naoki Yamamoto demonstrated, in his translation of the *Kitāb al-Futuwwah* to Japanese, that there are many commonalities between *futuwwah* and the Samurai culture codified in Bushido in Japan despite the lack of a direct communication between the two cultures. The author claims that Japanese traditional ethic of Bushido is similar to the moral codes of *Futuwwah* in Islam (Yamamoto 2011).

The word *futuwwah* means the quality of being young. Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) said that the people of Paradise will be young because it is the most perfect age for human beings. The word *futuwwah* is derived from *fatā* (the feminine is *fatāt*) which literally means a young person. It is similar to, and sometimes synonymously used with, *murūwwah* which literally means moral qualities of a good person. It is derived from the word *mar'* (the feminine is *mar'ah*) which means a person. As a concept both *futuwwah* and *murrūwwah* are synonymously used in the classical Arabic, Turkish and Persian as a key value in Islamic applied ethics and morality.

*Futuwwah* literally refers to a stage in life (ages 15-23 or 33) which is between childhood (*murāhaqah* between ages 1-15) and youth (*shabāb* between ages 23-40) (al-Qushayrī 260). There is no need to stress the fact that this periodization is quite different than the periodization in the modern culture. The age 15 corresponds to the age of reaching puberty which is an important turning point in Islamic law and religion. As it is commonly known in Islam, after reaching puberty one legally becomes a person with full powers and responsibilities. Today, the age of becoming fully eligible for all legal rights and duties is variably determined in different legal systems in the modern world without an objective criterion as in Islam.

In the ethics and morality literature *futuwwah* is used for various meanings.

- (1) *Applied ethics and morality*: *Futuwwah* is used mostly to mean applied ethics derived from the example of Prophet Muḥammad (SAV), previous prophets from Adam to Isa, Companions of Prophet Muḥammad (SAV) and all saintly figures in the subsequent generations. There are books exclusively dedicated to this type of understanding of *futuwwah* in Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

<sup>1</sup> “This conclusion, which was based on a cursory examination of very few sources, may be excessive and may deserve some of the scholarly criticism it received later on; nevertheless, the Christian and Islamic institutions present striking similarities. For example, in the West, the Templars asked a monk, Saint Bernard, to codify the rule of their order; in Baghdad, when al-Nāṣir institutionalized *Futuwwah*, which also had a military vocation, he called upon a great Sūfī, Shihāb al-Din Suhrawardī (d. 1234) the founder of the order (*tariqah*) that bears his name, to give it its code and ritual (Introduction by Chodkiewicz in al-Sulamī 1991: 18-19). On the influence of the *futuwwah* to chivalry in the West, see the Introduction by Mahmud Shelton to *The Royal Book of Spritual Chivalry* (Kāshifi Sabzawāri, 2000: xxiv-xxvii).

- (2) *A higher moral and spiritual stage*: In some Sufi literature, *futuwwah* is used to indicate a stage in knowledge, spiritual state and moral qualities reflecting altruistic virtues. For instance al-Qushayrī uses *futuwwah* as one of the qualities a sufi must have (al-Qushayrī, 260-266).
- (3) *Youth organization*: *Futuwwah* is also used as a name for youth organizations committed to the *futuwwah* ethics. It emerged at the time of the Abbasids, spread to Iran and Anatolia and continued until the end of the Ottoman State in Turkey.
- (4) *Guilds*: *Futuwwah* was used as a name, in the medieval Iran and Turkey, for artisans organized themselves around the *futuwwah* principles. In Anatolia these organizations, mostly guilds of a different artisan groups, were also named in Turkish as *âhilik* from the Seljuk period on.
- (5) *Unruly youth groups*: At times, the word *futuwwah* was used with a negative meaning for unruly youth groups (Mustafa Cevad 28-29).

Our interest in this paper is mainly on the first usage of the term *futuwwah* as the applied ethics derived mainly from the Sunnah of Prophet Muḥammad (SAV) and his followers in the subsequent centuries.

## I. FUTUWWAH ETHICS: DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

The *futuwwah* ethics has been very effective in the Muslim world among the youth for so many centuries. It owes this to the method it used. While we do not have detailed explicit discussions of their theory, method and philosophy, I try, below, to identify seven distinct features of *futuwwah* ethics.

### 1. Keeps theory implicit

There cannot be any ethics without a theory about philosophy, methods and ethical reasoning. However, in the *futuwwah* literature the theoretical background is kept hidden or implicit in the background. Consequently, there is no explicit theorizing or meta-theorizing about ethics in the literature. The understandable reason for it is that these books aimed at codifying the ethical principles derived from the Sunnah to be put in practice by the youth. The fact that the ethical theory is implicit requires us to uncover it and reconstruct it.

### 2. Employs narrative reasoning

In Islamic intellectual history, we find several ethical traditions. *Futuwwah* stands in contradistinction with them. Among them the most prominent one is the ethics as part of practical philosophy which is known as “self-management” (*tadbir al-nafs*)<sup>2</sup> or *tadhib al-akhlâq*.<sup>3</sup> Theoretical ethical reasoning is based on rational argumentation and justification. In the *futuwwah* ethics the reasoning is based on the traditional justification deriving from the Sunnah and the examples of great figures from past centuries. Narrative serves this purpose instead of rational theorizing.

### 3. Grounds norms in the Qur’an and the Sunnah

The *futuwwah* ethics is grounded in the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Its purpose is to put the principles of ethics in the Qur’an and the Sunnah in practice. The Qur’an and the Sunnah may seem too vast and inaccessible to the masses. The *futuwwah* literatures is like a digest of diverse principles from the Qur’an and the Sunnah. As I mentioned above, in the *futuwwah* ethics, ethical norms are grounded in the religious tradition which is embodied in the two holy scriptures of Islam, the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

### 4. Utilizes the power of precedence

The *futuwwah* ethics uses the power of precedence of great men and women from the past in convincing its audience and justifying its norms. In the narrative, the *futuwwah* ethics uses the stories of great figures and saintly persons. This is similar to the Qur’anic and the hadith narrative which also conveys its moral messages through the stories revolving around great figures from the past. Worldwide, power of precedent is a commonly used method of reasoning and justification in law to ground legal norms. Islamic law also uses it. Therefore, it is no exception that *futuwwah* ethics also uses it.

### 5. Integrates concrete role models

*Futuwwah* ethics uses the great figures, both men and women, from past generations as concrete role models. Role models are very important tools in conveying moral and ethical

2 Practical philosophy, known as *al-hikma al-‘amaliyyah*, has three branches: ethics (*tadbir al-nafs*), economics (*tadbir al-manzil*), and politics (*tadbir al-madinah*). The distinction between theoretical and practical philosophy originates from the ancient Greek philosophy from Aristotle. Muslim philosophers also followed the same categorization.

3 Ibn Miskeveyh, Ebû ‘Alî Ahmed b. Muhammed b. Yakub (d. 1030), *Tahdhib al-akhlâq*, Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-Ilmiyye, 1985/1405.

values to the next generations. *Futuwwah* ethics chooses its role models from the prophets, Companions of Prophet Muhammad (a.s.m.), and saintly men and women in Islamic history. For instance, Khatam al-Tai is used as an example of generosity who gives everything until he has nothing while 'Alī (r.a.) is used as an example of courage who is ready to sacrifice even his life for his friends.

### 6. Includes the pre-Islamic narratives

*Futuwwah* ethics does not only use the narrative from the Islamic history but also extends it to the beginning of world history, to the story of Adam and Eve in Paradise and also in the beginning of life on the earth. This comprehensive approach provides depth to the narrative.

### 7. Codifies norms for easy dissemination and uses symbols for them

The *futuwwah* literature has a very practical goal, which is to improve the ethical thinking and moral life of the youth. To this purpose, ethical principles from the Qur'an and the Sunnah are codified and listed for easy dissemination and practice. Parsimonious discourse characterizes those lists which makes them mnemonic, that is to say easy to memorize and spread. They also expressed the ethical values with symbols given to the initiate during the initiation ceremony such as a belt for chastity, a cup with salty water for endurance and patience, and the sweetmeat called the "morsel of resignation" (*rīza lokması*) for contentment (Kāshifi Sabzawari 2000: xxviii, 406-407).

## II. YOUTH ETHICS IN THE QUR'AN AND THE SUNNAH

Above I have already pointed out that the *futuwwah* derives its core ethical values from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. However, when we look at the Qur'an we see two different standards of morality: First, the minimum standards that everyone is required to follow and second, the higher standards that the believers are encouraged to practice voluntarily. For instance, in one verse, the retaliation or retribution (*qiṣāṣ*) is praised and required while in another verse forgiving is praised but not required while the believers are called to forgive the wrong doers voluntarily. When we group these verses about ethics in the Qur'an, we realize that the Qur'anic ethics, and thus the Islamic ethics in general, has multiple layers. The first level is about the bare minimum based on reciprocity, retaliation and retribution while the others go

beyond these values, to such values as forgiving and responding to cruelty with goodness. This categorization with levels is important to identify which type of ethics the *futuwwah* derives from the Qur'an: the minimum standards or the higher standards?

## III. MULTIPLEX ETHICS IN THE QUR'AN

The Qur'anic ethics is multiplex in the sense that one can identify three levels of ethics: (1) reciprocal ethics, (2) tolerant ethics, and (3) altruistic ethics. The key concepts for the reciprocal ethics are exchange and retaliation (*qiṣāṣ*), for tolerant ethics are endurance and forgiveness, and for altruistic ethics are responding cruelty with goodness and prioritizing the needs of others. Below I will demonstrate each level with a verse from the Qur'an.

- (1) *Reciprocal ethics*: It sets the minimum standards for ethical values to serve as the common ground for all members of the society. It provides the foundation for Islamic law and ethics based on reciprocity to be applied in all areas of life and social relations. It is mandatory for all Muslims to follow. An example is retaliation: "And there is life for you in retaliation (retribution, *qiṣāṣ*)" (The Qur'an 2: 179).
- (2) *Tolerant ethics*: It calls believers not to retaliate or reciprocate but to forgo their rights and to forgive wrongdoers. Law is based everywhere in the world on reciprocity and retribution. The Qur'an also accepts it but at the same time it calls the believers to go voluntarily beyond reciprocity and retaliation by forgiving. Hence comes the second level of the Qur'anic ethics based on tolerance and forgiveness. The following verses illustrate the ethics of tolerance in the Qur'an. These verses acknowledge the legitimacy of retribution but call for *pardoning*, *reconciliation*, *waiving one's rights* and *overlooking* as more virtuous acts.

And the retribution for an evil act is an evil one like it, but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation - his reward is [due] from Allah. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers (The Qur'an 42:40).

Waiving [your right] is nearer to godliness, so do not forget to be generous towards one another: God sees what you do (The Qur'an 2: 237).

But if you pardon and overlook and forgive - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful (The Qur'an 64: 14).

(3) *Altruistic ethics*: Altruism is the opposite of reciprocal ethics because it gives priority to the other over one's own self. It is considered to be the highest level of ethics. It calls the believers to respond evil with goodness. As I demonstrated above the Qur'an calls the believers to voluntarily give up retribution by forgiving and reconciling, but it also calls even to a higher level: responding cruelty with goodness, kindness and generosity. The altruistic Qur'anic ethics constitutes the highest level of ethics to which all prophets, their companions and the saintly figures subscribed. Thus the Sunnah is a practical embodiment of the altruistic ethics. The following verses illustrate how the Qur'an promotes altruistic ethics as an alternative to reciprocal and tolerant ethics by asking the believers to respond to evil by not retributing or forgiving but by the best course of action.

Respond evil with that which is best. We are well aware of what they describe (The Qur'an 23: 96).

Such people will be given their reward twice, because they observed patience. And they respond evil with good, and spend from what We have given to them (The Qur'an 28: 54).

One may ask whether these three levels of ethics in the Qur'an exist in the *ahadith* (Prophetic sayings, sing. *hadith*) as well. I should note in passing that *ahadith*, which elaborate the Qur'anic principles is similar regarding the three levels of ethics. I do not need to cite the *ahadith* here to explain it because as I will demonstrate below al-Sulamī has already collected the *ahadith*, along with the verses of the Qur'an, that call to the altruistic ethics in his *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*.

The reciprocal ethic constitutes the minimum standard to which everyone is required to conform. It is the common ethical ground for the whole society. However, the last two (tolerant and altruistic ethics) are voluntary ethics as the believers are not required, but advised and encouraged to practice. Tolerance is easier than altruism. Practicing tolerant or altruistic ethics requires a shift in the ethical paradigm and world view along with spiritual and moral maturity by cleaning the heart from all the vices and internalizing all the virtues. Because not all believers can make this radical shift, forgiving, tolerance and altruism are not mandatory on everyone.

It is very crucial to emphasize that the *futuwwah* ethics subscribes to the highest ideal level of ethics, the altruistic ethics practiced by all the Prophets and saints, to which the Qur'an

calls the ambitious believers but does not require all to follow. One can confidently claim that the aim of the *futuwwah* ethics is to educate and encourage to voluntary altruistic aspirations.

## IV. YOUTH ETHICS IN THE QUR'AN

One should keep in mind that, there cannot be completely separate ethical systems for age groups and good morality cannot be essentially divided according to ages. Therefore most of the moral qualities are common for all people. Yet there are some specifically mentioned for youth. The moral teachings of the Qur'an and Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.) also reflects the same reality.

The *futuwwah* ethics follows the method of deriving ethical norms from the two major sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah, similar to the way other religious and legal norms are derived in *fiqh*. A good illustration for youth ethics in the Qur'an may be the advice of the Luqmān the Wise to his beloved son which may be seen as a good example for formulating a youth ethics and codifying it in a simple way. One can notice that he gave only ten points of advice to his son, whose numbers I indicated within the brackets:

Luqmān said to his son while he was instructing him, "O my beloved son, [1] do not associate partners with Allah. Indeed, associating partners to Him is a great injustice. ... O my beloved son, [2] indeed if wrong should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is the most Kind and the most Acquainted. O my beloved son, [3] establish prayer, [4] enjoin what is right, [5] forbid what is wrong, and [6] be patient over what befalls you. Indeed, [all] that is of the matters [requiring] determination. And [7] do not turn your face [in contempt] toward people and [8] do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful. And [9] be moderate in your pace and [10] lower your voice; indeed, the worse sound is the voice of donkeys" (Luqmān 31:13, 16-19).

In the *futuwwah* literature all Prophets are presented as embodiments of *futuwwah* ethics and morality. For instance, Luqmān, whose advice to his son I cited above, himself set a good

example by practicing what he preached. He is reported to have said that he reached high levels of noble character by “[1] Lowering my gaze, [2] watching my tongue, [3] eating what is lawful, [4] keeping my chastity, [5] undertaking my promises, [6] fulfilling my commitments, [7] being hospitable to guests, [8] respecting my neighbors, and [9] discarding what does not concern me”<sup>4</sup>. Ibn Kathir, Ebu al-Fida ‘Imaduddin Ismail b. ‘Umar (d. 1373) *Qasas al-Qur’ân* (ed. Adil Cenzuri), [n.p.] : al-Rawza li al-Nashr, [n.d.]

The first example in setting a good role model in the Qur’an, however, is the Prophet Adam who is cited as an example for accepting one’s mistakes and apologizing for it. Ibrāhīm is mentioned as another great example who was called a *fatā* by his people (The Qur’an 21:60). The *fatā* of Musa, who is named Yusha, accompanied and served him during his trip to seek for divine knowledge (The Qur’an 18:62). The Seven Sleepers or the Companions of the Cave (*Ashab al-Kahf*) are also mentioned as yet another example for righteous youth who did not compromise their values despite oppression (The Qur’an 18:13). Prophet Yusuf is also presented as an outstanding young person with chastity, forgiveness, endurance and good character. al-Sulamī illustrates the chain of the *futuwwah* from the first man and Prophet, Adam, to the last Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions as follows:

The first to follow the call of *Futuwwah*, to honor munificence and good conduct, was Adam—whose name is fixed in the Will of Allah, whose being lives in the House of Majesty, who is supported by the Holy Light and Purity, and who has been crowned by the Crown of Munificence and entered in the Realm of Salvation. When his son Cain renounced *Futuwwah*, his other son, Abel, took it up. The Prophet Seth gave *Futuwwah* its due and protected it from all and everything that was improper. The Prophet Enoch was brought to high stations by it and was saved from the traps of the Devil. Noah suffered from his devotion to *Futuwwah*, and thus became illuminated by it. ‘Ad was named after *Futuwwah*, which protected him from pride. Hud showed the beauty of loyalty to his people with *Futuwwah*, and Salih saved himself from evil with its help. Abraham, the friend of Allah, who was a true *fatā*, broke the statues and idols. Through *Futuwwah*, Ishmael was ready to be sacrificed to his Lord Most High, and Lot

4 Narrated by Ibn Wahb in Chapter 16, *Stories of the Qur’an* by Ibn Kathir. See, Ibn Kathir, Ebu al-Fida ‘Imaduddin Ismail b. ‘Umar (d. 1373) *Qasas al-Qur’ân* (ed. Adil Cenzuri), [n.p.] : al-Rawza li al-Nashr, [n.d.].

reached the high heaven from which there is no descent. With *Futuwwah* Isaac prays until the Day of Reckoning. Jacob held fast to the ideals of *futuwwah*. In *Futuwwah* Job found comfort in his sickness. With *Futuwwah* Joseph trod the most beautiful of paths and succeeded at each step. Dhul-Kifl, abiding with the high ranks of *Futuwwah*, did his good deeds. Shu’ayb, taking the laurels in the race, won the first place—with *Futuwwah* he was kept from all doubt and error. Moses was honored by being invested with the robe of *Futuwwah*. Aaron abode with it and spoke well. The Companions of the Cave and the Inscription were honored by it and were saved and entered in to the realm of God’s gifts. David’s heart was revived with it and because of it he found it sweet to bow and prostrate. Solomon received *Futuwwah* from David; both men and jinns came to be under his command on its account. Jonah saw Reality in the rules of *Futuwwah*, and he followed them. Zachariah entered the realm of peace and joy with it. John, with his loyalty to it, in difficult moments was saved from the pangs of suffering. Jesus shone with the purest of light through it. Entire victory was given to Muḥammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the brothers Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and his uncle’s son ‘Alī became guardians of it (al-Sulamī 1991: 33-34)

In the ahadith the word *shabb* is frequently used to mention the good character of the young people. It would exceed the scope of this paper to cite all the ahadith regarding youth ethics here. al-Sulamī’s book, *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*, collected some of those ahadith, which I will discuss below. al-Sulamī makes it clear that *futuwwah* is based on the Sunnah and following the role model of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) as follows:

Know that *Futuwwah* means following the honored words of the Prophet (s.a.w.s.) on the day he entered Mecca: “O my people, give salutations, wish blessings of Allah upon each other, feed each other, visit your relatives, pray in the quiet of the night when all else is asleep, and enter salvation and Paradise.” And know that *Futuwwah* is gained by avoiding what our Master forbids: “Do not stay away from your family, do not turn your backs to each other, O good servants of Allah, be brothers to each other as Allah orders you to do” (al-Sulamī 1991: 108).

## V. ATTEMPTS TO CODIFY YOUTH ETHICS: FUTUWWAH LITERATURE

Beginning with 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Sulamī we observe the emergence of a literature about youth ethics with the purpose of simplifying it and disseminating it among youth more easily. To that end, they make a list of the most important moral qualities (*makārim al-akhlāq*) which may be seen as a codification of practical youth ethics.

However, it should be noted that, although youth is the primary target audience, the word *futuwwah* is used in these books not specifically for the people who are young in age but people who have qualities of a young person with good character. This is because in the Arab culture, even before Islam, good character was highly valued, particularly in the young people. The pre-Islamic (Jahiliyya) poetry reflects the praised qualities in the ancient Arab culture which are not very different from the good qualities advocated in the *futuwwah* literature in particular hospitality which was a prerequisite for nobility and dignity. Hence the word *karamah* means both generosity and nobility. This is because it is believed that they are inseparable; nobility depends on generosity and generosity brings nobility.

The moral principles and values represented by the *futuwwah* literature were practiced everywhere in the Muslim world as testified by the travel literature such as the one by Ibn Battuta, Evliya Çelebi and others<sup>5</sup>. The institution of waqf, zawiya (tekke, dargah) and karavansaray may be seen as institutional embodiments of *futuwwah* in Muslim societies. Yet the most important institutional manifestation of the *futuwwah* is in the guilds in Iran and Anatolia. The Ottomans and the Seljuks called it *akhilik* (in Turkish spelling *ahilik*) which comes from *akhi*, brother, from Arabic.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Aysylu, Saetgaraeva, *Hospitality in Islamicate Civilization: Waqf and Futuwwah through Ibn Battuta's Travelogue*, Ibn Haldun Univeristy, Alliance of Civilizations Institute, Department of Civilization Studies, Unpublished MA thesis, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> On Turkish Ahilik, see, Ebubekir Aytekin, *Tarihten Günümüze Fütüvvet ve Ahilik*, İstanbul: Kayıhan yayıncılık 2017; Fatih Köksal, *Ana Kaynaklarıyla Türk Ahiliği*, İstanbul: Doğu Kütüphanesi 2015; Muallim Cevdet, *İslam Fütüvveti ve Türk Ahiliği*: İbn Battuta'ya Zeyl (çeviren: Cezayir Yazar), İstanbul: İşaret 2008; Abdulgani Muhammed b. Alaaddin el-Hüseyni er-Radawi (930/1542), *Fütüvvetnâme-i Tarikat*, (ed. Osman Aydın), Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı 2011.

## VI. EVOLUTION AND SPREAD OF THE FUTUWWAH LITERATURE

Now, before we focus on al-Sulamī's *Kitāb al-Futuwwah* in the next section, with the purpose of contextualizing it in history, we can have a closer look to the *futuwwah* literature in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. I will survey below, the *futuwwah* or the *Futuwwat-nāma* (as they are called in Persian and Turkish) treatises over almost a millennium, from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. I have no claim to be exhaustive in my list because this is not my purpose here, and new discoveries are still made in Turkey, Iran and the Arab world that bring to light previously unknown *futuwwah* books from manuscript libraries, some of which do not have *futuwwah* in their titles. My purpose here is to demonstrate the *continuity* of the tradition of composing *futuwwah* books for nine centuries and how it abruptly ceased with the rise and spread of modernization. and went to oblivion after almost a millennium of shaping the youth ethics. My second purpose here is to demonstrate how widespread the *futuwwah* was all over the Muslim world, including Arabic, Persian and Turkish speaking peoples in a vast geography extending through North Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, Anatolia, and Iran, and how it disappeared after prevailing in such a vast area with diverse cultures and languages.

By the 5th/11th century an ethical code of altruism and selflessness, known as futuwwa, had been adopted in Khurasān by mainstream Sufis. Among them are 'Abd al-Raḥman Sulamī (d.399-400/1021) and his disciple al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072). As I mentioned above, 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Sulamī (d.399-400/1021) is known to be the author of the first book of *futuwwah*, *Kitāb al-futuwwah*. Sulamī's work may be considered an attempt to integrate Baghdādī Sufism into the pre-existing Khurasānian ethic of *futuwwah*. al-Qushayrī also contributed to the literature on futuwwa, although in a very short chapter in his well-known *Risāla*.

The tradition 'Abd al-Raḥman Sulamī started was followed by al-Khārāqānī (d. 425/1033), author of *Risāla Sayr wa Sulūk*, and 'Abd Allāh Anṣārī al-Harawī (d. 481/1089), author of *Tuhfah al-Ikhwān* or *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*, an Arabic-Persian *futuwwat-nāma*, very similar to that of al-Sulamī, that examines the meaning of *futuwwah* ethics, mainly through the definitions offered by past Sufi masters. Kaykāvus b. Iskandar (d. 475/1082) authored *Qābus nāma*, and 'Alī b. Hasan b. Ja'duyyeh from the 11<sup>th</sup> century authored *Mirāt al-Murūwwah* and presented it to Nizam al-Mulk. All these works are dedicated to *futuwwah* ethics, though their authors did not put the word *futuwwah* in the titles. It is not surprising that 'Alī b. Hasan b. Ja'duyyeh used, in the title of his book, *murūwwah* instead of *futuwwah*, for as I mentioned

above, *muruwah* and *futuwwah* are synonymously used in the literature.

In the sixth century of hijrah or the eleventh century of the Common Era, the tradition was maintained by 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Rasūlī (5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century), who authored *Risāle fi al-Futuwwah*. In the seventh century, Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234) authored *Risāla al-futuwwa* and *Kitāb fi'l-futuwwa* in Persian as two separate works. These works are known as the first books exclusively dedicated to *futuwwah*, and had it in their titles.

Persian *futuwwah* treatises that were composed between the 7th-10th A.H. /13th-16th C.E. centuries in Turkish and Persian speaking regions discussed the various dimensions of “manliness” (Arabic, *futuwwa*; Persian, *jawānmardī*; Turkish, *fütüvvet* and *ahilik*), an ethic that had been spiritualized from an early period of Sufi history and subsequently became institutionalized with the emergence of “fraternal” associations from the 7th/13th century.

Later in the thirteen century came Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Makārim Ibn al-Mī'mār (d. 1244), author of *Kitāb al-Futuwwa*<sup>7</sup>, and Ahmed Kharṣūṭī (d. 1216), author of *Tuḥfa al-Wasāyā*. The famous Muḥyi al-Dīn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240) and Sayyid Izzi Marvī (8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century) also talked about the *futuwwah* as part of their other works but without composing an independent book on it. Nāṣir al-Dīn Khusraw, wrote *Futuwwat-nāma-yi Nāṣirī* (668-9/1290) which is a mathnawī of 891 rhyming couplets.

In the fourteenth century, 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (d. 730/1330) authored *Futuwwat-nāma*, and Najm al-Dīn Zarkūb (d. 712/1312) authored *Tuḥfa al-ikhwān fī khaṣā'is al-fityān* (Gift to the brothers on the qualities of the youth). We have another book titled *Futuwwat-nāma* whose authorship, while uncertain, is attributed to Mīrzā 'Abd al-'Azīm Khān Qarīb-i Gharakānī (730?/mid 14<sup>th</sup> century?).

Again from the fourteenth century we have several other works such as 'Alī Hamadānī (d. 787/1385), *Risāla-yi futuwwatiyya*; Gulshahrī (d. 1317), *Manṭıq al-ṭayr*; 'Alā' al-Dawla al-Simnānī (d. 1336), *Risāla al-futuwwa*; and Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd Āmulī (d. 752/1352), *Nafā'is al-funūn fī 'arā'is al-'uyūn* (Precious arts in the brides' eyes).

Burgāzī who lived in the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries is the author of the first known Turkish *Futuwwat-nāma*<sup>8</sup>. Again in the fifteenth century, the tradition was maintained by Darvish

'Alī b. Yusūf (14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries), author of *Futuwwat-nāma*, and by Sayyid Gaybī (d. 1490 ca), author of *Futuwwat-nāma*. In the fifteenth and sixteenth century the tradition was maintained without a break by Akhī Dāi (1475-76), who authored a *futuwwat-nama* in poetry, 'Abd Allāh Iznikī (15<sup>th</sup> century), Razawī (d. 1514), Ḥusayn Wā'iz Kāshifī (d. 909/1504), who authored *Futuwwat-nāma-yi Sulṭānī*<sup>9</sup> and Jān 'Alī (end of 16<sup>th</sup> century). There is also a *Futuwwat-nāma* the content of which is attributed to the Imam Ja'far al-Sādiq.<sup>10</sup>

To our present knowledge, we observe a sharp decrease in the number of the *futuwwah* works during the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. During these centuries the torch was carried by Sheikh 'Abd al-Qādir (18<sup>th</sup> century), the author of *Futuwwat-nāma*, Esrār Dede (d. 1797), who the author of *Futuwwat-nāma* and Mehmed Tāhir b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 1812), the author of *Minhāj al-Murīdīn*. There are many other *futuwwah* works in Arabic, Turkish and Persian waiting to be discovered in the manuscript libraries.

There is yet another genre within the *futuwwah* literature, which Mahrān Afshārī brought to light. These are *futuwwat-nāma* books addressed to particular guilds mostly by anonymous authors<sup>11</sup>. There is also great interest in Turkey to unearth and celebrate the the *ahilik* tradition.

I should end this section by a note that the *futuwwah* values still live in the social memory and practice of Muslim societies everywhere in the Muslim world<sup>12</sup>. Values cherished by *futuwwah* could be observed in the practice of Muslims all over the world although they are not familiar with the literature on the *futuwwah* ethics. This is because *futuwwah* values are practiced and transmitted across generations through practice.

9 Translated to English, See Husayn Waiz Kashifi Sabzawari, The Royal Book of Spritual Chivalry (Futuwwat namah-yi sultani) (tr. Jay R. Crook and Introduction by Mahmud Shelton) Great Books of the Islamic World, 2000.

10 For more information see. Mehmet Saffet Sarıkaya, *Fütüvvetname-i Cafer Sadık, Istanbul 2008*.

11 Mahrān Afshari, *Chahardah Risala der Bab-i Futuwwah wa Asnaf*, Tahran 1381/2002 (14 booklets on futuwwah and guilds); Mahrān Afshari, *Futuwwatnameha wa Rasail-i Khaksariyya (Si Risale)*, Tahran 1394/2015 (30 short books on the futuwwah and Khaksariyyah); Mahrān Afshari, *Si Futuwwatname-i Diger*, Tahran, 1391/2012 (30 other futuwwah books).

12 I want to cite two striking examples. One is by Tosun Bayrak al-Jarrahi who wrote in the Preface of his translation of the Kitab al-Futuwwah (The Way of Sufi Chivalry) that he learned futuwwah in practice from his sheikh Muzaffar Ozak. He wrote: “My thanks are due to my revered master, teacher, and guide along the way to Truth, Sheikh Muzaffar Ozak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti, who taught me, according to my humble capacity, the Futuwwah and everything else I know ...” (al-Sulamī 1991: 1). Another example of the living futuwwah can be found in the account of Cemalnur Sargut about her teacher Samiha Ayverdi (Sargut 2017: 177-185).

7 Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Makārim Ibn al-Mī'mār (d. 1244) authored *Kitāb al-Futuwwa* by a request from Nasir li din Allah (1180-1225), the Caliph of the time who turned the Futuwwah into a formal youth organization with symbols and rituals.

8 For a survey of Turkish futuwwatname literature, see Ali Torun, *Türk Edebiyatında Türkçe Fütüvvetnameler*, Ankara, yayınevi 1998; Mehmet Saffet Sarıkaya, *XIII-XVI. Asırlardaki Anadolu'da Fütüvvetnamelere göre dinî inanç motifleri*, Ankara: yayınevi 2002



## VII. 'ABD AL-RAḤMAN AL-SULAMĪ AND THE FIRST BOOK ON FUTUWWAH

'Abd al-Raḥman al-Sulamī is known as a great Muhaddith, Historian and Sufi. He is presently known as the author of the first book on *futuwwah*, *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*<sup>13</sup>. The book has five chapters. There is some overlap and repetition in these chapters. The book uses the verses from the Qur'an, ahadith, anecdotes and sayings of earlier great *futuwwah* leaders and poems to ground the ethical values of the *futuwwah*. Below, I will focus on the usage of hadith because they occupy the greatest space in the book.

**Hadith scholarship in the *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*:** It is very well-known that al-Sulamī is a great scholar of hadith. He narrates every hadith or *khbar* (sayings from great personalities) with a complete chain of authorities connecting him to the source. He narrated 129 narrations (al-Sulamī 1991: 111-120) from 77 shaikhs whom he met (al-Sulamī 1977: 9-18) in *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*, all with the complete chain of authorities<sup>14</sup>. Let me share two examples about how Sulami presents an ethical value and substantiates it with a narrative authenticated by a chain of authorities.

**From the *futuwwah* is to bring joy into the lives of your friends and meet their needs.** In a Hadith that comes to us through [1]'Abdul-Rahman ibn Muḥammad ibn Mahmūd, who narrated from [2] Ahmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Yahyā, who narrated from [3] Muḥammad ibn al-Azhar, who narrated from [4] Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Basri, who narrated from [5] Ya'la ibn Maymūn, who narrated from [6] Yazīd al-Zaqqashi, who narrated from [7] Anas ibn Mālik (r.a.a.), the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) said: "When one brings joy with his words into the life of a believer or satisfies his worldly needs, whether small or large, it becomes an obligation upon Allah to offer him a servant on the Day of Last Judgement" (al-Sulamī 1991: 37).

13 *Kitab al-Futuwwah* has several Arabic editions and translations to English, Turkish and Japanese. See the References.

14 Ateş lists the names of his 77 shaikhs (al-Sulamī 1977: 9-18) while Bayrak lists the narrations and their chains (al-Sulamī 1991: 111-120). Bayrak listed at the end of the book 127 chains of authorities he omitted in the text of the translation in order not to bore the lay reader. This number does not include the two narrations Bayrak used as examples in the beginning of his translation with the chain of authorities. Therefore, the total number of narrations are 129.

We see in the *sanad* of hadith that there are seven authorities in the chain of narration between al-Sulamī and Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w.).

Another example is as follows:

**From the *futuwwah* is to respond cruelty with kindness, and do not punish for an error.** In a Hadith that comes through [1] Mu ammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muḥammad ibn Sabih al-Jawhari, who narrated from [2] 'Abd Allah ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Shiruyah, who narrated from [3] Ishaq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Hanzali, who narrated from [4] Qabisah, who narrated from [5] Sunayn, who narrated from [6] Abū Ishāq, who narrated from [7] Abū al-Ahwas: "[8] Abū al-Ahwas's father asked the Messenger of Allah whether, if he were to go to a close friend and the man would not help him, he should do the same to the friend if he asked for help. The Messenger of Allah said no" (al-Sulamī 1991: 37).

In this hadith, which al-Sulamī cites to substantiate the ethical value of not responding cruelty with the same but responding with kindness and not punishing it, there are eight authorities between al-Sulamī and the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.).

Another example about generosity is as follows:

**From the *futuwwah* is to maintain good conduct and behavior, the kind that reflects the perfect behavior of the people of Paradise.** We heard through [1] Abū al-Qāsim Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Naşrābādī, who narrated from [2] Mu ammad b. Rabi', who narrated from [3] Sulaymān al-Jizī in Egypt, who narrated from his [4] Father, who narrated from [5] Talq b. al-Samh, who narrated from [6] Yahyā b. Ayyūb, who narrated from [7] Hamid that [8] Anas (r.a.a.) was ill. A friend of his came to visit him. Anas said to his servant, "Serve whatever we have to our brother, even if it is a piece of bread, because the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) said, 'Generosity is a characteristic of the people of Paradise'" (al-Sulamī 1991: 38).

This example is based on an anecdote reported from a well-known Companion of the Messenger of Allah, Anas, who is presented as role model for *futuwwah*. There are seven authorities between al-Sulamī and Anas. Anas demonstrated ethics of *futuwwah* in his behavior and supported it with a hadith.

Here is another example not based on a hadith from the Messenger of Allah but on an anecdote from a saint, Ma'rūf al-Karkhī, who is presented as a role model for *futuwwah*. In this example a *futuwwah* value is substantiated by the practice and teaching of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī. This story is also a good example for how an ethical value is conveyed through a narrative.

**From the futuwwah is to show compassion both to the ones who obey Allah and the ones who rebel against Him.** [1] Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Shādhān, who narrated from [2] Abū Bakr al-Harbī, who reports this story of [3] Ibrāhīm al-Atrush: We were sitting on the shores of the Tigris River with Ma'rūf al-Karkhī. A boat full of young people drinking and playing tambourines was passing by. One of the dervishes said, ‘O Abū Mahfūz, do you see the ones who revolt against their Lord in that boat? Pray to Allah that they be cursed!’ Ma'rūf lifted his hands to heaven and prayed in this fashion: ‘O Allah, my Lord, I beg you to make these people as joyful in heaven as you have made them joyful in this world.’ ‘But we asked you to curse them’ said one of the people. ‘Ma'rūf answered, ‘My brothers, if God accords them joy in heaven, it will be because He has accepted their repentance’” (al-Sulamī 1991: 76).

Note that although what is narrated is not a hadith but just an anecdote from a Sufi saint, al-Sulamī still reports it with a chain of authorities similar to the way a hadith is narrated. There are three authorities between al-Sulamī and Ma'rūf al-Karkhī. The book follows the same pattern until the end by mentioning first the ethical value and bringing evidence from the Qur'an, hadith, sayings of saintly figures and also poems to substantiate it.

### VIII. ETHICAL OF VALUES IN THE KIT B AL-FUTUWWAH

The book lists the values of *futuwwah* and brings evidence from the Sunnah or from the sayings and practices of saintly figures from previous generations. Each hadith or saying is reported with a chain of authorities, following the practice of hadith scholars. Table 1 lists a majority of the *futuwwah* values in al-Sulamī 's *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*, with the original Arabic and the English translation. The list is not exhaustive because the purpose here is to demonstrate how the *futuwwah* emphasizes the altruistic ethical values derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

**Table 1: Ethical Values in al-Sulamī 's Kitāb al-Futuwwah**

	English Translation	Arabic Original
1	Kindness with friends and meeting their needs	الملاطفة مع الاخوان و القيام بحوائجهم
2	Responding cruelty with generosity and abandoning retaliation against evil	مقابلة الإساءة بالإحسان، وترك المكافأة على القبيح
3	Not searching for the failures of friends	ترك طلب عثرات الإخوان
4	Being sociable with friends	التآلف مع الإخوان
5	Generosity	السخاوة
6	Maintaining the old friendship	حفظ الود القديم
7	Going along with friends if it is not a sin	المداراة مع الإخوان ما لم تكن معصية
8	Letting your friends use your property as if it is their own	أن يمكن إخوانه أن يحكموا في ماله كحكمهم في أموالهم
9	Loving hospitality and giving feasts	محبة القرى والضيافة
10	Honoring friends and acting for them	تعظيم الإخوان والحركة لهم
11	Righteousness	استقامة الأحوال
12	Compassion to friends and consolation	الشفقة على الإخوان والمواساة معهم
13	Loving, visiting and communicating for the sake of Allah	التحبيب والتزاور في الله، والتواصل
14	Truthfulness in speech and honesty	صدق الحديث، وأداء الأمانة
15	Seeing as your real property what you gave out but not what you keep	أن يرى أن الباقي من ماله ما بذله، لا ما أمسكه
16	Enjoyable companionship, playfulness with friends and cheerfulness with them	حسن العشرة، والملاعبة مع الإخوان، والبشر معهم
17	Continuous repentance, correcting faults with strong determination not repeat them again	ملازمة التوبة وتصحيحها بصحة العزم على ترك العود إلى ما منه تاب
18	Not reprimanding friends and asking forgiveness for them from God	أن لا تعاتب إخوانك عند زلاتهم وأن تتوب عنهم إذا أذنبوا
19	Conforming with friends on everything and not disagreeing with them	موافقة الإخوان على الجملة وترك الخلاف عليهم
20	Serving the needs and interests of people while keeping the etiquette of worship	القيام بمنافع الخلق مع حفظ آداب العبودية
21	Maintaining inner and outer piety	حفظ الورع ظاهراً أو باطناً
22	Forgiving even when one has power to punish	العفو عند القدرة
23	Concentrating on one's own faults than the faults of others	الاشتغال بعيبه عن عيوب الناس
24	Giving benefit of doubt to others	حسن الظن بالخلق
25	Giving advice to friends generously while knowing that one's own self has the same faults	بذل النصيحة للإخوان والعلم بنقصان نفسه في ترك ما ينصحهم به

26	Patiently enduring hurtful actions from friends for the sake of Allah	احتمال الأذى في الله
27	Refraining lubricity in all conditions	ترك المداهنة في كل الأحوال
28	Loyalty and truthfulness all the time	ملازمة الصدق
29	Compassion to all creatures in all conditions	الشفقة على الخلق في كل الأحوال
30	Not changing one's relations for worldly reasons	أن لا يتغير لأخيه بسبب من أسباب الدنيا
31	Making the right start to realize the goal at the end	تصحيح مبادئ الأحوال ليتم لك تحقيق النهايات
32	<i>Carpe diem</i> . Live the moment	أن لا يهتم العبد في وقت إلا لوقته
33	Practicing kindness in morality	استعمال التظرف في الأخلاق
34	Preferring comfort of one's friends to his endurance of hardship for them	أن يؤثر إخوانه بالراحات ويحمل عنهم المشقات
35	Patience in social relations and contentment with the minimum of it	الصبر على معاشرة الخلق والاكتفاء لمن لا بد منه
36	Humility and leaving snobbery with friends	التواضع وترك التكبر مع الإخوان
37	Not being disrespectful to anyone	أن لا يزدري بأحد من الخلق
38	Refraining jealousy	مجانبة الحسد
39	Spending for friends	الإنفاق على الإخوان
40	Never neglecting friends at any time	أن لا يغفل عن إخوانه في وقت من الأوقات
41	Happiness when meeting friends	السرور بلقاء الإخوان
42	Offering help before getting asked	الابتداء بالصنيعة قبل المسألة
43	Refraining from anger completely	أن يجتنب الإنسان الغضب جملة
44	Protecting neighbors and maintaining good neighborliness	حفظ الجار والمجاورة
45	Generosity to everyone	إكرام الناس جميعاً
46	Not criticizing the food offered to one	ترك العيب على طعام يقدم إليه
47	Loving the poor and the stranger and being kind to them	محبة الغرباء وحسن تعدهم
48	Trusting Allah with regard to livelihood	الثقة بضمأن الله تعالى في الرزق
49	Do unto other what you want them do to you	أن تعامل الناس على حسب ما تحب أن يعاملوك به
50	Forgetting the favors you did to your friends	أن تنسى معروفك عند إخوانك
51	Visiting friends' homes without waiting to get invited	حضور دار من يثق به من الإخوان من غير دعوة
52	Helping friends and going along with them	المساعدة مع الإخوان وموافقهم

At the end of his book, al-Sulamī provides a summary of the *futuwwah* values as follows:

Be honest, loyal, and dependable; be generous; keep a beautiful character; be satisfied with little; do not make fun of your friends, and live with them in harmony; do not listen to slander; wish to do good; be a good neighbor; speak well and be loyal to your word; treat those who serve you well; educate the young and teach them good behavior; respect your elders and superiors; refrain from holding grudges and seeking vengeance; do not cheat or manipulate people, or criticize or talk against them.

Love for Allah's sake and hate for Allah's sake. Be friends for Allah's sake and be enemies for Allah's sake. Distribute freely from your property and help others from the rank that has been upon you. Do not expect appreciation or praise; give when you are asked to show your wealth and your position; serve your guests with your own hands, and serve and give lovingly, not grudgingly. Feed your friends from your own food and show them respect; meet the needs of your brethren with your property and your very life; respond to other's faults with kindness; visit those who do not visit you; be humble and avoid arrogance; avoid self-love and do not think highly of your state. Do good consistently to your mother and father; visit your kin; do not see the faults of others, keep secret their wrongdoings, and advise them only when one can hear; pray for the sinners and pardon their wrongdoings. Feel the evil and terror of your ego, and the shame of going along with it. Show consideration to people and compassion, kindness, and good to the faithful and the Muslims. Pity the poor and be compassionate toward the rich; be modest before men of knowledge; discern the truth in what you hear and accept it. Save your tongue from lies and slander, save your ears from error, and save your eyes from looking at the unlawful. Be sincere and pure in your actions, and be straight in your states. See what is good and beautiful in the Creation; escape from evil and befriend the good. Turn away from the worldly and face Allah. Leave your wants; throw away desire to the praised for your worldly achievement. Be honored by the company of the poor. Avoid respecting the rich for their riches; the real wealth is to be with one's Lord. Be thankful for what is given to you. Tell the truth without fearing anybody. Offer thanks for things in which you find joy, and be patient with the difficulties that you have to tolerate. Flee from the curse of disloyalty and keep others' secrets. When you are with company, sit at a place below that which is due to your rank. Give up your rights while fully upholding the rights of others. Educate your ego. Abide by Allah's prohibitions when you are by yourself. Consult your friends in every matter. Trust in Allah when you are in need. Do not be ambitious. Show respect to the devout, show kindness to the sinful. Do not cause discomfort to anyone; let your outer self be the same as your inner self. Be friends with the friend of your friend and enemies with the enemy of your friend. No matter how far away your friend is, be with him.

These are some of the signs of the ones who follow the path of *futuwwah* (al-Sulamī 1991: 109-110).

The above list gives a clear idea about the futuwah values. It includes almost all the ethical values al-Sulamī mentions in the *Kitāb al-Futuwwah* and substantiates by a verse from the Qur'an, or a hadith or a saying from a respected authority. These values reflect the altruistic ethical approach the *futuwwah* adopted which is based on doing good even to those who do cruelty to one and giving priority to friends even over one's own self.

## IX. THE FIRST PERSIAN FUTUWWAH BY SUHRAWARDI

In Persian *fatā* is translated as *jiwānmard* and Shihāb al-Din 'Umar al-Suhrawardī is the author of the first Persian *Futuwwat-nāma* (the book on *futuwwah*)<sup>15</sup>. Following the tradition of the authors before himself, Suhrawardī also tries to codify the *futuwwah* values to disseminate them easily. Yet he summarizes the values of *futuwwah* in 25 qualities. Similar to the *Kitāb al-Futuwwah* of al-Sulamī, Suhrawardī's work also reflect the values derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, but codified and simplified for easy dissemination and memorization.

For al-Sulamī, the people who are characterized by virtue and practice have actual experience of *futuwwah*. The master and the member of *futuwwah* (*sāhib al-futuwwah*) puts into practice such qualities as knowledge, gentleness, wisdom, virtue, skill, orderly behavior, morals and many others which are in this category. He learns all of these as knowledge and practices them. If someone does not have the ability to manifest all of them, by necessity he will be helpless and unsuccessful in obtaining these twenty-five. Such people are the people of the manifest *futuwwa*, as the term can be applied to them. If someone does not possess the capacity to this extent, it is not proper for such a person to talk about *futuwwah*. The root of those twenty-five qualities which have been mentioned have been included within three letters, and they have been approved and adopted by all virtuous people and wise men. Of these twenty-five, seven are within the "F" of Futuwwa, fourteen are within the "T" and four are within the "W."

The seven virtues which emanate from F and begin with F are as follows:

1. Virtue (*fadl*)
2. Spiritual disclosure (*futūh*)
3. Eloquent language (*fasaha*)

4. Freedom from concern and desire (*farāgha*)
5. Understanding (*fahm*)
6. Discernment (*firāsa*)
7. Practive (*fi'l*)

Those which are derived from "T" and begin with T are as follows:

1. Depending only on Allah (*tawakkul*)
2. Repentance (*tawba*)
3. Humility (*tawādu'*)
4. Sincerity (*tasdīq*)
5. Imagining (*tasawwur*)
6. Endurance (*tahammul*)
7. Voluntary service to people (*tatawwu'*)
8. Reciting prayers at night (*tahajjud*)
9. Tender attitude (*talaṭṭuf*)
10. Blessings from Allah (*tabarruk*)
11. Possess a power to put things into practice (*tasarruf*)
12. Commitment (*tamkīn*)
13. Contemplation (*tafakkur*)
14. Peacefulness (*taskīn*)

The four others that are derived from "W" and begin with W are as follows:

1. Keeping promise (*wafa*)
2. Piety (*wara'*)
3. Friendship with Allah (*walayah*)
4. Connection to Allah (*wasala*)

The way Suhrawardī formulated the qualities of *futuwwah* in such a parsimonious way and linked them with the letters of *futuwwah* represent an excellent example of how the authors of the *futuwwah* literature used various techniques to communicate and disseminate their ideas easily to the young generations in their times. The above effort demonstrates how innovative they were in attracting the attention of the youth.

15 Shihab al-Din 'Umar al-Suhrawardī, *Rasa'il Javānmardī*, (ed. Mortaza Sarrāf) Tehran: Department d'iraologie de l'institut franco-iranien de recherche, 1973.

## Conclusion and Contemporary Implications: What can We Learn from the Futuwah Today?

I think it is quite possible today to learn from the rich heritage of the *futuwwah* in building a youth ethics. There are two areas where the legacy of *futuwwah* can be helpful today: (1) the ethical values and (2) the method of teaching those ethical values and disseminating them in the society. The values of the *futuwwah* ethics would provide a powerful alternative to today's youth culture which is based almost totally on entertainment and self-gratification. However, I am not going to focus on that here, but rather on what we can methodologically learn from the heritage of the *futuwwah*.

### 1. Keep theory implicit

It is crucial to keep philosophical and methodological debates implicit in the background. Otherwise, the focus on practice shifts to intellectual discussions and also there is the danger of losing the lay audience who is not interested in the abstract intellectual discussions, but are after practical moral principles.

### 2. Use narrative

It is a very effective method to use narrative to convey ethical ideas and moral principles to people, in particular to children and younger generations. Narrative ethics as a method is used in the Qur'an, the hadith and also the Sufi literature on ethics and morality. For instance, the famous *Mathnawī* of Rumi successfully uses narrative to ethically educate its readers while they feel entertained by the stories.

### 3. Ground in the Qur'an and hadith

The Qur'an and the hadith have the most binding power on Muslims. It will add great authority on the ethical values if they are grounded in the Qur'an and the hadith. Actually, the purpose of Islamic ethics is nothing other than to promote understanding of the ethics and morality in the Qur'an and hadith and put it in practice.

### 4. Employ the power of precedence

Power of precedence is a very effective tool in teaching both negative and positive ethical norms. For instance, the Qur'an uses the precedence of the bad people such as Ferro, the Nimrūd, Abū Jahl and the like to demonstrate the negative consequences of not following moral principles. It also uses the precedence of good people to demonstrate who was happy and successful in life.

### 5. Cite great personalities

Citing the words of great men and women is a very effective strategy to get the audience

accept the ethical ideas and practice them. This has always been used by many authors in the field. In addition to the sayings and proverbs, poems should also be cited.

### 6. Employ role models from the prophets, *sahābah* and great figures

Role models are very important for young people to concretely observe how moral values are put in practice. Therefore, outstanding men and women should be used as role models.

### 7. Codify for easy dissemination

Following the example of the *futuwwah* literature, ethical principles should be parsimoniously codified for easy memorization and dissemination. Innovative techniques may be used to produce simple and attractive codifications.

*Futuwwah* is based on the highest levels of the Qur'anic altruistic ethics, makārim al-ahlāq. Makārim al-akhlāq is not only the ethics of Prophets from Adam to Muḥammad (s.a.w.) but also it is the morality of the people of paradise. *Futuwwah* aims to educate its followers to have the ethics of the people of paradise in this world (al-Sulamī 1991: 38). The most perfect morality is in paradise. *Futuwwah* is based on the conviction that we can have it in this world even in a small group who share those values on a voluntary basis. *Futuwwah* is about best friendship, love and care among friends. It is not only about the outer manners but also inner manners and good conduct inside one's heart.

Today, there are many things we can learn from the tradition of the *futuwwah* ethics which went into eclipse during the period of modernization and secularization in the Muslim world. Now there is a great interest in publishing the forgotten old manuscripts of the *futuwwah*, which serve as good reminder that once there was a code of ethics for youth derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah in the Muslim world. Now, we need to take a second step to revive the tradition of *futuwwah* as a living ethics, in particular among the youth, to offer an alternative to the current approaches to ethics.

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