

The Book of the *Jihad*
of ‘Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami
(d. 1106)

Text, Translation and Commentary

Niall Christie

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For Steph

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Text, Translation and Commentary

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Preface

On the 15th July 1099, after a siege lasting a little over a month, crusaders from Europe fought their way into the city of Jerusalem and captured it. After the dust of conquest settled, Jerusalem became the capital of the Latin Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem, one of the four Latin states that the Europeans would eventually set up in the territory that they had conquered in the Levant. Some six years later, in 1105, while the crusaders were continuing to expand their territory in the Levant, a Damascene Muslim jurist named 'Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami (d. 1106) publicly dictated an extended call to the military *jihad* (holy war) against the European invaders. Entitled *Kitab al-Jihad* (the Book of the *Jihad*) al-Sulami's work both summoned his Muslim brethren to the *jihad* and instructed them in the manner in which it ought to be conducted, covering topics as diverse as who should fight and be fought, treatment of prisoners and plunder, and the need for participants to fight their own inner sinfulness before turning their efforts against the enemy.

Al-Sulami's text is vital for a complete understanding of the Muslim reaction to the crusades, providing the reader with the first contemporary record of Muslim preaching against the crusaders. However, until recently only a small part of the fragmentary manuscript that survives has been available for study by modern scholars, as it has remained for the most part unedited. This book presents a full Arabic edition of the manuscript, along with the first full English translation thereof, supplemented by an introductory study that explores several topics including the techniques that the author uses to motivate his audience, the precedents that influenced his work, and possible directions for future study of al-Sulami's text. In addition, accompanying notes highlight passages in other works that parallel parts of the text and discuss both features of the manuscript and important figures and concepts mentioned therein, while an appendix provides translations of *jihad* sermons by Ibn Nubata al-Fariqi (d. 985), a preacher from Asia Minor whose rhetorical style was highly influential in the literary tradition of which al-Sulami's work forms a part. In this way this book seeks to open up al-Sulami's text for deeper study in the future by scholars of Islam or the crusades, while also seeking to provide enough supplementary material to make the work accessible to those less familiar with the history of the period or the Muslim perspective thereon.

The introductory study and translation include transliterations of a number of Arabic words, for which I have used a simplified form of the system used in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd Edition, with a number of minor alterations. In particular, the Arabic letter *jim* is indicated using *j*, rather than *dj*, and the letter

qaf is indicated using *q*, rather than *k*. In addition, underlining is omitted from letters that in the *Encyclopaedia* would be indicated using multiple, underlined Latin characters (such as *dhal* [dh] or *shin* [sh]), and macrons and diacritics are also omitted; I assume that scholars familiar with Arabic will still understand which letters are being used in any given case, and they may also refer to the edition for clarification of words that appear in the translation. Since most readers will be non-Arabists, translations of Arabic words have been given when they first appear. Words that appear repeatedly or are particularly important are also listed and defined in the glossary.

References are for the most part given using regular Chicago-style footnotes, except where clarity has required the use of an alternative system. This is particularly the case with regard to Arabic texts, where at times it has proved more appropriate to use references to books, parts, biography numbers and so forth; in such cases I have sought to provide as much information as possible to make follow-up of such references easier for other readers. Qur'anic quotations are presented as they are found in al-Sulami's work, with my own English renderings, though I have relied heavily on the edition and English version by 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali (11th edition, Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2004) as a guide, and I have followed his numbering of the *ayas* (verses of the *Qur'an*) that al-Sulami quotes.

It is of course stating the obvious to note that no book is written in isolation, but in the production of this work I have been privileged to benefit from an enormous amount of support from both within and outside the academic community. Without meaning to slight anyone whom I may have accidentally missed here, I would like to highlight with gratitude the contributions of the following: Carole Hillenbrand, 'Ammar Amin and Suleiman Mourad were instrumental in helping me to obtain copies of the manuscript of al-Sulami's work. Linda Northrup gave me essential training in the use of Arabic manuscripts, without which it would not have been possible to undertake this project. Paul Cobb provided constant valuable feedback, including giving my final draft a rigorous and indispensable check. Maya Yazigi, Suleiman Mourad, Deborah Gerish and Barrie Brill read earlier drafts of this work and gave me numerous helpful comments and suggestions. Maya Yazigi, in addition, allowed me to plunder her library mercilessly. I have also benefited from the advice and suggestions of many other members of the academic community, including in particular Ahmed El Shamsy, Paul Hyams, Floréal Sanagustin, Michael Bonner, Shawkat Toorawa, Steve Judd, Benjamin Kedar, Julie Meisami, Yehoshua Frenkel, Kazuo Morimoto, and Lutz Richter-Bernburg. I would like to thank my friends and colleagues at Langara College, Corpus Christi College and the University of British Columbia for their ongoing encouragement, especially my former office-mates Shelley Reid and Tracy Deline, with whom I shared many hours of intense (and sometimes not so intense) concentration as we all strove to complete our respective opuses. I am also grateful to John Smedley, Lindsay Farthing, Abigail Humphries Robertson, Annette Bell, Michael Bourne, Claire Jarvis and all at

Ashgate Publishing for their assistance, including immense patience in the face of a project that ran considerably beyond the original deadline. Finally I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my wife, Steph, the dedicatee of this work, whose constant love, patience and support were vital to its completion.



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Introductory Study

In this chapter we will conduct a preliminary study of al-Sulami's *Kitab al-Jihad*, considering in particular the background of its author, the initial composition and dissemination of the work, its purposes and the techniques used to achieve them, the influence of al-Sulami's sources and the genres of writing that his work falls into, and possible avenues for future research. However, before we embark on our discussion, it is worth giving some consideration to the early development of the Muslim *jihad* doctrine, better to understand the theological and historical context in which al-Sulami composed his work.

The Development of the *Jihad* up to the 12th Century

There have been numerous works written on the early development of the *jihad* doctrine, so we will only summarize it here.¹ The Arabic word *jihad*, so often understood in the popular consciousness as meaning 'holy war,' actually encompasses any form of striving that one conducts on behalf of the faith, including not only activity waged against enemies on the battlefield ('*jihad* of the sword') but also speaking or writing in defense of Islam ('*jihad* of the tongue' or '*jihad* of the pen') or struggling with one's own inner sinfulness in an effort to improve one's piety ('*jihad* of the self/soul'). What we might more accurately term the 'military *jihad*' is regarded in Muslim tradition as having originated during the lifetime of the Prophet, during which the Muslims at Medina were authorized, through

¹ On the development of the *jihad* in general, see Alfred Morabia, *Le Gihâd dans l'Islam Médiéval: Le 'Combat Sacré' des Origines au XII^e Siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993); Reuven Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Ella Landau-Tasseron, 'Jihad,' in *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe et al. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001–6), 3: 35–43; and Suleiman A. Mourad and James E. Lindsay, 'Rescuing Syria from the Infidels: The Contribution of Ibn 'Asakir of Damascus to the *Jihad* Campaign of Sultan Nur al-Din,' *Crusades* 6 (2007): 38–42. On the development of the *jihad* doctrine in the crusading period, see in particular Emmanuel Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade, Idéologie et Propagande dans les Réactions Musulmanes aux Croisades* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1968); and Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 89–255.

Qur'anic revelation, to engage in defensive and then offensive warfare for the benefit of the community.² The Muslim expansion beyond the Arabian Peninsula was conducted under the banner of *jihad*, and the majority of the Muslim fighters probably were motivated by genuine religious zeal. However, it was in the late 8th and early 9th centuries, when the Muslim world, ruled by the 'Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad, stretched from Spain and North Africa in the west to the borders of India and Central Asia in the east, that a more universal military *jihad* doctrine came to be elaborated. The *jihad* became both a communal and individual obligation; the founder of al-Sulami's school of law, Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (d. 820), enunciated a theory of *jihad* in which he defined it as both a *fard kifaya* (obligation of sufficiency) and a *fard 'ayn* (individual obligation). Essentially, the obligation to military *jihad* was considered to be fulfilled as long as enough people undertook it to ensure its success; thus most of the time it was considered adequately fulfilled if enough people volunteered for the traditional annual raids on enemy (usually Byzantine) territory, but if a major enemy expedition threatened the security of Muslim lands, each individual was required to volunteer for the military forces sent out to repel it. This theory gradually spread across the Muslim world and was accepted by most religious scholars.³

The political fragmentation of the 'Abbasid caliphate in the 10th and 11th centuries was accompanied by both a general decline in enthusiasm for the *jihad* and modifications in *jihad* theory. Much of the impetus for these developments resulted from the fact that by this time the frontiers of the Muslim world had largely stabilized and it was becoming widely recognized that the conversion of the entire world to Islam by conquest was simply not practical. Up until this point most Muslim legal scholars had presented the world as being divided into two major zones: *dar al-islam* (the Abode of Islam), in which Islam was the dominant religion, and *dar al-harb* (the Abode of War), non-Muslim territory against which Muslims were obliged to wage war on a regular basis. However, an increasing number of scholars now began to recognize an intermediate zone, *dar al-'ahd* (the Abode of the Treaty) or *dar al-sulh* (the Abode of Peace), comprising non-Muslim states that were allowed to retain their autonomy provided that they recognized the authority of the Muslims and paid appropriate tributes. At the same time, agreements of safe-conduct for visitors from the *dar al-harb* began to see widespread use. These changes allowed trade to flourish between Muslim and non-Muslim territories.⁴

This is not to say, however, that there were not regions of the Muslim world where the military *jihad* continued to be prosecuted. While rulers increasingly neglected the *jihad*, many Muslim warriors took matters into their own hands and began to establish frontier fortresses, known as *ribats*, in which they sought to

² For a useful summary and analysis of the related Qur'anic passages, see Firestone, *Jihad*, 47–65.

³ Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, 106–8 and 114–16.

⁴ Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 98.

live rigorously pious lives and from which they conducted raids on non-Muslim territory. Such fortresses and practices became widespread, with examples appearing as far west as North Africa and as far east as the borders of Central Asia. However, probably the best-known example of a *mujahid* (fighter in the military *jihad*) from the period was the Hamdanid ruler of northern Syria and northwest Mesopotamia, Sayf al-Dawla (r. 944–67). Sayf al-Dawla was famous for his campaigns against the Byzantines on his northwest frontier, waged in response to Byzantine encroachment on Muslim territory, and he and his successors received thousands of volunteers to swell their ranks as a result of their effective use of propaganda. Among those who praised Sayf al-Dawla's efforts were the famous Muslim poet al-Mutanabbi (d. 963) and the preacher Ibn Nubata al-Fariqi (d. 985),⁵ the second of whom we shall return to in due course.

By the 12th century many Muslim religious thinkers, including some who had partaken in the military *jihad*, had elaborated a two-part theory of *jihad*, giving greatest merit to the 'greater *jihad*' (*al-jihad al-akbar*), embodied in various non-violent actions, such as speaking or writing to defend the faith and enjoin pious conduct, and represented above all by the duty of seeking to purge one's own soul of disobedience to God in order to establish a closer relationship with Him and present oneself as a moral example to one's fellow Muslims. In many cases the language used to depict the greater *jihad* remained militaristic in flavor, but the enemy was now conceived as being internal rather than external. Meanwhile, the actual military *jihad*, though still regarded as an intrinsic part of the *jihad* obligation, became known as the 'lesser *jihad*' (*al-jihad al-asghar*). *Sufis* (Muslim mystics) were highly influential in the development of the greater *jihad*, though its origins were traced by its supporters to *hadith*⁶ of the Prophet himself. A particularly influential figure in the development of this doctrine was the great Muslim mystic and theologian Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali (d. 1111), whom al-Sulami quotes and probably met in person. In his most important work, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), al-Ghazzali sought to encourage his readers to focus on the struggle against their own souls, making the military *jihad* of secondary importance.⁷ As will become apparent, this concern is also given great prominence in al-Sulami's work.

⁵ Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 100–2.

⁶ Accounts of the sayings and actions of Muhammad and his Companions. The *hadith* collectively form the *Sunna*, which alongside the *Qur'an* forms the basis of Islamic teachings. 'Companions' is the term generally used to indicate loyal Muslim followers of the Prophet who actually had face-to-face contact with him and hence are held in high regard as transmitters of Islamic teachings.

⁷ On al-Ghazzali, see in the first instance W. Montgomery Watt, 'al-Ghazali,' in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. H.A.R. Gibb et al. (New Edition, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960–2004; henceforth *EI2*), 2: 1038–41; and Frank Griffel, 'Al-Ghazali,' in *The Islamic World*, ed. Andrew Rippin (London: Routledge, 2008), 359–65. Here the author has followed al-Sulami's spelling of the religious thinker's name as it is presented in the manuscript, which is clearly 'al-Ghazzali'; see for example 'Ali ibn Tahir al-

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The Author

We know very little about 'Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami. The earliest biographical information that we have about him is found in the *Ta'rikh Dimashq* (History of Damascus), the great biographical dictionary compiled by the scholar and preacher Ibn 'Asakir (d. 1176). He gives al-Sulami's full name as 'Ali ibn Tahir ibn Ja'far ibn 'Abd Allah, Abu'l-Hasan al-Qaysi al-Sulami al-Nahwi. Since *al-nahwi* means 'the philologist,' we are given an immediate indication of al-Sulami's major field of interest. As is normal for documents of the period, Ibn 'Asakir then gives a long citation of his sources before eventually stating, 'He was a *thiqa*,⁸ and he had a *halqa* (circle of students) in the Friday mosque⁹ upon whom he endowed¹⁰ a *khizana* (room or cupboard) in which were his books.' Ibn 'Asakir then cites a *hadith* transmitted by al-Sulami: 'The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him salvation, hardly ever left any of his family on a feast day without giving them alms.'¹¹ Finally, again on the authority of others, Ibn 'Asakir notes that al-Sulami died on Tuesday 21st Rabi' I 500 A.H. (19th November 1106 C.E.).¹²

Later biographical dictionaries generally follow Ibn 'Asakir and add little more. The biographer and geographer Yaqut al-Hamawi (d. 1229) adds that most people saw al-Sulami as pious and that when asked about his year of birth, al-Sulami said that he was born in 431 A.H. (1039–40 C.E.).¹³ The scholar and bureaucrat Ibn al-Qifti (d. 1248) recalls al-Sulami's interest in language more explicitly, noting

Sulami, *Kitab al-Jihad* (unpublished manuscript, Asad Library, Damascus [henceforth Sulami]), f. 175b. On the development of the greater *jihad*, see Morabia, *Le Gihâd dans l'Islam Médiéval*, 256–57 and 293–336; and Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 32–48. The chronology of the development of the greater *jihad* remains disputed, and it may be that al-Sulami was active during the period in which it was becoming formalized; see Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 32–48; and Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, 13–14 and 169–70.

⁸ One recognized in religious science as a reliable transmitter of *hadith*; on *thiqa* see in the first instance G.H.A. Juynboll, 'Thika,' in *EI2*, 10: 446.

⁹ Meaning the Umayyad Great Mosque in Damascus.

¹⁰ Literally 'instituted a *waqf*.' A *waqf* is an inalienable religious endowment, intended to benefit those upon whom it is endowed until the Day of Judgment. On *waqf*, see in the first instance R. Peters, 'Wakf: In Classical Islamic Law' in *EI2*, 11: 59–63.

¹¹ Referring to the charitable gifts normally given at each of the major Muslim festivals.

¹² 'Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Asakir, *Ta'rikh Dimashq al-Kabir*, ed. 'Ali Ashur al-Janubi (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 2001), Vol. 46, no. 5031 (pp. 3–4).

¹³ Yaqut ibn 'Abd Allah al-Hamawi, *The Irshâd al-Arib ilâ Ma'rifat al-Adib, or Dictionary of Learned Men of Yâqût*, ed. D.S. Margoliouth (E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Series 6, London: Luzac and Co., 1923–31), 5: 225–26.

that al-Sulami taught Arabic to his students.¹⁴ By way of summary, the writer and teacher Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 1505) notes al-Sulami's piety and reliability, his circle of students in the Friday Mosque of Damascus, his gift of the *khizana* of books, the dates of his birth and death and the fact that he was written about by Ibn 'Asakir.¹⁵

These sources present us with an elusive but engaging figure, a pious, trustworthy teacher who was clearly concerned for the long-term welfare of his students. Ibn 'Asakir's choice of *hadith* to illustrate his biography is intriguing in that it does not have any particular associations with *jihad*, from which we might suggest that al-Sulami was not particularly recognized for *jihad* preaching by his biographer Ibn 'Asakir. Indeed, Suleiman Mourad and James Lindsay have suggested that Ibn 'Asakir *deliberately* minimized al-Sulami's promotion of the *jihad* as part of an attempt to promote his own reputation at the expense of the religious scholars of Damascus, and that he was actually aware of al-Sulami's work and may even have attended some of his preaching sessions.¹⁶

As one final point, it is almost certain that al-Sulami was a follower of the Shafi'i school of Islamic law. He came from a family of religious scholars who followed this school, and in addition, in the authorities that he cites in his work he draws most heavily on the works and opinions of al-Shafi'i and his followers.¹⁷

The Manuscript

Al-Sulami's work exists only in one fragmentary manuscript, currently kept in the Asad Library in Damascus.¹⁸ What remains consists of Parts 2 (ff. 173b–91a), 8 (plus an additional fragment, ff. 191b–213a), 9 (ff. 1–20) and 12 (ff. 213b–37a). With the exception of several instances where notations have clearly been added at a later date, the entire manuscript is written in one hand, and it includes both the main text and additional marginal notations by the author or scribe. The

¹⁴ Jamal al-Din Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ibn al-Qifti, *Inbah al-Ruwah 'ala Anbah al-Nuhah*, ed. Muhammad Abu'l-Fadl Ibrahim (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya, 1950–73), 2: 283.

¹⁵ Jalal al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suyuti, *Bughyat al-Wu'ah fi Tabaqat al-Lughawiyyin wa'l-Nuhah*, ed. Muhammad Abu'l-Fadl Ibrahim (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-'Asriyya, n.d.), 2: 170.

¹⁶ Suleiman A. Mourad and James E. Lindsay, *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology in the Crusader Period: Ibn 'Asakir of Damascus (1105–1176) and His Age, with an Edition and Translation of Ibn 'Asakir's The Forty Hadiths for Inciting Jihad* (Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts 99, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2013), 33–46. The author is grateful to Suleiman Mourad for his guidance on the *hadith* under discussion here.

¹⁷ Emmanuel Sivan, 'La g n se de la contre-croisade: un trait  damasquin du d but du XII^e si cle,' *Journal Asiatique* 254 (1966): 222, n. 5.

¹⁸ The author has found no cataloguing information for this manuscript, but it was formerly kept at the Zahiriyya in Damascus under the numbers 3796 (ff. 172–237) and 4511 (ff. 1–20).

manuscript was clearly intended for use rather than to be decorative; as is common in utilitarian manuscripts from the period, the lines of text are frequently uneven and spill over into the margins, words or sections are crossed out, and often the diacritics that assist in reading the Arabic words are omitted. The manuscript was partially edited and translated by Emmanuel Sivan in 1966,¹⁹ and Sivan's pioneering article on this has been the foundation of almost all the scholarship that has been conducted on al-Sulami's call since. In 2007, as the initial manuscript of this book was nearing completion, the first full Arabic edition of al-Sulami's work was published by Suhayl Zakkar in Damascus, although this omits some sections that the scribe crossed out and some of the briefer marginal notations.²⁰ In this work we have sought to provide a complete representation of the Arabic manuscript, as well as a full English translation, and naturally Sivan and Zakkar's works have been helpful in this regard.

It seems likely that while not actually in his own hand, this is al-Sulami's intended text, the actual manuscript that he produced when dictating his work in public. A helpful starting point in ascertaining this is the *sama'at* on the manuscript. *Sama'at* (sing. *sama'*) were certificates written on a manuscript, informing a reader who had heard the text read previously, when and where. The people named included the senior scholar presiding over the reading, the scribe recording the information, and those who had attended. The date and location of the reading were also often given. This allowed those named in the *sama'at* legitimately to claim knowledge of the text in question in the future.²¹ The manuscript of al-Sulami's work bears three *sama'at* on the first page of Part 2, one on the second page of Part 8, one on the first page of Part 9 and one on the first page of Part 12.²² In addition to the explicit information, the *sama'at* also give us some additional clues. Four of the *sama'at*, one on each part, are listed as having been written between May and October of 1105 by a scribe named Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Baqi, with the location of the reading being listed in the first of these as the Mosque of Bayt Lihya, which was a village in the *Ghuta*, the rural area surrounding Damascus. Another was written by one Ahmad ibn Salama in an unspecified location in July and August of the same year, and the last, written in 1113 at the Great Mosque in Damascus, was recorded by one Hibat Allah ibn al-Hasan.²³ It must be admitted that in all cases, in

¹⁹ Sivan, 'Génèse,' 206–22. References below to al-Sulami's work refer to the manuscript, and folio page numbers indicate either the right-hand page (a) or the left-hand page (b).

²⁰ See *Arba'at Kutub fi'l-Jihad min 'Asr al-Hurub al-Salibiyya*, ed. Suhayl Zakkar (Damascus: al-Takwin, 2007).

²¹ R. Sellheim, 'Sama': As a term in education' in *EI2*, 8: 1019–1020.

²² Sulami, ff. 173b, 192b, 1b and 213b. The slightly odd ordering used here represents the re-organization of the parts of the manuscript into numerical order.

²³ Sulami, f. 173b. This contradicts details of the previously accepted account of the manuscript's transmission, which places the second reading in 1105 in the Great Mosque of Damascus. See Sivan, 'Génèse,' 204–5 and Nikita Elisséeff, 'The Reaction of the Syrian Muslims after the Foundation of the First Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem,' in

their references to al-Sulami the scribes use the expression *radiya 'llah 'anhu* (may God be content with him), an expression that gives us pause as it is most commonly reserved for references to important Companions of the Prophet and other now-deceased holy figures. This might initially seem to suggest that what we have is a copy, made after the death of al-Sulami, which includes copies of the *sama 'at*, but with the eulogistic expression added to al-Sulami's name by people who viewed him with great respect. However, there are a number of cases of this blessing being used when the intended beneficiaries were still living that can be dated to both before and after al-Sulami's death; for example, we have an inscription from the Umayyad period (661–750) from Rehovoth in Israel in which a prayer for divine forgiveness of an individual is recorded and in which God is requested to *radiya 'anhu* (be content with him).²⁴ A more academic example can be found in the *Jawahir al-'Iqdayn fi Fadl al-Sharafayn* (The Jewels of the Two Necklaces on Excellence of the Two Honors) of the Shafi'i jurist 'Ali ibn 'Abd Allah al-Samhudi (d. 1505). Al-Samhudi advises students preparing to recite a text in front of their *shaykh*²⁵ to invoke God's mercy on the author of the text, then to say to their *shaykh* '*radiya 'llah 'ankum*' (may God be content with you), '*radiya 'llah 'an shaykhina wa imamina*' (may God be content with our *shaykh* and *imam*),²⁶ or something similar, the *shaykh* of course still being alive in this case.²⁷ This second example is much more pertinent to the issue at hand, as al-Sulami's text was being recited in a similar context, albeit admittedly about 400 years earlier; it suggests that in the academic context in particular the blessing in question was periodically invoked on living beneficiaries, though it remains impossible to say for certain if this was standard practice during al-Sulami's lifetime.²⁸

Another feature of the *sama 'at*, and also of a number of other minor notes also found on the title pages of the manuscript, that suggests that this may indeed be the original manuscript is that while all the *sama 'at* by Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Baqi and the text itself are all written in the same hand, the various hands used for the other *sama 'at* and notations are too different, in terms of the formation of the letters, width of the strokes and so forth, both from that of the *sama 'at* by Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Baqi and from each other, to suggest that this is a single copy made at a later date by a single scribe, since the handwriting is not universally consistent

Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth Century Syria, ed. Maya Shatzmiller, The Medieval Mediterranean 1 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), 163.

²⁴ Moshe Sharon, 'Five Arabic Inscriptions from Rehovoth and Sinai,' *Israel Exploration Journal* 43 (1993): 53–54.

²⁵ The scholar from whom they were learning.

²⁶ An *imam* is a prayer leader in a mosque, a position that the *shaykh* is likely to have fulfilled for his students. The term was also used for the spiritual leader of the Muslim community and was synonymous with the caliph.

²⁷ Nur al-Din 'Ali ibn 'Abd Allah al-Samhudi, *Jawahir al-'Iqdayn fi Fadl al-Sharafayn*, ed. Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1995), 182.

²⁸ The author is indebted to Yehoshua Frenkel and Kazuo Morimoto both for their advice and for drawing his attention to the article and source cited in the preceding discussion.

throughout. Thus it seems more likely that we have an original text by one scribe that has had additional *sama'at* and other notations added to it later.

Internal evidence from the text would seem to indicate that it is in fact unfinished. The manuscript includes a number of gaps that appear to be waiting to be filled, even including points where the marginalia curve around to leave the space of the main page available,²⁹ and the fragment at the end of Part 8 ends with the word *bab* (chapter) written in the center of the line, clearly indicating that another chapter was intended to follow.³⁰ There are also other points where sentences remain unfinished.³¹ Thus we are left with the impression of a work in progress, rather than a finished product, and while allowing text to spill into margins and using marginalia would save paper, it would seem unlikely that a scribe copying a manuscript at a later date would also have copied, and then crossed out, crossed-out sections that were clearly intended to be omitted. The rather chaotic layout of the text would seem to indicate that the scribe was taking down a dictation from al-Sulami as he composed the text aloud.

In the light of these factors, we might suggest that the manuscript that we have was composed in public in 1105 by al-Sulami and taken down by Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Baqi, with the other *sama'at* being added when Part 2 of the text was repeated on later occasions in both 1105 and 1113, and the additional notations on the title pages being added even later.

Genre, Purpose and Audience

Al-Sulami's text is a multi-faceted work, and it would be inaccurate to regard it as falling neatly into one literary genre. It is most clearly a book on the *jihad*, a genre of writing dating from at least as early as the 8th century and the *Kitab al-Jihad* (Book of the *Jihad*) of the famous jurist and *jihad* fighter, 'Abd Allah ibn al-Mubarak (d. 797).³² This genre of writing flourished in the crusading period after al-Sulami's death as the *jihad* propaganda campaigns of Nur al-Din (r. 1146–74) and Saladin (r. 1169–93) gained momentum.³³ Al-Sulami's work also shows similarities to the *Kitab al-Siyar* of Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Fazari (d. 802 or later), another famous religious scholar and fighter in the *jihad*; al-Fazari's work is itself of mixed genre, being both a work on the regulations affecting conduct of war (*siyar*) and an account of the military campaigns of the Prophet and his Companions (*maghazi*).³⁴ Al-Sulami's *Kitab al-Jihad* also

²⁹ Sulami, ff. 188a, 205a-b, 225b, 227a and especially 208a.

³⁰ Sulami, f. 213a.

³¹ See for example Sulami, ff. 191a, 217b and 228b.

³² 'Abd Allah ibn al-Mubarak, *Kitab al-Jihad*, ed. Nazih Hammad (Beirut: Dar al-Nur, 1971).

³³ Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 165–66.

³⁴ Abu Ishaq al-Fazari, *Kitab al-Siyar*, ed. Faruq Hamada (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risala, 1987). On Ibn al-Mubarak and al-Fazari see Michael Bonner, *Aristocratic Violence and*

contains sections reflective of another genre of literature, books of *fada'il* (merits). These were works describing the merits of a particular place or practice, primarily through the medium of quotations from the *Qur'an* and *hadith*; perhaps the best known examples, at least to modern scholars, are the *fada'il* works on Jerusalem by Ibn al-Murajja al-Maqdisi (fl. 1038–48) and Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Wasiti (fl. 1019).³⁵ Al-Sulami devotes a section of his work to describing the merits of the *Bilad al-Sham*,³⁶ and especially Jerusalem and Damascus, in a way that is intended to provoke his listeners into action. We will discuss this in more detail later.

In addition to the features that might be seen as growing out of types of religious and legal texts, al-Sulami's own background as a teacher of Arabic is also evident. Periodically in the narrative al-Sulami will pause to explain a particular word or expression in order to ensure that his audience understands his meaning correctly. In doing so he frequently deconstructs a particular word or phrase, explaining the Arabic consonantal root's meaning and discussing other possible permutations thereof.³⁷ At times he even shows knowledge of Persian, explaining how certain Persian words relate to Arabic words or concepts raised in his narrative.³⁸ Al-Sulami also shows an interest in poetry, something not at all unusual in scholars of the period, and in addition to quoting lines periodically to illustrate his points, he also devotes an entire section of his work to poetry, from both before and after the rise of Islam, that encourages his listeners to brave combat.³⁹

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that this text is clearly exhortatory in tone; it is above all a call to al-Sulami's listeners to undertake the military *jihād* against the crusaders. Given its length, it is as a whole unsuitable for use as a conventional *khutba*,⁴⁰ bearing a closer resemblance to a work of *wa'z*.⁴¹ That said,

Holy War: Studies in the Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier, American Oriental Series 81 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1996), 109–25.

³⁵ Abu'l-Ma'ali al-Musharraf ibn al-Murajja al-Maqdisi, *Fada'il Bayt al-Maqdis*, ed. Ayman Nasr al-Din al-Azhari (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2002); and Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Wasiti, *Fada'il al-Bayt al-Muqaddas*, ed. Isaac Hasson, Max Schloessinger Memorial Series 3 (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1979).

³⁶ The term used by mediaeval Muslim writers to refer to the region roughly corresponding to the modern states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian autonomous areas and the edge of south-east Turkey. *Al-Sham* could also refer specifically to Damascus.

³⁷ See for example Sulami ff. 178b–79a.

³⁸ Sulami, ff. 180a, 200b, 203a and 217a.

³⁹ Sulami, ff. 215b–18a.

⁴⁰ Address usually given from the *minbar* (pulpit) of the mosque at the Friday noon prayer, akin to a Christian sermon.

⁴¹ Exhortation. *Wa'z* preaching was less formalized and regulated than the preaching of *khutbas* and could be performed either spontaneously or in pre-arranged gatherings, some of which were even attended or convened by members of the political elite. On this topic see Daniella Talmon-Heller, 'Islamic Preaching in Syria during the Counter-Crusade (Twelfth-Thirteenth Centuries),' in *In Laudem Hierosolymitani: Studies in Crusades and Medieval Culture in Honour of Benjamin Z. Kedar*, ed. Iris Shagrir,

as we have seen, it is clear from the *sama'at* that Part 2 was repeated in public at least twice, once before and once after the author's death, and it may well have been used as a basis for *khutbas*. It is understandable that this would be the most popular section of the work since it deals most directly with the Frankish impact on the region.

The issue of transmission raises the question of to whom the text was addressed. From the *sama'at* it seems that al-Sulami's audiences, and the audience for the third reading in 1113, were comprised of a small number of listeners, primarily religious scholars. Thus al-Sulami seems in the first instance to have been calling on his immediate listeners to go out and fight against the Franks. This was not an unrealistic expectation; we have numerous accounts of religious scholars who did go out to fight and found martyrdom on the battlefield, being recognized and celebrated afterwards for their sacrifice.⁴² However, it seems that al-Sulami also intended for his work to reach a much wider audience:

By God, you community of *sultans* of this country, and those aides, soldiers and others from the local militia, stalwart auxiliaries and lords recently acquired with wealth and passed as inheritance among yourselves, families and close friends, who follow them, go out, lightly or heavily armed, and fight the *jihad* with your wealth and your selves.⁴³

Al-Sulami clearly wanted his call to go beyond the religious classes to the 'secular' authorities of the region. His reference to 'lords recently acquired from wealth and passed as inheritance among intimates, families and close friends' probably intended to address the *mamluks*, soldiers who had begun life as slaves, been brought up to be both Muslims and skilled fighters, and had then been manumitted upon reaching adulthood. By now there were many instances of such soldiers rising through the ranks to become senior figures in Muslim armies and government. Thus al-Sulami ensured that his call was directed to rulers from both free-born and slave origins. This passage actually forms part of a larger section in which al-Sulami emphasizes the obligation of rulers to defend their subjects.⁴⁴ It is understandable that al-Sulami targeted the rulers of the region, since they were

Ronnie Ellenblum and Jonathan Riley-Smith, *Crusades—Subsidia 1* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 68–74; and *idem*, *Islamic Piety in Medieval Syria: Mosques, Cemeteries and Sermons under the Zangids and Ayyubids (1146–1260)*, Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 7 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2007), 115–48. On preachers of these types of addresses see also Johs. Pedersen, 'The Islamic Preacher: *Wa'iz, Mudhakkir, Qass*' in *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume*, ed. Samuel Löwinger and Joseph Somogyi (Budapest: Globus Nyomdai Müintézet, 1948), 1: 226–51.

⁴² On this topic see Daniella Talmon-Heller, 'Muslim Martyrdom and Quest for Martyrdom in the Crusading Period,' *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 14 (2002): 131–39.

⁴³ Sulami, f. 177b.

⁴⁴ Sulami, ff. 177a–b.

the ones most able to respond to the Frankish threat; however, this does not mean that he considered the rest of the Muslims to be exempt from the obligation to take part in the *jihad*, as will become apparent below.

From the *sama'at* it seems that al-Sulami's work was primarily disseminated to small groups of scholars. However, it is also clear from one of the *sama'at* that al-Sulami's second dictation of the second part of his work, at least, took place at a number of *majalis* in July–August 1105.⁴⁵ The Arabic word '*majlis*' (plural: *majalis*) essentially means a gathering where people sit down together. Thus the word is often used in the modern day to mean a parliament or similar government assembly. However, in al-Sulami's time one of the most common forms of *majlis* was a gathering of scholars to study together or hear a reading or sermon. In particular, a *majlis al-wa'z* was a gathering, either formally-arranged or spontaneous, where popular preaching would take place. At times these could be very complex affairs, including Qur'anic recitations; exegesis of the Qur'anic excerpts recited; the telling of news; the sermon itself, which could include poetry and edifying or amusing anecdotes; and a high degree of audience participation, including group discussions and vocal indications of approval or disapproval, as well as sometimes dramatic expressions of repentance.⁴⁶ It is clear that al-Sulami's work is well suited to this sort of transmission, containing as it does many of the elements that we have just listed. The *sama'a* on al-Sulami's text for the *majlis* of July–August 1105 records only three people who heard the text, and it may indeed be that these were the only persons present; we do have records of Muslim scholars who preferred teaching small groups, so such a limited audience is not inconceivable.⁴⁷ However, this would seem to run counter to al-Sulami's clear desire to spread his message as far as possible, and since by this time *majalis al-wa'z* were often popular events that attracted large crowds, it is possible that there were actually many others who were present at this *majlis*, and possibly the other readings, but did not necessarily feel the need to have their names recorded. *Majalis al-wa'z* were also periodically attended by senior political figures, so al-Sulami may not only have devised his preaching with the wider audience in mind but also have hoped that some of these political figures would be in attendance. If this had happened one would expect the names of such figures to be recorded; since they are not, it would seem that if he had any such hopes he was disappointed.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Sulami, f. 173b.

⁴⁶ Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety in Medieval Syria*, 117–23.

⁴⁷ On such preachers and *majlis* etiquette in general, see Christopher Melchert, 'The Etiquette of Learning in the Early Islamic Study Circle,' in *Law and Education in Medieval Islam: Studies in Memory of Professor George Makdisi*, ed. Joseph E. Lowry, Devin J. Stewart and Shawkat M. Toorawa (Cambridge: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 33–44, esp. 36.

⁴⁸ On *majalis*, audiences and preachers' relations with rulers see Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety in Medieval Syria*, 116, 123–36, and 141–48.

That is not to say, however, that we can be certain that al-Sulami's efforts did not have an impact on the ruling classes. As we have noted, the part of his work in which he exhorted Muslim rulers to unite to fight the Franks was composed at Bayt Lihya in May–June 1105, then repeated in an unspecified location in July–August of the same year. At the time Damascus was ruled by the *atabeg* (military regent for an underage ruler) Zahir al-Din Tughtigin (r. 1105–28). In October–November 1105 Tughtigin marched out to fight the Franks and take fortifications that they were building in the vicinity of Damascus. Then the following year he attacked and took control of Busra, which was held by forces loyal to political rivals who had previously allied with the Franks against him. Naturally the coincidence is striking, and it is tempting to suggest that Tughtigin's activities were a response to the efforts of al-Sulami and others like him; however, it is more likely that they were provoked by a desire on Tughtigin's part to advance his political ambitions and that, as Carole Hillenbrand has concluded, al-Sulami's text never did make the leap from the discussions of religious scholars to the discourse of rulers. Indeed, Muslim rulers had by now discovered the usefulness of making alliances with the crusaders against other crusaders or even other Muslims, so while al-Sulami's ideas probably did continue to circulate among the religious scholars of the region, and they may well have informed later preaching of the *jihad* against the Franks, much like Pope Urban II, who died before hearing of the conquest of Jerusalem by the First Crusade, al-Sulami himself did not live to see the objective of his preaching fulfilled.⁴⁹ As an aside, al-Sulami does not present an opinion on Sunni Muslims making alliances with Shi'ites, as Tughtigin did with the Fatimids in August–September 1105.

Al-Sulami's Vision of the Jihad

The version of the *jihad* teaching that al-Sulami presents in his text on the whole follows the standard *jihad* doctrine of the period. At the outset of Part 2 he provides a number of *hadith* and anecdotes indicating that the *jihad* is a matter of concern to all Muslims;⁵⁰ however, he also clearly depicts the military *jihad's* conduct as being first and foremost the responsibility of the ruling classes. He quotes al-Shafi'i's own teaching that the *imam* must organize a military expedition every year, and as indicated above, he goes on to recall how this duty is extended to local

⁴⁹ Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 108–16. For more on the impact of al-Sulami's preaching, see Sivan, 'Génèse,' 204–6; and Niall Christie, 'Religious Campaign or War of Conquest? Muslim Views of the Motives of the First Crusade,' in *Noble Ideals and Bloody Realities: Warfare in the Middle Ages*, ed. Niall Christie and Maya Yazigi, *History of Warfare* 37 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006), 57–72. Mourad and Lindsay suggest that al-Sulami's work had faded to obscurity by the 13th century, in large part due to the prominence achieved by Ibn 'Asakir; see Mourad and Lindsay, *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology*, 89–90.

⁵⁰ Sulami, ff. 174a–b.

rulers as well. He also emphasizes the obligation of rulers to defend their subjects and expresses outrage at rulers who do not take military action in the face of the crusaders' activities.⁵¹ In his discussion he echoes standard ideas that circulated at the time regarding the responsibilities of rulers. Probably the most influential writer in this regard was the 11th-century judge, Abu'l-Hasan al-Mawardi (d. 1058). Al-Mawardi wrote a treatise on the duties of rulers, *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya* (The Rules of Government), in which he argued that the caliph and his provincial governors were required to conduct the military *jihad*. In his text he presents a list of the ten public duties of the caliph, which include the following:

3. He must protect the territory of Islam and defend the sanctuaries so that people may earn their sustenance and journey safe from any threat to their persons or belongings; [...]

5. He must fortify the border posts against attack and defend them with force against an enemy which might appear unexpectedly and violate what is sacred or shed the blood of Muslims or *dhimmi*s protected by a pact;

6. He must make *jihad* against those who resist Islam after having been called to it until they submit or accept to live as a protected *dhimmi*-community—so that Allah's rights, may He be exalted, 'be made uppermost above all [other] religion' [*Qur'an* 9: 33].⁵²

Thus we see no fewer than three of the ten public duties of the caliph being related to the *jihad* and defense of his subjects. In his work al-Mawardi imposes similar duties on provincial governors who are stationed in provinces that border enemy territory.⁵³ He also states that the provincial rulers do not require the caliph's permission to wage defensive war against enemies,⁵⁴ a ruling that would have had clear relevance, in the eyes of al-Sulami, to the current state of affairs in the Levant, in that it meant that there was no need for local rulers to seek caliphal permission before conducting expeditions against the Franks, making these rulers all the more open to criticism for their inaction.

While rulers were expected to take the lead in the conduct of the *jihad*, the rest of the Muslims also faced obligations in this regard. Al-Sulami takes up

⁵¹ Sulami, ff. 174b–75a, 177a–b and 188b–89a.

⁵² Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, *Kitab al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya wa'l-Wilayat al-Diniyya*, ed. Ahmad Mubarak al-Baghdadi (Kuwait and al-Mansura: Dar al-Wafa, 1989), 22–23; and *idem*, *Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah: The Laws of Islamic Governance*, trans. Asadullah Yate (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1996), 28.

⁵³ Al-Mawardi, *Kitab*, 40–41 and *Ahkam*, 48.

⁵⁴ Al-Mawardi, *Kitab*, 44 and *Ahkam*, 52–53. Al-Mawardi actually devotes an entire chapter to laying out in detail the regulations affecting the conduct of an *amir* charged with waging the *jihad*; see al-Mawardi, *Kitab*, 47–73 and *Ahkam*, 57–82.

al-Shafi'i's model of *fard 'ayn* and *fard kifaya*. However, his precise position on when the *jihad* changes from being an obligation of sufficiency to being an individual obligation is difficult to discern. He cites the opinions of a number of scholars, not all of whom agree with each other, and provides only a limited amount of commentary. This has a particular impact on his presentation of the offensive military *jihad*, for he begins by presenting the opinions of al-Shafi'i and al-Ghazzali, both of whom describe Muslims taking individual action to ensure that an expedition against enemy territory is carried out when it becomes apparent that this will not be initiated by their rulers, suggesting that at this point the obligation has become an individual one.⁵⁵ However, he later gives another opinion of al-Ghazzali that seems to indicate that the *jihad* should only be an obligation of sufficiency in defensive situations.⁵⁶ Thus his attitude towards the offensive *jihad* is difficult to discern.

Al-Sulami's attitude to the defensive *jihad*, on the other hand, is much clearer, probably as a result of the fact that it is first and foremost the defensive *jihad* that he is trying to invoke from the local rulers. Following standard Shafi'i doctrine, al-Sulami indicates that the defensive *jihad* is incumbent on all eligible Muslims until a sufficient number undertake it to ensure the successful defense of Muslim territory. Thus the defensive *jihad* begins as an individual obligation in reaction to the enemy threat, but once enough Muslims march to repel the enemy the rest are no longer under obligation to become involved. As Hadia Dajani-Shakeel has noted, he does diverge from standard *jihad* doctrine at one point when he states, 'Were it not for our hopes of uprooting them by going to fight them and of taking back the country from them, it would not be permitted to call this opposition to them a *jihad* or an expedition in this situation.'⁵⁷ Here al-Sulami seems to be suggesting, in a manner perhaps more reminiscent of St Augustine of Hippo (d. 430) but not at all reflecting standard *jihad* teaching, that a reasonable hope of recovering territory lost by the Muslims is what qualifies military action taken in this situation as a *jihad*. It may be that here al-Sulami is subordinating strict legal accuracy to exhortatory intent; by offering his listeners a probable success he seeks to make involvement in the counter-crusade more attractive. We will return to the ways in which al-Sulami seeks to motivate his listeners below.

In his discussion of defensive *jihad* al-Sulami still expects the ruling classes to take the lead, stating that the ruler's permission is usually required for Muslims to go out to face the enemy, the only exception being when this is not possible, such as in the case of a surprise attack on, or siege of, Muslim territory made by the

⁵⁵ Sulami, ff. 175a–b.

⁵⁶ Sulami, f. 176a.

⁵⁷ Sulami, f. 188b; and Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, 'A Re-Assessment of some Medieval and Modern Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade,' in *The Jihad and its Times*, ed. Hadia Dajani-Shakeel and Ronald A. Messier, Michigan Series on the Middle East 4 (Ann Arbor: Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, 1991), 54.

enemy.⁵⁸ Thus we see a continued recognition on the Damascene author's part of those who were actually able to initiate a military response to the situation, with the rulers continuing to be the primary targets of his preaching.

In his work al-Sulami considers numerous other regulations relating to the military *jihad*; for example, he devotes significant portions of his text to defining who is required to undertake the *jihad*, which he views as being incumbent in the first instance on all free, adult, male, sane Muslims, provided that they are not afflicted with a major illness that prevents them from taking part. Thus women, children, slaves, the insane and the seriously sick are excused; in fact, women in particular are explicitly prohibited from fighting.⁵⁹ We are also informed that the *jihad* of a *mujahid* who dies while owing a debt will not ensure entry into Paradise until the debt is settled,⁶⁰ and according to most of al-Sulami's sources the obligation is also lifted if the individual in question does not have the means to take part, if he has parents who would benefit from his care, or if the parents or a creditor will not give permission.⁶¹ Al-Sulami presumably takes it as read that non-Muslims are not expected to take part, since he does not even address religion as a qualifying factor, though he also does not explicitly prohibit them from joining the war effort.

With regard to who may be attacked in the military *jihad*, al-Sulami devotes a chapter to the question, noting the debates found among religious scholars on this issue. The killing of old men, monks, women, children, field-laborers and the blind is forbidden, unless the individuals in question fight against the Muslims.⁶²

These are just some of the regulations that al-Sulami explores in his text. However, it is clear that for al-Sulami the spiritual aspect of the *jihad* is a paramount concern. He emphasizes the importance of correct intention in the undertaking of *jihad*, citing a *hadith* in which we are told that the first three people to enter Hell on the Day of Judgment will be a man who memorized the *Qur'an* for the reputation that it would gain him, a rich man who only gave to charity in order to be seen as generous, and a *mujahid* who only fought to gain recognition for his courage.⁶³ In addition, al-Sulami also provides a lengthy passage stressing the importance of the greater *jihad* against the self, which he presents as a prerequisite for involvement in the lesser *jihad* against the enemy. He exclaims, 'Put the *jihad* against your souls ahead of the *jihad* against your enemies, for truly your souls

⁵⁸ Sulami, ff. 175b–77b, esp. 176b.

⁵⁹ Sulami, f. 210a.

⁶⁰ Sulami, f. 187a.

⁶¹ Al-Sulami discusses those who are expected to take part and those who are exempt in Sulami, ff. 176b–77a and 184b–88a. Not all of al-Sulami's sources agree on the need for parental or creditor's permission, and in particular parental permission is not required if the parents are not Muslims; see Sulami, ff. 185a and 186a–87b.

⁶² Sulami, ff. 206b–9b. Al-Sulami repeats the permitting of killing women who fight and adds a prohibition on the killing of women prisoners on f. 210a.

⁶³ Sulami, ff. 182a–b.

are greater enemies to you than your human enemies. So prevent your souls from being disobedient to their Creator, be He praised. You may [hence] succeed in your hopes of victory over your human enemies. [...] Tear out your disobedience to God, be He praised, and follow your tearing it out with doing what is right in what you start afresh. It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you rulers over the world.⁶⁴ The prioritizing of *jihad* of the self over *jihad* against enemies becomes even more explicit when al-Sulami adds, ‘Among His words, be He exalted, are: “O you who believe! Bow and prostrate yourselves in prayer, worship your Lord and do good. Perhaps you will prosper.” Then He said after that [...] “Strive for God to fulfill the due of *jihad*.”’⁶⁵ Here al-Sulami recalls the *Qur’an*, 22: 77–78, placing particular emphasis on the fact that worship of God and good action are mentioned before the (by implication military) *jihad*. This enables him to emphasize the idea of *jihad* of the self as a pre-requisite for *jihad* against the enemy, linking reconciliation of the self with God to earthly success in a way that clearly makes the former necessary for the achievement of the latter.

Motivating Listeners

Al-Sulami adopts a number of strategies in his preaching in order to provoke a reaction from his listeners.⁶⁶ Since the first part of his manuscript that we have is Part 2, it is impossible to determine what his opening gambit was, though we have some hints that help us to speculate on what it might have been. In the later sections of his work, al-Sulami begins his discussion of any given topic with quotations from the *Qur’an* that support his point.⁶⁷ Earlier works on the *jihad*, such as that of Ibn al-Mubarak, adopt the same strategy; this similarity of approach suggests that we can turn to these to see how they open their works in order to seek a possible opening for al-Sulami’s text. Ibn al-Mubarak begins his treatise with a number of Qur’anic quotations that encourage the Muslims to go out and fight for the cause of God,⁶⁸ so for Ibn al-Mubarak Muslims should fight the *jihad* in the first instance because God tells them to. Given that al-Sulami also clearly sees the *Qur’an* as the starting point for his teaching, we might expect him to have adopted a similar perspective. However, without further evidence this must be regarded as only speculation.

From the evidence that we do have, we can discern a number of motivational techniques and themes that run through al-Sulami’s narrative:

⁶⁴ Sulami, f. 180b. Note the militaristic language that is used in al-Sulami’s discussion of the struggle to be undertaken against one’s self or soul.

⁶⁵ Sulami, f. 180b.

⁶⁶ See Niall Christie, ‘Motivating Listeners in the *Kitab al-Jihad* of ‘Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami (d. 1106),’ *Crusades* 6 (2007): 1–14, on which this discussion of motivational techniques draws heavily.

⁶⁷ See for example Sulami, ff. 193a and 222b.

⁶⁸ Ibn al-Mubarak, *Kitab al-Jihad*, 27–29.

Neglected duties

We have already seen that al-Sulami regards the *jihad* as a duty that is obligatory for both the rulers and their subjects. He criticizes the Muslims for their neglect of this duty, presenting this as something that is particularly shameful in the light of the enthusiastic campaigns waged by the early caliphs.⁶⁹ He reserves particular contempt for the ruling classes, who as we saw above were subject to particular expectations with regard to protecting their subjects and waging the *jihad*, and his contempt turns to astonishment at those rulers who continue to neglect this duty even in the face of a proximate Frankish threat.⁷⁰

It is clear from his work that al-Sulami sees Muslim unity as being the key to Muslim success against the enemy. For al-Sulami, the current disunity of the Muslims is a punishment inflicted upon them by God for their neglect of the *jihad* and their other sins. Thus he presents God as making the Muslims vulnerable to the crusaders, whom He then tempted to attack their lands. It is through this lens that he sees the Christian conquests of territories in Spain in the 11th century and of Sicily in 1061–91.⁷¹ Al-Sulami presents the continuing Muslim disunity as being all the more shameful because in the days before the rise of Islam both Arab tribes and Persian kings would recognize the advantages to be gained from forming alliances and staying unified; even infidels recognized the value of unity, but now supposedly faithful Muslims do not. To give his position the prophetic stamp of approval, he closes his argument with a *hadith* from the Prophet himself: ‘Do not snub each other, oppose each other or envy each other. Be worshippers of God in a brotherhood as God, be He exalted, ordered you.’⁷²

Fearful consequences

What is to be expected if the Muslims do not unify against the enemy? Al-Sulami threatens his listeners with punishments, warning them that failure to respond will lead to damnation and hellfire.⁷³ However, they will also be made to suffer in this life first; al-Sulami threatens his listeners with a range of earthly miseries, including ‘conquest by these blasphemers, expulsion from the country by force and subjugation, or staying with them in degradation and servility, with the killing, capture, torture and torment by night and day that this involves.’⁷⁴ To emphasize his

⁶⁹ Sulami, f. 174b.

⁷⁰ Sulami, f. 177b.

⁷¹ Sulami, f. 174b. It is interesting to note that the Spanish scholar, Ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 1148), who traveled in the Muslim east between about 1092 and 1100, perceived Muslim disunity as having facilitated the Frankish conquest of Jerusalem, although he did not regard this as stemming from any divine machinations. On Ibn al-‘Arabi see Joseph Drory, ‘Some Observations During a Visit to Palestine by Ibn al-‘Arabi of Seville in 1092–1095,’ *Crusades* 3 (2004), 120.

⁷² Sulami, ff. 189a–b.

⁷³ Sulami, f. 177a.

⁷⁴ Sulami, f. 177b.

point and frighten his listeners into action, he presents the Frankish activities in the Middle East as being part of a wider systematic war of conquest also exemplified in the wars in Spain and Sicily mentioned above, suggesting that the reluctance of the Muslims to respond merely compounded the situation and encouraged the crusaders to seek ever greater gains in the Levant.⁷⁵

Earthly and heavenly rewards

Al-Sulami also seeks to encourage his listeners to respond to the crusader offensive by offering them a number of rewards. The most immediate rewards that he highlights are the spoils of battle. The taking of plunder was always an accepted benefit of military *jihad* activity, and al-Sulami states that the raiding of the enemy for plunder is not only possible for but actually required of the Muslims.⁷⁶ He also devotes a significant portion of his text to the rules governing the distribution and treatment of booty, including prisoners.⁷⁷ As noted above, he also suggests to his listeners that correct behavior may lead to God establishing them as rulers over the earth.⁷⁸

However, al-Sulami clearly places greater importance on less physical rewards, for the regulations concerning the distribution of plunder come only after he has discussed other more spiritually beneficial rewards. One of these is the opportunity to be involved in the fulfillment of a great prophecy. Citing prophetic tradition, he explains that there will be a band of Muslims who will fight for their faith until the Day of Judgment, conquering their enemies. He indicates that these Muslims will be from Jerusalem, Damascus and their surroundings, and also argues that they will go on to conquer Constantinople and Rome, bastions of Christian power the conquest of which by now formed part of Muslim eschatological tradition.⁷⁹ Finally he cites a *hadith* stating that the Byzantines will conquer Jerusalem for a period then be driven out of it by the Muslims and pursued to Constantinople, which will then be taken. Since the Muslims regularly confused the Europeans and Byzantines during the period, this allows him to suggest to his audience that if the Muslims choose to fight the *jihad* now, they may find themselves being the warriors chosen to capture Constantinople and presumably Rome afterwards.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Sulami, ff. 174b–75a.

⁷⁶ Sulami ff. 175b and 176b.

⁷⁷ Sulami, ff. 222b–237a.

⁷⁸ Sulami, f. 180b.

⁷⁹ Sulami, ff. 178a–80a. On Muslim views of the Byzantine Empire and Constantinople, see also Nadia Maria El Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs*, Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs 36 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). On Muslim apocalyptic writing in general and the depiction of the Muslim and Byzantine invasions in particular, see David Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 21 (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc., 2002), esp. 49–91.

⁸⁰ Sulami, ff. 180a–b. On Muslim confusion of Europeans and Byzantines, see Niall Christie, *Levantine Attitudes towards the Franks during the Early Crusades*

Al-Sulami is very exacting in his discussion of this topic, presenting multiple versions of the *hadiths* that he cites and taking pains to emphasize that they are reliable. Given that this is one point in his text where he specifically targets the inhabitants of the local area, it may well be that he regarded this as his pivotal argument in his attempts to motivate his listeners and so did his utmost to state his point as strongly and irrefutably as possible.⁸¹

As we have seen above, al-Sulami also sees the current situation as giving his listeners the opportunity to reconcile themselves with God, with the suggestion that this may lead to success against the enemy. Al-Sulami presents the arrival of the crusaders as providing a particularly good opportunity for his listeners, for he sees them as having been sent as a test by God, but at the same time it is a test that is clearly not meant to be too onerous, for the enemy are few in number and do not have easy access to support from their allies and compatriots.⁸² Here we see an inconsistency in al-Sulami's argument, for he presents the Franks as being weak and ripe for conquest, whereas elsewhere we saw him present them as systematic in their plans and wide-ranging in their capabilities and ambitions. Thus we see al-Sulami manipulating the image of the enemy that he presents in his efforts to provoke a reaction in his audience; in this case, the Muslims have an opportunity to regain divine favor easily, something that al-Sulami hopes will make his listeners more likely to respond.

Al-Sulami also offers rewards for those who die fighting in the *jihad*. He gives four examples of *hadith* in which a Muslim is given a vision of the joys that await him after his death in the *jihad*. In each case the Muslim is shown riches, servants, a heavenly wife (two wives, in one case), all of which will be his after death. After experiencing this foretaste of Paradise, the Muslim is returned to this world for long enough to inform his companions of the fate that lies in store for him, accounting for how it is known to others.⁸³ Through using these *hadith*, and giving more than one example to prove the reward's universal availability, al-Sulami seeks to reassure his audience that even those killed in the *jihad* will enjoy the great benefits of their martyrdom.

The Uhud-Mecca/Hunayn narrative

When discussing how al-Sulami attempts to motivate his audience, one further feature of his text bears more detailed exploration. However, first some background will be necessary. According to Muslim belief, Muhammad started receiving the divine revelation in 610 while meditating in a cave on the outskirts of the city of Mecca in Arabia. However, his preaching of worship of a single god, with

(490/1096–564/1169) (Ph.D. diss., University of St Andrews, 1999), 17–20 and 64.

⁸¹ For a fuller discussion of al-Sulami's views of Jerusalem and his eschatological arguments, see Niall Christie, 'Jerusalem in the *Kitab al-Jihad* of 'Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami,' *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007): 209–21.

⁸² Sulami, ff. 176b–77b.

⁸³ Sulami, ff. 218b–22b.

no associates or partners, was not well received by the authorities of Mecca, a major pagan shrine where multiple deities were worshipped, for various reasons including economic as well as religious grounds, since pilgrimages to Mecca were a lucrative source of revenue. As a result, Muhammad and his followers were forced to emigrate to Medina in 622, the event from which Muslims date their calendar. However, Muhammad and his Muslim followers at Medina soon found themselves in conflict with the Meccans, a conflict that took the form of various raids and counter-attacks and particularly three major battles: the Battle of Badr, a Muslim victory, in 624; the Battle of Uhud, a defeat for the Muslims, in 625; and the Battle of the *Khandaq* [Trench] in 627, which while initially something of an inconclusive stalemate proved to be another Muslim victory in the long term, cementing both the Prophet's position in Medina and Medina's position as an equal rival to Mecca. Conflict between the Meccans and the Muslims of Medina only came to an end in 630, after the two sides had fought each other to a stalemate, when Muhammad and his followers took Mecca and three weeks later defeated a confederation of Arab tribes nearby at Hunayn, which brought any significant opposition in the region to an end.

In Part 9 of his text al-Sulami provides a sequence of two extended narratives telling the story of two incidents from this short chronology of the Prophet's life: the Battle of Uhud in 625 and the conquest of Mecca and subsequent victory at Hunayn in 630.⁸⁴ In this sequence al-Sulami omits any description of the events that happened in between (including the Battle of the *Khandaq* in 627), only pausing briefly at the end of the story of the Battle of Uhud to explain the meaning of some of the words that he has used in the narrative. He clearly intends to juxtapose these two narratives, and we may suggest that he did so because it enabled him to draw an analogy between the time of the Prophet and the present day. A closer examination of these events will be helpful in considering this.

In the spring of 625, a year after the Muslim victory at Badr, the Meccans sought to avenge their defeat and put a stop to periodic raids made by Muhammad on their caravans. To this end they descended on Medina from the north and encamped near the hill of Uhud. Muhammad, to preserve his prestige in Medina and protect crops that the Meccans were raiding, felt forced to go out to meet them despite the fact that the Meccans held the better tactical position and had the advantage of numbers. Battle was joined on a plain next to the hill in March, and according to the traditional account the Muslims initially drove the Meccans back. The Meccans had placed a cavalry contingent in position to outflank the Muslims, so Muhammad in response had stationed a force of 50 archers who ward off them off, but when the Muslims drove the Meccans back the archers abandoned their position to seek out their share of the loot, which freed the Meccan cavalry to outflank the Muslims and attack them from the rear. Caught between two forces, the Muslims were themselves driven back and forced to take shelter in the lava flows around the plain. The Prophet himself was slightly injured, and his uncle, the

⁸⁴ Sulami, ff. 5b–14b.

highly-influential Hamza ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib, was killed. Unable to pursue the Muslims into the lava flows with their horses, the Meccans broke off their attack at nightfall and departed.⁸⁵ The defeat at Uhud is frequently seen in Muslim tradition as one of the bitterest tests that Muhammad and the Muslims ever faced, a trial to see if they would remain faithful to God in the face of despair and adversity.

Having given us an image of the Muslims in defeat, al-Sulami then describes their greatest victories. Having fought the Meccans to a standstill and established their inability to resist him, the Prophet took their city, facing only limited resistance, in January 630, becoming reconciled with most of the inhabitants and cleansing the *haram*⁸⁶ of pagan idols. Within weeks he faced attack from an immense army of pagan Arabs led by the Banu Thaqif, the rulers of the town of Ta’if, to the east of Mecca. The Muslims faced the pagans at Hunayn, and despite an initial reverse they won a major victory over their opponents. The Battle of Hunayn had almost as much of an impact as did the conquest of Mecca, consolidating Muhammad’s position at Mecca and demonstrating his power to the rest of the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, thus establishing him as a major force in the region.⁸⁷

There are a number of parallels that may be drawn between the events that al-Sulami describes and both the situation in the Levant at the time and his hopes for the future. Like their ancestors at Uhud, the Muslims had suffered defeats at the hands of non-Muslims, defeats that had resulted from Muslim disobedience to their religious authorities and were a test from God intended to see if they would remain steadfast in faith. However, if they obeyed al-Sulami’s call then, like their ancestors, they would conquer their opponents’ capital (actually two capitals: Jerusalem, the Frankish capital, and Constantinople, the Byzantine one) and score great victories over their opponents. Al-Sulami does not state this explicitly in his presentation of past events, but the implication is clear. In this way he sought to present his listeners with an example from the lifetime of the Prophet of a case where bitter defeat had been followed by great victories, implying that since this had happened in the past, it could well happen again.

Venues

It is worth pausing to give deeper consideration to the venues in which al-Sulami’s work was presented. As noted earlier, the initial presentation of the work took place in the Mosque of Bayt Lihya near Damascus. A number of Muslim writers have given us descriptions of this village, which was also known as Bayt Lahiyya,

⁸⁵ Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (2nd ed., Harlow: Pearson, 2004), 37–38; and Sulami, ff. 5b–11a.

⁸⁶ The holy sanctuary in Mecca that includes the Ka’ba, the shrine said to have been built by Abraham and Ishmael.

⁸⁷ Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 43; and Sulami, ff. 11b–14b.

Bayt al-Aliha or Bayt al-Ilahiyya.⁸⁸ Particularly pertinent to our discussion is the account of Muhammad ibn Jubayr (d. 1217), a Spanish Muslim traveler who visited the region in July or August of 1184:

To the east of the city, and on the right of the road leading to the birthplace of Abraham—upon whom be (eternal) happiness—is a village called Bayt Lahiyya, by which they mean (the house of) idols. Its church is now a blessed mosque. There Azar (Terah) the father of Abraham carved the idols and gave them shape, but the Friend (of God) Abraham—the blessings of God be upon him and our noble Prophet—came and broke them. Today it is a mosque, and in it the people of the village congregate for their Friday prayers. Its ceiling is overlaid throughout with mosaics of coloured marble, with devices and rare designs making him who looks upon it conceive it to be a carpet of the most perfect embellishment. It is one of the venerated holy sites.⁸⁹

We have no indication from any of our biographies of al-Sulami that he had a particular connection to the mosque at Bayt Lihya, and Mourad and Lindsay suggest that he only chose it because he, as a relatively unimportant scholar, felt that his preaching would not be tolerated by the higher religious authorities in Damascus itself.⁹⁰ However, there were good reasons for al-Sulami to choose this venue for the first presentation of his work, and Ibn Jubayr's description raises a number of points that may have been instrumental in al-Sulami's choice. First, the mosque was a converted church and thus presents us with a classic example of appropriation of sacred space, where the followers of one religion take control of a religious site of another faith, thus asserting their religion's superiority over the faith in question. Other examples of this include the Umayyad Great Mosque in Damascus, built on the site of a Christian church and a Roman temple in 705–15, and the conversion of the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople to a mosque after the Ottoman conquest of 1453. If knowledge of this aspect of the history of the Mosque of Bayt Lihya was available to Ibn Jubayr, who was only passing through the region, it is also likely to have been known by 'locals' like al-Sulami. The importance of the appropriation of sacred space in Bayt Lihya to al-Sulami's

⁸⁸ 'Bayt al-Aliha' means 'the House of Idols,' while 'Bayt al-Ilahiyya' means 'the House of Theology.' For the significance of these, see what follows. On this village and its mosque see Guy Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems* (Beirut: Khayats, 1965), 237, 259 and 413.

⁸⁹ Abu'l-Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, ed. William Wright and M.J. de Goeje, E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Series 5 (2nd ed., Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1907, repr. New York: AMS Press, 1973), 277; and *idem*, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, trans. R.J.C. Broadhurst (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952), 288. The author has adjusted Broadhurst's transliteration of the name of the village to match the system used in this book.

⁹⁰ Mourad and Lindsay, *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology*, 33–34.

preaching is clear; by presenting his work in this setting, al-Sulami could remind his listeners of past Muslim victories over Christians in the hope of convincing them that such success could be repeated again.

However, the significance of the Mosque of Bayt Lihya becomes even greater when one considers its place in Muslim religious memory, as it was regarded as the site of Abraham's destruction of the idols made by his father. This incident is described in the *Qur'an*, 21: 51–71 and runs approximately thus: Abraham, having turned to worship of God, tried to persuade his father and compatriots to abandon their worship of idols. To prove to them how pointless their worship was, he waited until their backs were turned and then broke all but the largest of the idols. When questioned about what had occurred, he informed the people that the largest idol had broken the others and told them to ask the idols to confirm or deny this. When they answered that idols do not speak, he asked them why they worshipped objects that did nothing, rather than the one true god. Enraged, the people sought to harm Abraham, first through burning and then through an unspecified device, but in each case God protected Abraham from their attacks, eventually leading him away to the Promised Land.

Bayt Lihya was, therefore, an important site in the Muslim community's history, the site of a very early case of conflict between a Muslim and polytheists. Given that Abraham outwitted his persecutors and was subsequently aided by God against them, he represented an encouraging prototype for al-Sulami, who sought to convince his listeners that taking action in defense of their faith would also provoke support from God. In addition, the fact that al-Sulami was choosing a holy site as the venue in which to exhort his listeners to march out in defense of another holy site cannot have been lost on his audience.

The mosque at Bayt Lihya was also an important center in terms of its contribution to everyday religious life. Ibn Jubayr notes that it was used as a mosque for Friday prayers, referring to the Friday noon prayer, which is the time when Muslims are encouraged to gather at a mosque to pray together and hear a *khutba*, much in the way that Christians are encouraged to congregate at a major church service on Sunday mornings. This makes the mosque a place of great significance in the village, and on the basis of Ibn Jubayr's description of its ornate decoration, and a comment by the Muslim geographer Muhammad al-Idrisi (d. 1165 or 1166) that it was almost as big as the Umayyad Great Mosque in Damascus,⁹¹ one can surmise that it was a major mosque frequented by both local villagers and pilgrims who came to visit the village because of its Abrahamic history. Al-Sulami may have hoped that this would mean that his message would be spread beyond the circle of scholars who formed his immediate audience as a result of being passed on by the villagers and pilgrims who attended his sessions in a more casual fashion.

The choice of the Umayyad Great Mosque for the repetition of Part 2 of al-Sulami's work in 1113 requires far less rationalization than the original choice of

⁹¹ See the quotation from al-Idrisi in Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems*, 237.

venue. The mosque was the Friday mosque of Damascus, the site of regular visits by religious scholars, students and pilgrims as well as the major gathering place for Muslims at noon on Friday. As such it formed something of a buzzing hive of religious ritual and study. Thus the preacher, a senior religious scholar called 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Ahmad al-Sulami (possibly a relative of the author) could be assured that news of his message would disperse among the local populace and beyond. In this way, choice of venue continued to play a part in the propagation of al-Sulami's work even after his death.

Al-Sulami's Sources and Influences

Much of al-Sulami's argument is based on precedents from the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*. It is clear that he was concerned to present the *jihad* that he expected his listeners to undertake as being entirely in keeping with earlier tradition, indeed even required *because* of the example of earlier tradition. Hence it is not surprising that he makes such voluminous use of quotations from earlier works that also discuss these precedents. While in some cases al-Sulami does directly identify the actual texts from which he has drawn these quotations,⁹² in many cases he does not. Many of the *hadiths* that he quotes can be found in various texts from both before and after his lifetime, and appropriate examples are provided in the notes to the translation. However, what is more important is the fact that al-Sulami chose to use *hadith* material so copiously in his attempts to motivate his audience.

Following standard procedure, al-Sulami provides *isnads*⁹³ for the *hadith* material that he quotes, and he also mentions a number of scholars from whom he has drawn opinions, usually, though not always, by name. As noted above, al-Sulami was almost indubitably a member of the Shafi'i school of law, and al-Shafi'i himself features prominently as one of his sources; most of the opinions of al-Shafi'i that al-Sulami cites may be found in the former's great compilation of law, *Kitab al-Umm* (The Book of the Basis), with al-Sulami quoting most often from the abridgement thereof by al-Shafi'i's pupil Isma'il ibn Yahya al-Muzani (d. 878).⁹⁴ He also records opinions and *hadith* transmitted by numerous other Shafi'i scholars, probably the best known of whom was al-Ghazzali, whom we have mentioned above. Al-Ghazzali visited Damascus in 1095–96, staying in the Umayyad Great Mosque,⁹⁵ so it is possible that, as Sivan suggests, al-Sulami attended the lectures given by the eminent scholar,⁹⁶ but he may have met him

⁹² See for example Sulami, f. 174a.

⁹³ Chains of transmitters, used to indicate the source of *hadiths* and prove their authenticity.

⁹⁴ Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, *Kitab al-Umm*, ed. Mahmud Mutarji (9 vols., Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2002). This edition comprises the *Kitab al-Umm* of al-Shafi'i, followed by the *Mukhtasar* (Abridgement) of al-Muzani, and the *Musnad* (Supported [Traditions]) and *Ikhtilaf al-Hadith* (Variety of *Hadith*) of al-Shafi'i.

⁹⁵ Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety in Medieval Syria*, 78.

⁹⁶ Sivan, 'Génèse,' 223.

instead (or as well). What is interesting about al-Sulami's use of quotations from al-Ghazzali is that the latter is not known to have made any specific response to the arrival of the crusaders, nor do we have textual sources by al-Ghazzali for the statements that al-Sulami ascribes to him, suggesting that in some cases the latter may be quoting from lost texts or citing oral testimony,⁹⁷ or perhaps he is simply 'name-dropping' to reinforce his argument.

Also worthy of note are the scholars cited by al-Sulami who were also active participants in earlier military *jihad* activity, either as preachers encouraging *mujahidin* or as *mujahidin* themselves. We have already mentioned Ibn al-Mubarak and al-Fazari above. Al-Sulami also cites opinions from Abu Muhammad al-Husayn ibn Dawud al-Massisi al-Tarsusi, also known as Sunayd (d. 840); Hajjaj ibn Muhammad al-Massisi (d. 821); and Makhul ibn Abi Muslim al-Dimashqi (d. between 730 and 737). All of these scholars were known and respected for their involvement in the *jihad* on the Muslim-Byzantine frontier in the 8th and 9th centuries CE. As noted above, it may well be that al-Sulami expected his immediate audience to seek to imitate these figures in their own involvement in the *jihad* against the Franks.⁹⁸

Of the contemporary sources cited in *isnads* by al-Sulami, probably the most influential is Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tamimi al-Kattani, the *sufi* and *hafiz* (d. 1073).⁹⁹ 'Abd al-'Aziz was a well-known scholar who traveled widely in pursuit of knowledge and wrote a copious number of works. Ibn 'Asakir gives a lengthy list of scholars from whom he learned and also lists several scholars who used him as an authority, though al-Sulami is not one of these. 'Abd al-'Aziz was regarded as being pious, honest and also a *thiqa*, like al-Sulami, and he was clearly highly regarded among religious scholars for his collection and dissemination of *hadith*.¹⁰⁰ Thus we receive some indication of the circles in which al-Sulami moved.

These are merely some of the scholars from whom al-Sulami drew opinions. One point worthy of note is that in assembling his text al-Sulami makes use of opinions of scholars from both the Shafi'i and other schools of law, though he clearly gives greatest prominence to Shafi'i jurisprudence. As examples of his use of non-Shafi'i sources, we see him quoting the opinion of a follower of the legal school of Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855) in support of the obligation to take up arms against an attacking enemy,¹⁰¹ and by the same token when discussing

⁹⁷ This is clearly the case in two instances. See Sulami, ff. 175b and 176a. The author is grateful to Ahmad El Shamsy for his advice on this matter.

⁹⁸ On these figures and their activities, see in the first instance Bonner, *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War*, 107–34 and 161–64.

⁹⁹ At the time, the term *hafiz* was used to indicate someone recognized as an authority on *hadith*. In the modern day it is more commonly used for someone who has memorized the *Qur'an*.

¹⁰⁰ Ibn 'Asakir, *Ta'rikh Dimashq al-Kabir*, Vol. 38, no. 4183 (pp. 184–86).

¹⁰¹ Sulami, f. 176b.

the fate of plunder taken in the holy war al-Sulami draws on the opinions of the founder of the Maliki legal school, Malik ibn Anas (d. 796), and his followers as well as Shafi'i and Hanbali legal opinions.¹⁰² This interplay of opinions from different legal schools was not unusual during the period and illustrates how the major Sunni schools of Islamic law for the most part only differed on a few minor matters of detail; al-Sulami was still able to develop a unified theory of *jihad* despite employing opinions from more than one school of law. Of course, we may also be seeing al-Sulami's continued attempts to universalize his call as much as possible, since he clearly attempts to speak to followers of more than one school of law.

As noted above, al-Sulami devotes a significant portion of his work to poetry from both the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. In most cases he identifies the poets by name, and again many of them can be traced to textual sources.

In addition to the use of actual text in al-Sulami's work, it is also worth noting less explicit influences. In particular, as a public exhortation to the *jihad* al-Sulami's work shows features of earlier sermons preached with the same intent. One possible influence in this regard is Ibn Nubata al-Fariqi, mentioned above, who starting in 959 preached a number of *khutbas* on the *jihad* in both Aleppo and his hometown of Mayyafariqin. Ibn Nubata's preaching made him famous, and his sermons became models for later calls to the *jihad*. Naturally, Ibn Nubata was himself drawing on a preaching tradition stretching back through Islamic history, but it is interesting that many of his ideas and oratory techniques are echoed in the work of al-Sulami, suggesting that the latter had either Ibn Nubata, or sermons that may have been influenced by him, in mind as he composed his *Kitab al-Jihad*. These ideas and techniques bear further exploration.

Motivating listeners

The clearest parallels between al-Sulami's preaching and that of Ibn Nubata emerge when one considers the means used by the latter to motivate his listeners, for he uses many of the same techniques employed by the Damascene preacher. Ibn Nubata bitterly criticizes his listeners for their neglect; for example, in a *khutba* preached in Mayyafariqin in 959 he states, 'How many times do you hear speech and not remember? How many times are you thrashed with rebukes and not torn out [from your complacency], as if your ears vomit back the remembrance of admonitions, or as if your hearts are too proud to preserve them?' He goes on to attempt to shame his listeners, pointing out that while the enemy obeys the call of Satan the Muslims abandon the truth that God entrusted them with; indeed, he suggests that Muslim failure to act was what led to Byzantine success against them. Ibn Nubata also looks outside the Muslim community for examples of creatures who will defend what is important, noting that beasts will fight over what they hold sacred

¹⁰² See for example Sulami, ff. 225b–26b.

and birds will die defending their nests, even though they know nothing of Islam;¹⁰³ in his preaching his listeners become worse than animals. Thus like al-Sulami we see Ibn Nubata not only haranguing his listeners for their neglect and reluctance to act, with enemy success being ascribed to this reluctance, but also using images of better behavior from inferior, non-Muslim creatures in an attempt to shame his listeners. Ibn Nubata is also clearly concerned with the restoration of Muslim unity. He describes his patron Sayf al-Dawla as ‘the gatherer of the unity of Islam in the face of the scattering of its unity,’¹⁰⁴ prays God for unity achieved through his patron’s *amir* Naja and his followers,¹⁰⁵ and repeatedly urges his listeners to unite with each other.¹⁰⁶ Like al-Sulami, he sees disunity as leading to destruction.¹⁰⁷ Ibn Nubata also expresses a parallel view to that of al-Sulami in his depiction of the enemy as a divine test. He states that the trials that the Muslims are facing have been arranged by God,¹⁰⁸ thus making the Byzantines ultimately His tool used to test the Muslims, a test that he elsewhere describes as being required ‘so that He might distinguish some of you from others, and so that the steadfast worshippers might be known.’¹⁰⁹

Ibn Nubata also attempts to frighten his listeners into responding through depiction of the consequences of inaction, though he places his focus very much on the next life, repeatedly threatening his listeners with the fires of Hell,¹¹⁰ and he devotes relatively little space to this topic. He pays more attention to the rewards available to those who engage in the *jihad*, which like al-Sulami he depicts in considerable detail. While he also offers his listeners rule over the world,¹¹¹ his focus is primarily on heavenly rewards, and he exhorts his audience to seek to attain Paradise and disdain worldly things.¹¹² That said, he also seeks to appeal

¹⁰³ *Sayf al-Dawla: Recueil de Textes Relatifs à l'Émir Sayf al Dawla le Hamdanide*, ed. Marius Canard (Algiers: Editions Jules Carbonel, 1934), 130. Translations of eight of Ibn Nubata’s *khutbas* are given in an appendix to this book, and references will be provided to these in the form ‘*khutba* number.paragraph,’ where appropriate; in this case see also 1.ii. For other examples of Ibn Nubata criticizing his listeners for their neglect, see Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 156–57 (3.ii) and 162–63 (4.ii).

¹⁰⁴ Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 245 (6).

¹⁰⁵ Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 144 (2). Naja was a Circassian *ghulam* (a soldier probably of slave origin) and favored *amir* of Sayf al-Dawla. On Sayf al-Dawla’s career see in the first instance Th. Bianquis, ‘Sayf al-Dawla’ in *EI2*, 9: 103–10; and Marius Canard, *Histoire de la Dynastie des H’amdaniides de Jazira et de Syrie*, vol. 1, Publications de la Faculté des Lettres d’Alger, 2nd series, vol. 21 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953).

¹⁰⁶ Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 157 (3.ii) and 417–18 (8.ii).

¹⁰⁷ Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 416 (8.i).

¹⁰⁸ Canard, *Sayf al Dawla*, 418 (8.ii).

¹⁰⁹ Canard, *Sayf al Dawla*, 158 (3.ii). See also *ibid.*, 171 (5.ii).

¹¹⁰ Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 131 (1.ii), 132 (1.iii), 159 (3.ii), and 164 (4.ii).

¹¹¹ Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 156 (3.ii).

¹¹² Canard, *Sayf al-Dawla*, 131–32 (1.ii-iii) and 164 (4.ii).

to rather more earthly instincts when he reassures his listeners that ‘the gates of Paradise will be opened to those who endure, and the beautiful hidden *huris*¹¹³ will appear with documents in their hands that give assurances of safety from the Mighty, the Compassionate.’¹¹⁴

Obedience to God

Purity of intention and good conduct, however, remain vital for Ibn Nubata, and he repeatedly urges his listeners to desist from sinful ways and seek to be obedient to God in a manner highly reminiscent of the greater *jihad* advocated by al-Sulami.¹¹⁵ In particular, in one long passage from a *khutba* preached on preparations made at Mayyafariqin in March 963 he addresses the benefits to be gained from obedience to God:

Do you not see the results of tight adherence to obedience and the abandonment of wasteful ways, how they brought you to the settling of your concern, the strengthening of your fortresses and homeland, priority in benefits, the praised customs that He permits, returning to God in what He ordered, desisting from what He forbade and rebuked, vigilance in the preference of truths for His cause, and the following in the digging of the trench of the model from the *Sunna* of His Messenger,¹¹⁶ as a shield protecting from what we have been warned about and a kindness that remains for ages? That is one of God’s favors to you, so be thankful, acknowledge His blessings, do not blaspheme against Him, show readiness to your enemies, consider the period of your continued existence to be short, take to the *jihad* the equipment for it and to the destination a shield for it, and do not seek sanctuary in the refuges of abstention in order that you might shelter there from the calamities of divine decrees. Indeed, God, be He exalted, says, and it is the most true of things said, ‘Fleeing will be no use to you if you flee from death and killing. Even if [you escaped] you would only enjoy it for a little [time].’¹¹⁷ What shield gives more protection than the greatest of fortifications? What readiness makes one better prepared than loyalty and certitude? What support is more perishing than that of the evildoers? What party is more victorious than the party of the Lord of the worlds? Indeed, a man sacrifices himself worthily for the cause of his Lord if He showers upon him forgiveness for his sins, so set out to be worshippers of God. The roads to God are evident, trade for His cause is lucrative, the basins of achievement are full, and the gardens of leisure are fertile. In survival is hope, and in life are things to

¹¹³ Virgins of Paradise, according to the conventional reading.

¹¹⁴ Canard, *Sayf al-Da'ula*, 159 (3.ii).

¹¹⁵ Canard, *Sayf al-Da'ula*, 159 (3.ii), 244 (6.i), and 416 (8.ii).

¹¹⁶ A reference to the Battle of the *Khandaq* mentioned above, in which a trench dug by Muhammad and his companions protected Medina from a major attack by the Meccans and their allies.

¹¹⁷ *Qur'an*, 33: 16.

be enjoyed before the gates of hope are closed, the reasons of fate are validated, death interposes between hope and the one who hopes, and the remorse of the traveling native becomes long, when he comes to the destination, over the result, and he regrets that a friend did not come to him. So know, God have mercy on you, firstly that you will not find any way to achievement, and prepare for yourselves in the Hereafter something that will be said [in your favor], because, by God, there is no dwelling after the earthly world except Paradise or fire. May God make us and you of those who are not kept away from mercy by God, nor impeded from His gifts of blessing, nor disgraced by disobeying Him, and do not refrain from what His will intends. Indeed, the most beautiful thing is that which repetition of breaths entails, by which the helpless hesitator is calmed and which the hearts of the wise remember, which is the speech of the creator of *jinn* and humans, which reads from ‘O you who believe, fear God and be with those who are truthful’ to His saying ‘So that God will reward them with the most beautiful [reward] for what they were doing.’¹¹⁸

While Ibn Nubata is clearly concerned to ensure that his compatriots continue in their efforts to defend the city, he also seeks to combine this with a return to piety and good conduct. In this way warfare, external personal action and internal piety become inextricably merged in a manner that hints at the future formalization of the greater *jihad* doctrine discussed by al-Ghazzali, al-Sulami and others.

Language and oratory techniques

It is not only in the major themes discussed that al-Sulami and Ibn Nubata show similarities. They also show similar taste in vocabulary, choice of imagery and argumentative and oratory techniques. To give an example of their rhetorical techniques, both make use of exclamations and invocations of blessings when addressing their audiences, such as *wa'llahi* (By God!)¹¹⁹ and *rahimakum Allah* (may God have mercy on you!).¹²⁰ Likewise, they both make use of the repetition of certain nouns in the accusative as a way of urging their listeners to certain things; al-Sulami uses *al-thabata 'l-thabata* (literally ‘the steadiness, the steadiness,’ but better translated as ‘stand firm’)¹²¹ in the same way that Ibn Nubata uses numerous repeated nouns such as *al-jihada 'l-jihada* (‘the *jihad*, the *jihad*,’ meaning ‘to the *jihad*!’) and *al-zafara 'l-zafara* (‘the victory, the victory,’ meaning ‘to victory!’).¹²² These techniques have the effect of making their speeches more dramatic and eloquent to the ears of their listeners.

¹¹⁸ Canard, *Sayf al Daula*, 162–64 (4.ii). The quotation is from *Qur'an* 9: 119–21; see the Appendix for a full quotation of the Qur'anic passage.

¹¹⁹ See for example Sulami, f. 177b; and Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 130 (1.ii).

¹²⁰ For example Sulami, f. 177a; and Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 131 (1.ii).

¹²¹ Sulami, f. 190a.

¹²² Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 131 (1.iii).

The vocabulary and imagery explored by both speakers are also similar and are heavily informed by their preaching being based in the *Qur'an*. Thus we see both preachers making use of clothing metaphors in their discussions of subjects such as faith, piety, enthusiasm for the *jihad* and glory,¹²³ metaphors that owe their origins to the *Qur'an* where one of the benefits enjoyed by the inhabitants of Paradise is green garments of silk and brocade.¹²⁴ By the same token, both speak of the word of God being highest and the word of the blasphemers being lowest, a comparison drawn directly from the *Qur'an*.¹²⁵

Both al-Sulami and Ibn Nubata also employ similar argumentative techniques in their attempts to make their messages more convincing. We have already seen them seeking to motivate their listeners with criticism and rewards, drawing on scripture to lend authority to the words. Both occasionally directly address the quality of the evidence that they use, attesting to the reliability of *hadith* material that they quote.¹²⁶ They also seek to present the relationship that the Muslims have with God as one based on reciprocity, with the implication being that if the Muslims aid God (by striving in His cause), then God will aid them as a given response, a promise that is also upheld in the *Qur'an*.¹²⁷ By making God's aid a certainty rather than a mere possibility they hope to increase their chances of provoking a response from their listeners.

The similarities between the works of al-Sulami and Ibn Nubata are considerable, but they should not surprise us. As has already been mentioned, Ibn Nubata's *khutbas* were highly influential in the development of *jihad* preaching, and even if al-Sulami was not thinking of him specifically when composing his own work, he was clearly drawing on the pool of sermon literature in which Ibn Nubata's texts had been so influential. As has already been hinted, Ibn Nubata's own preaching was itself also influenced by earlier precedents, no doubt including earlier sermons but also going back as far as the *Qur'an* itself, a text that has not-surprisingly continued to be the basis for Muslim sermons and similar works to the present day.

Avenues for Future Research

Al-Sulami's *Kitab al-Jihad* is a work of immense importance to the study of Muslim perspectives on the crusades. It represents the earliest surviving Muslim source that was written in response to the arrival of the Franks and, as such, presents the reader with an example of the sorts of reactions that their campaigns engendered among religious scholars in the period. Given the importance of this text, we must acknowledge that this brief study can be considered no more than

¹²³ For example Sulami, f. 177a; and Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 157 (3.ii).

¹²⁴ See for example *Qur'an*, 18: 31.

¹²⁵ For example Sulami, f. 177b; and Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 156 (3.i). See *Qur'an*, 9: 40.

¹²⁶ For example Sulami, f. 179b; and Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 156 (5.ii).

¹²⁷ For example Sulami, f. 177b; and Canard, *Sayf al Daula* 132 (1.iii). See *Qur'an*, 22: 40.

an introduction thereto. There remain numerous ways in which future researchers might approach the text, and here we will consider some of these.

Al-Sulami and the crusades

The ways in which al-Sulami presents both the Franks and the response that he expects his listeners to make to their arrival are of course extremely important for understanding medieval Muslim perspectives on the crusades, and it is not surprising that these are the aspects of his work that have received the most attention from scholars so far.¹²⁸ Al-Sulami presents modern scholars with what seems to be an unusually perceptive image of the crusaders and their motives, linking their arrival in the east to their attacks on Sicily and *al-Andalus* (Muslim Spain), and even describing their military campaigns as a *jihad*; how far his insight was unusual remains a matter of debate.¹²⁹ This is, naturally, not the only crusades-related topic that al-Sulami's work might be used to address. As an example, al-Sulami's work is also fascinating when compared to the accounts of Urban II's crusade sermons, given in Europe ten years earlier, as they share many similarities with regard to the themes that they address and the rhetorical techniques that they employ despite the fact that each preacher was working in an independent preaching tradition.¹³⁰

Al-Sulami and legal tradition

Given that al-Sulami is on the whole scrupulous about providing the *isnads* of the *hadiths* that he provides and often names scholars from whom he has drawn opinions, research might be done to determine how al-Sulami fits into the legal tradition and community of the period. This could include study of the way in which he selects and presents his materials, the interplay between the importance of choosing reliable sources and furthering his own agenda, and the way that he presents certain scholars in comparison to what is known about them. One of the fascinating features of al-Sulami's text is that sometimes he will describe the exact circumstances in which he or his sources received a given piece of information. We see him or his sources present at readings of texts in particular locations;¹³¹ in one particularly intriguing reference al-Sulami states that he heard one *hadith*

¹²⁸ See for example Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 105–9; Robert Irwin, 'Islam and the Crusades, 1096–1699,' in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 225–26; Dajani-Shakeel, 'Re-Assessment,' 45–48 and 52–55; Christie, 'Jerusalem in the *Kitab al-Jihad* of 'Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami'; *idem*, 'Motivating Listeners in the *Kitab al-Jihad* of 'Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami (d. 1106)'; and *idem* and Deborah Gerish 'Parallel Preachings: Urban II and al-Sulami.' *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 15 (2003): 139–48.

¹²⁹ See Christie, 'Religious Campaign or War of Conquest?'; and Paul E. Chevedden, 'The Islamic Interpretation of the Crusade: A New (Old) Paradigm for Understanding the Crusades,' *Der Islam* 83 (2006): 90–136.

¹³⁰ See Christie and Gerish, 'Parallel Preachings.'

¹³¹ See for example Sulami, ff. 178a, 197b, 15b and 227b.

from a seller of curios while sitting in his shop in the curio market in Damascus.¹³² Along with the *sama'at*, such descriptions offer us a window into the interactions of religious scholars and help us to understand how knowledge was disseminated in the community.

Al Sulami's selection of the *hadith* material that he draws on for precedents is also fascinating as he clearly chooses his material while bearing his purpose strongly in mind. As an example, he describes the conversion to Islam of Wahshi ibn Harb, a character in early Muslim history, in the context of explaining how God's forgiveness extends to all who seek it, regardless of how sinful they have been in the past. Wahshi was a former Abyssinian slave who had earned his freedom from his Meccan master by slaying Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle, at the Battle of Uhud in 625, an event that we have mentioned above. Al-Sulami states that after Wahshi converted to Islam, Abu Bakr¹³³ sent him to the Prophet, whose Companion he remained thenceforth, despite the distress that this caused the latter.¹³⁴ This stands in stark contrast to the more commonly accepted version of the story, as epitomized in the account of the best-known biographer of the Prophet, Muhammad ibn Ishaq (d. 767). In Ibn Ishaq's account we are told that immediately after Wahshi's conversion the Prophet asked him how he killed his uncle. Wahshi told him, and then the Prophet told him to remove himself from his sight and never let him see his face again.¹³⁵ One can see, however, how this version of the story would not assist in al-Sulami's attempts to rally his listeners to the *jihad*, since rather than implying that the earlier behavior of a repentant sinner will be forgiven and forgotten it instead implies that past misdemeanors will continue to be held against him. Thus we see al-Sulami being careful in his selection of evidence in order to further his own agenda and avoid accidentally discouraging his audience.

In addition, al-Sulami also shows great care in his presentation of the *hadith* material that he uses. We have already considered the *hadith* recounted by al-Sulami that discusses the first three individuals who will enter Hell on the Day of Judgment. Al-Sulami is careful to include the frame narrative that surrounds this story, in which we are told that Abu Hurayra (d. c. 678), an important Companion of

¹³² Sulami, f. 233b.

¹³³ Abu Bakr al-Siddiq was one of the Prophet's closest Companions and later the first caliph (r. 632–34).

¹³⁴ Sulami, f. 191a. Wahshi died long after the Prophet, during the caliphate of 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (r. 644–56); see Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Al-Isaba fi Tamyiz al-Sahaba* (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Jalla wa Sharikat li'l-Nashr wa'l-Tawzi, 1910–11), Vol. 3, no. 9109 (p. 631). This edition also includes the *Isti'ab fi Ma'rifat al-Ashab* of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr al-Qurtubi.

¹³⁵ Ibn Ishaq's work is best known through the version of Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hisham (d. 833). On this incident, see his *al-Sira al-Nabawiyya* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2001), 381–82; and *idem*, *The Life of Muhammad*, trans. A. Guillaume (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 375–76.