

Awakened vision as an Initiatory experience in the ṭarīqa Tijāniyya

Antonio de Diego González
Universidad de Málaga | adediegog@uma.es

Could a dream or a waking vision be an esoteric initiatory experience with exoteric implications?

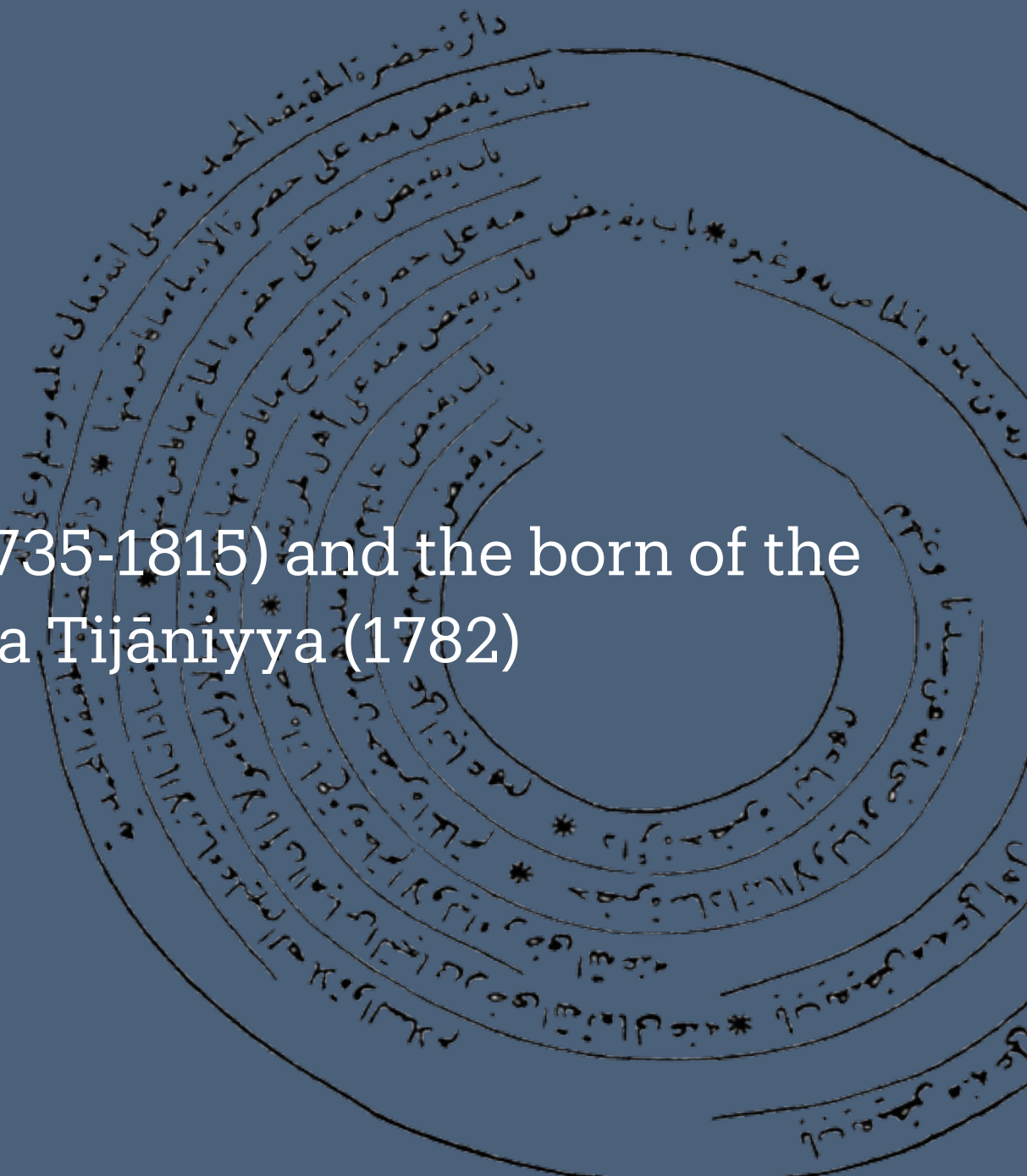
Has this happened in the Islamic world in modern times? What implications has it had?

Onto-epistemic legitimation in Islamic tradition

- Q. 12. Sura Yusuf
- Ḥ. Bukhari, 6592; Muslim 2666.
- Imam al-Busiri - *Qasida Burdah*
- Ibn 'Arabī - *khayal* and Imaginal experiences
- Imam Suyuti: *Tanwīr al-Ḥalak fi Imkān Ru'yah al-Nabī wa al-Malak*



Aḥmad Tijāni (1735-1815) and the born of the
ṭariqa Tijāniyya (1782)



Key ideas for an analysis of Tijāni's awakening vision (*ru'ya fī-l-yaqza*)

1. Neosufism background and esoteric heritage (Ibn 'Arabī, al-Suyuti, Al-Dabbagh): “*Ma'rifa serving the dīn*”.
2. Onto-epistemologic transformative event:
 - A. The islamic tradition doesn't considered a fiction an awakening vision of the Prophet. It is an initiatory experience.
 - B. The symbolic becomes Real; the *khayal* “translates” the tajally into a comprehensible and historized message.
 - C. The subject is not the same at esoteric level after the vision and make exoteric/social/metapolitical actions (*tajdīd*)

The dreams and the vision of Aḥmad Tijāni

1. A symbolic dream at childhood age (ca. 1745) like he was a King in his throne
2. A dream with the Prophet (ca. 1750) with *baṣīra* meaning
3. Abī Samghūn's awakening vision of the Prophet (1782)
4. Various dreams with the Prophet which he clarifies doubts about Fīqh or spiritual matters (from 1790 until his death).

(Sources: Alī Ḥarazim, *Jawāhir al-Ma'āni*, p. 40-43; Al Mushry, *Al-Jami'*, 98-102; Al-'Iraḳī, *Jawahir al-Ghaliyya*, ff^o-4-5)



Ksar Abi Samghūn (Algeria)

Aḥmad Tijāni's awakened vision (1)

He returned to the *Ksar* of *Abī Samghūn* and settled there, and it was then that he received the opening (*fāṭḥ*) and the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him, authorised him to teach creation. This was after he had isolated and occupied himself, for he never asked to be a master (*shaykh*) until he received the unlimited permission that allowed him to spiritually initiate (*tarbiya*) the whole creation that came to him free from any confusion.

(Alī Ḥarazim, *Jawāhir al-Ma'āni*, p. 40)



Oasis of Abi Samghun (Algeria)

Aḥmad Tijāni's awakened vision (2)

Soon after that, he [the Prophet], may Allāh be pleased with him, informed him [Shaykh Tijāni] of his spiritual position (*maqām*), his high honour (*irtifā'*), and his power (*qadr*). And he informed him of the benefits of the Will and his superiority that Allāh has prepared for those who love Him, follow Him, and take His side, and this is to be taken in full detail. When he [Shaykh Tijani] was given the permissions of the Aḥmadian way and the way of the Prophethood of the Chosen One, and Allāh illuminated his hands, he [the Prophet] told him that he was his master initiator (*murabbī*), his guardian, and that whatever came from Allāh would come by his hands and through him.

(Alī Ḥarazim, *Jawāhir al-Ma'āni*, p. 40)

Aḥmad Tijāni's awakened vision (3)

And he [the Prophet] said to him:

"You no longer owe obeisance to any shaykh of any ṭarīqa. I alone am your mediator and benefactor, and I confirm this to you. And he also said: "Leave everything you have taken from other paths. Follow this path without retreat (*khalwa*) and without shunning people, until you reach the state promised to you. In whatever state you are, you will be without tension, difficulty or effort. And do not depend on any other intimate of Allāh (*awliyā'*). And from the moment he said this to him, he left all other paths and stopped seeking the intimacy of Allāh. And he sought the care and love of the Lord of Existence (*sayyid al-wujūd*). And this indicates that our master, may Allāh be pleased with him, was granted greatness by Allāh, because when one comes and receives enlightenment from his [the Prophet's] hands, may Allāh's blessings and peace be upon him, his spiritual position (*maqām*) will be more exalted, majestic, and elevated, as he will be known to the people of the spiritual path."

(Alī Ḥarazim, *Jawāhir al-Ma'āni*, p. 41)

Aḥmad Tijāni's awakened vision (4)

“If the vision is legitimate as an awakened vision, the Shaykh has become a *Saḥābi*”.

(Ibn Mushry, *Al-Jami'*, p. 98)

Epilogue

Ibrahim Niasse and the embodiment of
an awakened vision



“I am shaykh Tijāni. Anyone who wants to know Allāh should come to me.”

Ibrahim Niasse, Kossi, 1929

And one of my aunts [referring to in-laws through the line of Ibrāhīm Niasse], who did not understand anything that was happening, got very angry and when she saw that the people were falling into *fanā* ' (mystical annihilation), she shouted at them:

“Moor! [*Nar in wolof*] Take your things and go back to your country! You are killing our people!”

Could a dream or a waking vision be an esoteric initiatory experience with exoteric implications?

Has this happened in the Islamic world in modern times? What implications has it had?

Thank you very much!



adediegog@uma.es