

## THE LIFE AND PHILOSOPHICAL ACTIVITY OF HAKIM TIRMIZI

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**Annotation.** This article examines the life, intellectual legacy, and philosophical activity of Hakim Tirmizi, one of the prominent thinkers of early Islamic civilization. The study analyzes his views on the relationship between reason and revelation, the concepts of heart and knowledge, and the spiritual perfection of the human being. Particular attention is paid to Hakim Tirmizi's interpretation of wilayah (sainthood) as the highest stage of moral and spiritual development. The article highlights his contribution to the formation of Sufi philosophy and his influence on subsequent Islamic scholars. The research is based on historical, philosophical, and comparative methods.

**Key words:** Hakim Tirmizi; Islamic philosophy; Sufism; spiritual knowledge; heart and reason; wilayah; moral perfection; Islamic thought.

### INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Hakim Tirmizi was born in Termez at the beginning of the 3rd (9th) century AH. In his treatise "Buduvvu shan", in which he narrates much of his life and spiritual development, he mentions that a certain person, whom he describes as "a fortunate manifestation of destiny and a good teacher", encouraged him to pursue knowledge. It is highly probable that this teacher, from whom he learned both transmitted and rational sciences from an early age, was his father, who was a hadith scholar. Attar writes that Hakim Tirmizi, who was deeply saddened when he could not join his friends on educational travels because it would leave his mother alone, met Khidr and received instruction from him.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS.

Hakim Tirmizi studied hadith from many scholars in Termez and Balkh and learned jurisprudence from a distinguished Hanafi jurist. At the age of twenty-seven, he set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca. After spending some time in Iraq studying hadith, he traveled via Basra and arrived in Mecca. In Buduvvu She'n, he recounts how each night at dawn he would pray near the Kaaba, repent for his major sins, and supplicate to God to help him reform his state, detach from worldly concerns, and successfully memorize the Qur'an.

After completing his memorization of the Qur'an upon returning home, Hakim Tirmizi devoted himself to reading and research to know God and turn toward the Hereafter. He traveled from city to city seeking a spiritual guide while maintaining continuous fasting and performing voluntary prayers. He was deeply influenced by the sayings of the gnostics and, inspired by the works of Ahmed ibn Asim al-Antaki, concluded that he needed to lead an ascetic life of self-discipline and spiritual exertion. During this period, he enjoyed solitude, wandered alone in the fields, frequently visited ruins and cemeteries, and struggled to find sincere companions. He narrates that in a dream he saw the Prophet Muhammad, after which the veil between him and the Truth was lifted, and he received divine inspiration. From then on, he would spend nights in conversation with visitors, praying and supplicating to God [1].



# Western European Journal of Historical Events and Social Science

Volume 4, Issue 1, January 2026

<https://westerneuropeanstudies.com/index.php/4>

ISSN (E): 2942-1926

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## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS.

Hakim Tirmizi had the opportunity to participate in the gatherings of great Sufis such as Ahmed ibn Hadhraveyh, Yahya ibn Mu'az al-Razi, and Abu Turab al-Nahshabi. He wrote on a wide range of subjects, including Sufism, ethics, theology (kalam), hadith, Qur'anic exegesis, history of legal schools, and linguistics. His works were well received, though this sometimes provoked jealousy, misinterpretation of his words, and even slander. For instance, he was accused of speaking of love, corrupting public morals, innovating in religion, and claiming prophethood. The governor of Balkh required him to provide a written pledge not to speak on these matters. Hakim Tirmizi narrates that these hardships further matured him, that he began to take pleasure in trials, his spiritual vision opened, and he experienced inner elevation. He also describes that those who persecuted him eventually had to flee their towns, and he resumed gatherings with those who respected him. Buduvvu She'n does not provide details about the last period of his life. Hakim Tirmizi continued to write and guide disciples until his death in Termez. His tomb is still visited by the local population today [2].

Hakim Tirmizi attempted to reconcile transmitted knowledge (naql) with reason (aql) in his own unique style, grounding transmitted sciences on rational foundations. In particular, he transmitted the wisdom of Hellenistic philosophy and Gnosticism into Sufism, helping the movement enter a new phase, and for this reason, he was called "Hakim" (the Wise).

Hakim Tirmizi broadly understood Sufism as wisdom (hikmah), dividing knowledge into three types: religious sciences (ilm), outward wisdom (zahir hikmah), and inward wisdom (batin hikmah), emphasizing the latter two. According to him, Sufism is not only about spiritual states but also about wisdom, i.e., objective truths. The knowledge possessed by prophets and saints is exalted and hidden wisdom, granted directly by God. The terms Haqq (Truth), 'Adl (Justice), and Sidq (Sincerity) were central to Hakim Tirmizi. Haqq relates to the senses, 'Adl to the heart, and Sidq to the intellect. Since Haqq, 'Adl, and Sidq encompass both gnosis and religion, at a certain point, religion is inseparable from knowledge. Haqq is the domain of Sharia scholars, 'Adl the domain of jurists, and Sidq is a divine gift for the wise [3].

According to Hakim, spiritual activity occurs either through human effort or divine grace (himmah). The former corresponds to general sainthood, the latter to special sainthood. Saints who obey God's law pay attention not only to following the commandments and prohibitions of religion but also to purifying intentions and controlling the self. If they are truly God's friends, by God's grace they attain the highest level of sainthood. They naturally adopt good deeds, thereby protecting themselves from error. A saint inspired by God (muhaddes, mukallim) can be confident in the truth of the knowledge received. Just as Satan cannot tamper with revelation, the nafs cannot distort the saint's inspiration. Sainthood, like prophethood, is not acquired but is a divine gift. However, whereas prophets have the duty to convey what they receive from God, sainthood is entirely personal [4].

Therefore, while a prophet requires a miracle as proof, a saint does not. Hakim states, "Prophethood is proven by proof, sainthood is proof itself." The relationship between a saint and God is based on love, protection, and grace. Saints are living exemplars of goodness and virtue. They live for Truth and dedicate themselves to serving God. Sainthood is not limited by time; saints always exist. A saint is a manifestation of divine perfection on earth.

Hakim Tirmizi, especially in his ideas about Hatmu'l-Evliya ("Seal of Saints"), asserts that just as there is a Khatm al-Anbiya (Seal of the Prophets), there is also a Khatm al-Awliya (Seal of Saints). The Khatm al-Awliya is not only the last of the saints but also the most exalted,



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<https://westerneuropeanstudies.com/index.php/4>

ISSN (E): 2942-1926

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the one with the highest rank; no saint surpasses him. His views on sainthood significantly influenced later Sufi thinkers, particularly Muhyiddin Ibn al-‘Arabi, who attached great importance to his theories.

Hakim Tirmizi was accused because of the ideas he advanced in his works *Hatmu'l-Evliya'* and *'Ilelu's-Şeri'a*, and according to some sources, these ideas even led to his expulsion from Termez. He was accused of placing saints above prophets, speaking of divine love in ways unknown to anyone else, including certain hadiths in his writings, and engaging in religious innovation (*bid'ah*). Hakim himself states that he never even contemplated such matters in his imagination [5].

Hakim's literary career, which he began very early, continued until the end of his life, and a significant portion of his works has survived to the present day. He explained that he wrote not according to prior planning or premeditation but rather as a consolation when overwhelmed by spiritual states. Consequently, although his style is generally clear, he sometimes digressed or was disorganized when explaining a topic. Moreover, in his time, the terminology of Sufism and philosophy was not yet fully developed, which also contributed to some ambiguity in his writings.

The group of Sufis who adopted Hakim Tirmizi's views, which influenced subsequent generations, became known as the Hakimiyya. Prominent figures of this movement include Abu Bakr ibn Warrak and Hasan ibn Ali al-Jawzjani [6].

Notable scholars drew on his works extensively. Al-Ghazali, particularly in the "Pride" section of "Ihya Ulum al-Din", benefited from Hakim Tirmizi's *Kitab al-Ekyas wa'l-Mugharrin*, while Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya used his *al-Furuq wa Man'u't-Taraduf* in *Kitab al-Ruh*. Ibn Ata Allah al-Iskandari notes that his master Mursi and Abu'l-Hasan al-Shazili greatly valued Hakim Tirmizi, extensively drew on his sayings, and considered him among the greatest saints. The influence of Hakim Tirmizi is also evident in Ibn Ata Allah himself. Baha' al-Din Naqshband is reported to have recognized Hakim as a great saint and occasionally turned to his spiritual presence. Hakim Tirmizi, who captivated Hujviri's heart, was a Sufi admired and influenced by Ibn al-Arabi [7].

## Works:

“*Hatmul avliyo*” – This work, consisting of twenty-nine chapters, is the first systematic and detailed discussion of prophethood and sainthood. In the fourth chapter, the author posed 157 mystical questions, leaving them unanswered to indicate that not everyone could speak about such profound matters. Later, Ibn al-Arabi wrote *al-Jawab al-Mustaqim 'amma sa'alahu al-Tirmizi al-Hakim* and also addressed these questions more comprehensively in *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya*. There is no statement in *Hatmu'l-Evliya'* or any of Hakim's other works claiming that sainthood is superior to prophethood. Takiyyuddin Ibn Taymiyya noted that some people's claims to being *Khatm al-Awliya* stemmed from a misinterpretation of Hakim's views. *Hatmu'l-Evliya'* was published by Osman Ismail Yahya.

“*Buduvvu shan*” – This is Hakim Tirmizi's autobiography. It was published by Osman Yahya and Muhammad Khalid Mas'ud.

“*Ilal ash-sharia*” – In this work, Hakim Tirmizi explains that a person who views through God's light can comprehend the causes and wisdom of Sharia rulings. He had presented this theory in *Isbat al-Ilal* theoretically and illustrated its practical application in “*Ilal ash-sharia*”. Defending the idea that divine commands are not contingent upon causes but aimed at testing humans led some contemporaries to accuse him of interpreting religious

rulings rationally. A manuscript of this work is held at the Bursa Library of Manuscripts and Printed Works [8].

“Al-Manhiyyat” – This work is particularly notable for showing that every prohibited act in religion has a reason justifying its prohibition. Hakim Tirmizi connects juridical rulings to spiritual purposes, demonstrating the close relation between outward and inward realities. This work contains commentary on 291 hadiths. Hakim Tirmizi selected 291 thematic headings, provided commentary on the hadiths under each, and sought conclusions aligned with the topics. His aim was not merely to transmit hadith but to explain and substantiate their principles. The critical edition, alongside Mustafa ibn Ismail al-Dimashqi’s commentary *Mirqat al-Wusul li-Nawadir al-Uṣul*, was prepared by Mustafa Abdulqadir Ata. Yusuf Abdurrahman al-Mara’shi conducted a separate study on the hadiths included [9].

## CONCLUSION

Hakim Tirmizi emerges as one of the most influential figures in early Islamic thought, combining rigorous scholarship with profound spiritual insight. His life demonstrates a continual pursuit of knowledge, ranging from hadith, jurisprudence, and theology to Sufism and philosophy. By reconciling transmitted sciences (naql) with reason (aql), and integrating elements of Hellenistic wisdom and gnosticism into Islamic mysticism, he contributed to a distinctive understanding of sainthood and spiritual perfection.

Despite facing accusations and misunderstandings in his own time, Hakim Tirmizi’s works – most notably “*Hatmul avliya*”, “*Buduvvu shan*”, and “*Ilal ash-sharia*” – have endured, influencing later generations of Sufi thinkers such as Ibn al-Arabi and Baha al-Din Naqshband. His teachings emphasize that true spiritual attainment is a combination of divine grace, moral excellence, and intellectual discernment, and that sainthood (*wilayah*) is a divine gift reflecting God’s presence on earth.

Hakim Tirmizi’s intellectual and spiritual legacy illustrates the integration of philosophy, ethics, and mysticism in Islam. His approach not only deepened the understanding of Sufism but also laid the groundwork for subsequent theological and philosophical developments, leaving a lasting imprint on Islamic thought.

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Volume 4, Issue 1, January 2026

<https://westerneuropeanstudies.com/index.php/4>

ISSN (E): 2942-1926

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