

## **Spiritual Insight and Juristic Vision in Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi's Writings (d.373 A.H/983 A.D): A Critical Study**

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**Abstract:** Islam recognizes *Bashr* (Human Being) an abode of the physical and the spiritual existence. The Quranic notions of the *Ruh* (Spiritual existence) and *Jasd* (physical appearance) formulate the idea of an absolute meaning that confirms the existence of human being. This cohesive union gives an exact picture having traits of the both, the *Ruhi* and the *Jasdi* interconnection. The righteous (*al-Rabaniyien*) are very much capable of identifying mischief of the self (*al-Nafs*) through the power of gnosis (*al-Marifah*) by maintaining the pre-eminence of the *Ruh* over the *Nafs*. They remain devoted to the essence of the *Shari'ah* and serve in capacity of a conscientious social being. The grand jurist Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi (d.373 A.H/983 A.D), a distinguished jurist and spiritual guide is of the same stature. He possessed the qualities of a grand jurist, a visionary legal expert as well as a reputed spiritual master utilizing the Quranic intelligence to empower the human intellect through the intrinsic capacities. Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi's contribution to the diverse fields of knowledge and mystic experiences influenced discourse of the Muslim intellectual thought throughout centuries. From Central Asia to Spain and Egypt to India, his works on Jurisprudence and philosophy mark an excellence in content as well as in exploration. Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi's approach is a placid endeavor to transform an individual through spiritual enlightenment while observing any religious obligation. The present paper is an attempt to discover legal and spiritual tendencies in Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi, his contribution to '*Ulum* and conception of the spiritual empowerment.

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## Prologue

The esoteric terms ‘*Arif*,’ *Mutaqi* and ‘*Mustaswif*’ deployed in the Islamic mystic expressions, cannot be defined in exact linguistic idiom or in obscure scholastic methods in general. These terms, however, denote character of a divinely ordained conduct that inculcates a sense of making a firm connection with God, serve the creatures and adhere to their inclusive responsibilities.<sup>1</sup> This qualified group give up the worldly material tastes and control the malevolent vicissitudes of the self (*al-Nafs*) for attainment of the salvation (*al-Najah*).<sup>2</sup> This group remained existent throughout the Islamic history initiating an overwhelming ideology of its non-material explanation of the Quran and Sunnah. Some of the reputed companions of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) who are known as the *Ashab-i-Suffa* (The people of the Veranda) are also believed to be the first such group (*al-Thabiqun al-Awalun*) who took a particular sitting in Masjid al-Nabawi (Prophet’s Mosque in Medina) for the public guidance.<sup>3</sup> The above references denote character of a God fearing group (*Mutaqiyien*) who besides being knowledgeable and capable lived a simple virtuous life for attainment of the salvation (*al-Najah*). These people believed in being pure (*Mutaqi*), patient (*Sabir*) and poor (*Faqir*), having less involvement in the matters of worldly importance and having a passion for collective good. They always considered this world as the prison (*Sijn*) and tried to set together all the possible efforts to move towards the eternal solace (*Na‘yiem*).<sup>4</sup>

The *Mutasawifs* (Sufis) do not constitute a separate sect in Islam, but had been experiencing the spiritual remedy to the individual ailments coming through self, luxury, greed and ill-desires. The following Quranic verse, therefore, facilitates the evolution of the concept for self-purification:

“The day on which property will not avail, nor sons; except him who comes to Allah with a sound heart (*Qalb- i- Saliem*)”.<sup>5</sup>

Making this and other relevant Quranic verses as the perennial source, the concept of *Tazkiyah* (Purification of the Soul) could be identified as a course for the attainment of the Allaha’s pleasure and immortal association (*Baqā bi al-Allah*) with Him.<sup>6</sup> The spiritual tendencies in Islam, as such encompassed a wide gradation, ranging from devoutly orthodox Muslims to mystics who viewed their connection with Islam as little more than the incidental.<sup>7</sup> This group technically known as the (*Mutasawifs*) stress

supreme importance of the religious experience and distinguish themselves among the Muslims by insistence that the experience of God (*Ma'rifah*) can be achieved in *this* life through extreme devotion, love and inclusiveness. A 9<sup>th</sup> A.H/15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. *Shadhili* Sufi master Sheikh Ahmad Zarruq, wrote in his major work "*Qawa'id al-Tasawwuf (Principles of Tasawuf)*:"

*"Tasawuf is a science ('Ilm) whose objective is the reparation of the heart (Qalb) and turning it away from all else but God."*<sup>8</sup>

Sheikh Ahmad bin Abija, a famous Moroccan Sufi in the Zarqawi lineage, during the 8<sup>th</sup>/A.H 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D. defined *Tasawuf* as:

*"A Science (al-Ilm) through which one can know how to travel into the presence of the Divine, purify one's inner self from filth, and beautify it with a variety of praiseworthy traits."*<sup>9</sup>

### **The Esoteric Impressions: 'Ilm and M'arifah**

*Al-'Ilm* (Knowledge), *al-Ma'rifah* (Gnosis) and *al-Tazkiyah* (purification) are the basic concepts and dynamic components in the Islamic spiritual tradition. Up to the 4<sup>th</sup> Century A.H, the Muslims found themselves in possession of a vast empire, and, living off tribute money (*al-Kharaj*) from the conquered territories. They "surrounded" themselves with slaves and lived on a scale of luxury unknown to their ancestors who lived a simple virtuous life.<sup>10</sup> The movement of protest against this worldliness ultimately resulted in both the legalistic and mystical schools which stressed for the attainment of *Tazkiyah* (Purification), *Ihsan* (Benevolence) and *Taqwa* (Piety). For early Islamic austere, fear of eternal punishment was the primary incentive to piety (*Taqwa*) and inclination towards worldly amusements a fore step towards hell. Eventually, however, a fervent love for God (*al-Hubb li-al-Allah*), displayed by such early Islamic saints as Abu Dharr Ghifari (d.59 A.H), Owais al-Qarni (d.43 A.H), Hasan al-Basri (d.110A.H) and Rabbi'a al-Adawiya (d.801 A.D) became a central themes, and provided a base for Islamic mysticism. Professor E.G. Browne notes that early Sufism was characterized by ... ascetism, quietism, intimate and personal love of God, and disparagement of mere lip service or formal worship.<sup>11</sup>

The Gnostic influences began to appear in some significant expressions of the Islamic spirituality after at least two centuries after Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W) passing away (10 A.H/632 A.D). Junayd Baghdadi, (d. 910 A.D), was especially instrumental

in shaping the discourse of *al-Marifah* into a pantheistic system (*al-Wahdah*). He wrote: “Whatever attains to True Being is absorbed into God and becomes God”.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, following this esoteric trend, Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922 A.D) a renowned esoteric, executed for blasphemy, became celebrated as *al-Shaheed* (martyr) among medieval Sufis, particularly Persian poets. These mystic expressions could later be found in Turkish and Urdu poetry as well. Al-Hallaj, who traveled extensively and developed quite a following, scandalized the orthodox with statements like “*An al-Haq*” (I am the Truth). Quietism (*Tark al-Duniya*), with its emphasis that God is all that matters and man is merely an instrument in His hands (*‘Aqidah al-Jabr*), provided fertile ground for the pantheistic beliefs that God is all there, and man and the phenomenal world are merely shadows or emanations of His being (*Wujud*).<sup>13</sup> The Spiritual experiences of these masters crossed over to Transoxiana, Persia, Egypt and Spain wherein an experienced group evolved to inculcate a majestic sense of the spiritual empowerment, tolerance and piety.<sup>14</sup>

#### **Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi: A Brief Depiction**

In the course of Islamic tradition, the concept of *al-‘Ilm* (knowledge) and *al-Ma‘rifah* (Gnosis) went on side by side to fulfil the criteria of an absolute relation. The ‘Ulama (Intellectuals) persistently tried to become identified with the Quranic term “*al-Rabaniyeen*” (The Righteous).<sup>14</sup> During the 3rd and 4th century A.H, the terminology of *al-Ma‘rifah* could be identified in the monumental works of the Muslim intellectuals.<sup>15</sup> The concurrent themes to support their argument were borrowed from the Quran and Sunnah and Athar al-Sahabah. This statement is evident through, and, becomes much stronger while observing the works of the grand jurist Abu al-Laith Nasr bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Samarqandi (d.373 A.H/983 A.D) who wrote extensively for developing a moral and mystical expressions for spiritual empowerment.<sup>16</sup>

Abu al-Laith Nasr bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Samarqandi (d.373 A.H/983 A.D) is associated with a simple way of introducing the learner with basic ideals of morality and spiritual content through the Quranic expressions, instances from the prophets life and brief description of the God fearing. This approach got him the appellation ‘Imam al-Huda’<sup>17</sup> (The Leader of Righteousness). He has been mentioned with a superb intellectual background and everlasting contribution in the vast arena of the Islamic studies. Being a renowned master in *Shari‘ah* and an connoisseur in *Tariqah*, his explanation of the purification of soul can be better understood through his expressions on human empowerment and advices to the adherents of the spirituality.<sup>18</sup>

Abu al-Laith Nasr bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Samarqandi was a native of Samarqand born there around 302 A.H/910 A.D. He mastered different branches of the Islamic learning that include *Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, Mantiq, Falsafah, Sirah, Tarikh and Usul al-Fiqh*.<sup>19</sup> This may also be noted out that Abu al-Laith is not to be confused with his contemporary scholar Nasr bin Muhammad al-Hafiz al-Samarqandi, as the famous biographer, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Qarshi (d.775 A.H) did, while taking a biographical narrative of the jurists of the *Mawara al-Nahr* (Transoxiana). The above mentioned biographer erred due to the resemblance of the name and nativity of both the scholars at Samarqand. Even it is also observed that al-Qarshi (d.775 A.H) attributed to the later some of the magnificent works of Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi.<sup>20</sup>

Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi acquired his knowledge by traveling to distant areas of *Mawara al-Nahr*, Iraq, Arabia and Syria and had an excellent association with the renowned scholars and jurists.<sup>21</sup> In the regions mentioned, he lived there for months together and excelled in almost all the branches of Islamic learning. Abu al-Laith, had an extreme ambition for the study of jurisprudence (*al-Fiqh*) which he thought as the paramount area of the knowledge dissemination and loved to enjoy listening to the legal debates.<sup>22</sup> This approach helped him in searching for new possibilities in exploring the moral content of the law as well as to discover the possible interpretations within different legal theories.<sup>23</sup> A renowned biographer of the Islamic history and culture, Ibn Khalikan, in his reputed work, *Wafiyat al-A'yan* remarks:

“He gained the confidence of his teachers and became a distinguished figure among his contemporaries which include Abu Bakr Shahuya (d.361 A.H), Qazi al-Haramain (d.351 A.H), Ahmad bin 'Ali al-Razi (d.370 A.H), Abu Bakr Khawarizmi (d.403 A.H), Abu-Mansur Maturidi, Muhammad al-Mawarzi (d.344 A.H), Hakim Samarqandi (d.342 A.H), al-Hindwani (d.362 A.H), Ibn al-Tabari, Abu-Bakr Jurjani (d.352 A.H), and Abu al-Haitham Qazi al-Neshapuri”.<sup>24</sup>

Abu Laith Samarqandi surpassed his teachers and while discussing any legal discourse he would try interpret a legal verdict in confirmation with '*Urf* (tradition) of a particular region.<sup>25</sup> This approach, as methodology in law, made him unique in the scholarly circles of the Central Asia and Persia, and also established adaptability of the non-confronting customary practices within the Islamic legal theory.<sup>26</sup> Abu Laith Samarqandi remained in Samarqand till his death in 383 A.H.<sup>27</sup> His death, as mentioned in the contemporary chronicles was a big loss to the Islamic legal and spiritual legacy.<sup>28</sup>

### Spiritual Expressions and Nature of his works

Abu al-Laith Nasr bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Samarqandi was a scholar par excellence. He established that the legal notions are meaningless until they possess the moral and spiritual content. The *Sirah* (Biography) of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was its best example. He studied Hadith with his father, Sheikh Muhammad bin Ahmad (376 A.H), *Fiqh* with Abū Ja‘far Moḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh al-Hindvānī at Balk (d. 362/ 973 A.D.) and Abū Sa‘īd Kālīl b. Aḥmad, who, after traveling all over the Islamic world, had become *Qāzī* in Samarqand (d.368/ 979 A.D).<sup>29</sup>

Having such a great intellectual capacities on his back, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi had a self-introspecting personality. He never became a *Qazi* himself, but he seems to have been appreciated because of his *fatwās*, *Zuhd* and preaching the Quranic ethics.<sup>30</sup> Like his teachers, he combined solid juridical knowledge with a predilection for propagating popular morality in terms of asceticism (*al-Marifah*).<sup>31</sup> He lived in the various cities of Transoxania (Central Asia) as an experienced jurist and had to deal with proselytizing among the Turkish tribes. It is therefore characteristic that his *Muqadimah fi al-ṣalāt*, a short treatise on prayer, was translated into Turkish several times and was offered in a splendid manuscript to Qānṣawh Ghaurī, the last Mamluk sultan in Egypt.<sup>32</sup>

Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi is also well-known for his monumental work on Quranic exegesis ‘*al-Tashrih*’ (Pub.Cairo, Egypt 1310 A.H). His *Tafsīr*, the high acclaim of which is attested by the great number of manuscripts, was translated three times into Turkish by Aḥmad Dā‘ī (d. 820/1417 A.D),<sup>33</sup> by Ibn ‘Arabšāh (d. 854/1450; with partial edition in F. Iz, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Nesir*, Istanbul, 1964, pp. 13-26, and, on the basis of the latter version, it got translated by Abu al-Faḥr Mūsā b. Ḥājījī Ḥusayn Aznīqī (d. 833/1429-30A.D).<sup>34</sup> Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi’s another text on *Tassawuf* in an Ottoman version, supposedly originally written in Persian, *Tazkirah al-Awliya*, is obviously spurious.<sup>35</sup> Being well versed in the lexicographical connotations of the Arabic and Persian, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi could narrate, compile, interpret and explain the Islamic teachings in both the languages.<sup>36</sup> The urban society in Samarqand spoke Persian; during Abu al-Laith’s lifetime the town was one of the intellectual centers of the Samanid Empire.<sup>37</sup> It is therefore not astonishing that, when he enumerates examples of formulations which imply unbelief, in the last chapter of his *Khazinah al-Fiqh*, he quotes them in Persian and explores it with acute examples.<sup>38</sup>

Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi’s magnum opus *Tanbīh al-Ghafilin*, with its quotations from the Quran, Hadith, and popular *Zuhd* connotations, also exists in a Persian

translation.<sup>39</sup> In addition, there is *al-Jami'ah* version of parts of the same text.<sup>40</sup> This book was popular and simple enough to become one of the last symbols of the religious identity in the dying Muslim society of Spain during 1492 A.D.<sup>41</sup> Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi was given the same honorific title, "*Imam al-Huda*" as was conferred to Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (834 A.D), who had lived in Samarqand two generations before him.<sup>42</sup> But, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi did not entirely share his outlook as being a pure Jurist and non-scholastic in his approach.<sup>43</sup> He, as it is depicted in his writings, avoided complicated *Kalāmi* issues and problems and remained a strict follower of the '*Aqidah* creed.<sup>44</sup> The Hanafite simplicity of his catechism, '*Aqīdat al-Uṣūl* (ed. A. W. Juynboll, in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Landen Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, Ser. IV, vol. 5, 1881, pp. 215ff., 267ff.) secured its high reputation in Indonesian and Malayan Islam, although Hanafite law, which deals only with the basic questions of Muslim belief, did not play an important role in this region.<sup>45</sup> Brought to Java by the Chinese Muslim merchants, it was afterwards pushed aside by the al-Shaf'i 'Ulama.<sup>46</sup> The Hanafi origin of the work is transparent in the "*Murjiyah*" (a scholastic Muslim sect) treatment and interpretation of the faith (*Iman*):

"Faith is indivisible because of its character as a light in the heart and the intellect, in the spirit and body of man. As divine guidance it is uncreated; as an act of assent (*Taṣdīq*) and as an oral confession (*Aqrār*), it is created."<sup>47</sup>

These, and similar statements are found in the last chapters of Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi's another work, *Bustān al-'Aarifīn*, a manual of basic religious knowledge.<sup>48</sup> Here, again he avoids difficult theological problems, dialectics, and polemics and instead gives us a simple explanation to a variety of the theological issues.<sup>49</sup> He may also have been the author of the *Sharah al-fiqh al-Akbar* ascribed to Imam Abu Mansur Maturidi.<sup>50</sup> as was recently suggested by W. M. Watt and W. Madlung.<sup>51</sup> He is mentioned in the text and on the title pages of some manuscripts of the work.<sup>52</sup>

### **Explanation in Quran and Sunnah**

Besides having command over the understanding of the *Shari'ah*, Abu al-laith al-Samarqandi developed a deep concern for the attainment of the *Ma'rifah*.<sup>53</sup> He identified Jurisprudence with pure ethics of Islam and presented content of the jurisprudence in a much broader perspective.<sup>54</sup> It is characteristic of the Islamic ethics that human actions are not simply divided into two shades of morality, right (*al-Sahih*)

or wrong (*al-Thaqim*); but rather five, arranged in order of their consequences in the next world.<sup>55</sup> The 'obligatory (*wajib*)' is that whose performance is rewarded by Allah in the next life (*al-Aakhirah*) and whose non-performance is punished. The 'recommended (*Mandub*)' is that whose performance is rewarded, but whose non-performance is not punished. The 'permissible (*Mubah*)' is indifferent, unconnected with either reward or punishment. The 'offensive (*Makruh*)' is that whose non-performance is rewarded but whose performance is not punished. The 'unlawful (*Haram*)' is that whose non-performance is rewarded and whose performance is punished, if one dies unrepentant.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, the human states of the heart (*al-Qalb*), as the Qur'an and Sunnah pointed out, come under each of these headings.<sup>57</sup> Yet, they are not dealt with in books of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) because unlike the prayer, zakat, or fasting, they are not 'quantifiable' in terms of the specific amount of them that must be done, But though they are not countable, they are of the utmost importance to every Muslim.<sup>58</sup>

With this moral and psycho-spiritual explanation, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi identifies the entire realm of *Ma'rifah* with Quran and the Sunnah. The Love of Allah (*al-Hubb li-al-Allah*) is the basic stuff for attainment of the *Tazkiyah*.<sup>59</sup>

"And those who believe are greater in love for Allah", making being a believer conditional upon having greater love for Allah than any other.<sup>60</sup>

The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) said, "Whoever is not merciful to people, Allah will show no mercy to him."<sup>61</sup>

"Mercy is not taken out of anyone except the damned."<sup>62</sup>

"By Him in whose hand is my soul, none of you shall enter paradise until you believe, and none of you shall believe until you love one another."<sup>63</sup>

Abu al-laith al-Samarqandi identifies an important component of gnosis ; the *Presence of mind in the prayer (al-Salah)*.<sup>64</sup> Abu Dawud relates in his *Sunan* that 'Ammar bin Yathir heard the Prophet (S.A.W) say, "Truly, a man leaves, and none of his prayer has been recorded for him except a tenth of it, a ninth of it, eighth of it, seventh of it, sixth of it, fifth of it, fourth of it, third of it, a half of it."<sup>65</sup> meaning that none of a person's prayer counts for him except that in which he is present in his heart with Allah.<sup>66</sup>

The love of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) is also a requirement for attainment of *al-Marifah*. Imam Bukhari relates in his *Sahih* that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give



him peace) said, "None of you believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his son, and all people."<sup>67</sup>

**Fear of anyone besides Allah.** Allah Most High says in Surat al-Baqara of the Qur'an, "And fulfill My covenant: I will fulfill your covenant—And fear Me alone."<sup>68</sup> the last phrase of which, according to Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, "establishes that a human being is obliged to fear no one besides Allah Most High."<sup>69</sup>

On *Despair*. Allah says,

"None despairs of Allah's mercy except the people who disbelieve."<sup>70</sup> indicating the unlawfulness of this inward state by coupling it with the worst human condition possible, that of unbelief.

On *Arrogance*. Muslim relates in his *Sahih* that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said,

"No one shall enter paradise who has a particle of arrogance in his heart."<sup>71</sup>

On *Envy*. Meaning to wish for another to lose the blessings he enjoys. Abu Dawud relates that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said,

"Beware of envy, for envy consumes good works as flames consume firewood."<sup>72</sup>

On *Showing off in acts of Worship*. Al-Hakim relates with a *Sahih* chain of transmission that the Prophet (S.A.W) said,

"The slightest bit of showing off in good works is as if worshipping others with Allah."

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### **A Brief Description of his Works**

Abu-Laith al-Samarqandi approached various branches of the Islamic learning and developed a juristic thought based on the Quranic ethics and spiritual elevation of an individual. His involvement in *Usul al-fiqh wa al-Qawaid* (The Principles of Jurisprudence and its Maxims) could not prevent him from writing on other significant aspects of the knowledge.<sup>74</sup> He distinguished himself by adopting a much balanced approach while interpreting Islamic legal discourse and embedded himself with Islamic esoteric tradition. His lifelong involvement in the knowledge tradition was an attempt to link the effective relationship between individual society and the religion. This reality, as an approach has been produced in his works in an explored from.<sup>75</sup>

### ***Al-Tashrih***

Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi, while approaching the Quran, produced a valuable commentary, '*al-Tashrih*' (Pub.Cairo, Egypt 1310 A.H). This Exegesis is indeed an expert approach to explore social laws of the Quran. Ibn al-Arab (d. 854 A.H), an Egyptian jurist, translated this exegesis (*Tafsir*) into Turkish Language, Abu al-Fazl Musa al-Azraqi; a contemporary of Ibn al-Arab added some introductory notes entitled "Anfas al-Jawahir" to enrich the treatise with advanced legal and intellectual debates.<sup>76</sup>

### ***Khazanah al-Fiqh:***

The treatise *Khazanah al-Fiqh* by Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi is the famous work compiled in the Fiqh literature. The esteemed jurist, in this work, discusses and deals with the legal terminology adopted in the Islamic jurisprudence. In the same way, narrations from the local usages, customs and social experiences that need the legal sanction. The manuscript was preserved by the Ottoman Turks (1299-1451 A.D) and the manuscript got translated and published from Istanbul in 1823 A.D in Turkish.<sup>77</sup>

### ***Mukhtarat al-Riwayat:***

The book, *Mukhtarat al-Riwayat* is also a reputed work of the grand jurist, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi. He approached some of the significant socio-legal discourses and pointed out towards the 'possible' deductions that may expand the canvas of Islamic jurisprudence. He observed the nature of certain methods deployed to serve as the alternate sources of the Islamic legal theory. Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi also approached the principles of analogy (*Qiyas*) and juristic preference (*Tarjeeh*) to accommodate the legality of the social environment besides serving the fixation of the religious commandments (*al-Ahkam al-Shar'iyah*). This treatise is a valuable study of the narrations (*al-Riwayat*) traced down to examine the future discourse of the legal doctrines.<sup>78</sup>

### ***Al-Muqadimah fi al-Salat:***

This treatise by Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi covers the significance and benefits of the obligatory prayers (*Salat al-Farz*). The reputed scholar has shown a great deal while exploring the essence of the al-Salah and its obligatory character. Furthermore, he explains nature of the juristic differences in order to show the scope of the juristic interpretations and ethics of the disagreement. Later on, commentaries to this treatise appeared in Turkish and Persian language which were published from various places.<sup>79</sup>

***Tanbih al-Gafilin:***

This reputed work of Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi is an account of the spiritual and ethical message of Islamic practices. In this treatise special emphasis is laid for the attainment of the spiritual and ethical perfection in order to establish a strong link with God. He explains the Quranic verses, narrates different incidents of the *Sirah*, and focuses on the significant episodes of the companions of the prophet (S.A.W) to infuse the real essence to *'Ibadat*.<sup>80</sup>

***Bustan al-'Aarifin:***

This work has been authored to highlight the spiritual aspect of Islam. It also provides moral and ethical message to achieve perfection in the religious deeds.<sup>81</sup>

***Al-'Aqidah:***

In addition to these compilations, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi approached the scholastic philosophy to explain the Islamic creed and dogma. To defend the Islamic beliefs against Greek philosophy and rationalism of the Mutazilah, Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi discusses the Islamic belief system on the imprints of Imam Abu Mansur Maturidi. Abu al-Laith al-Samarqandi compiled "*Al-'Aqidah*" in form of a dialogue to address the issues related to faith and responsibility of the human actions. The objective behind being to introduce the real message of the Islamic belief system and protection of the belief system against Mutazilah. This reputed work was published by A.W.T Juynboll in 1881 A.D from Germany. Muhammad bin 'Umar al-Navavi (d.1305 A.H) wrote its commentary entitled, "*Qatr al-Ghays*". The famous orientalist, Joseph Schacht holds that the works of Abu-Laith Samarqandi represent him both as a jurist as well as the philosopher who interconnected faith and jurisprudence.<sup>82</sup>

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