Ethics and Spirituality in Islam

Sufi *adab*

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Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*

An Introduction by Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen and Luca Patrizi

Outline:
- *Adab* and Sufism: issues and methodology (C. Mayeur-Jaouen and L. Patrizi)
- Sufi *adab*: a literary genre with multiple meanings (L. Patrizi)
- The misleading question of its origins and contributions; the misleading answer of categories (C. Mayeur-Jaouen)
- Configuring an indivisible concept. How to study Sufi *adab*? (C. Mayeur-Jaouen)
- The historiography of Sufi *adab*: six decades of research (L. Patrizi)

"Sufism resides entirely in *adab*" (*al-taṣawwuf kulluhu ādāb*); each spiritual station, each mystical moment has a corresponding etiquette and behavior (*ādāb*, plural of the term *adab*). This famous quote, which Sulamī attributed to Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād al-Nīsābūrī (d. 260/880), underlines the constitutive link explored by the authors of this volume. The enigmatic statement by al-Ḥaddād raises a number of questions. The first concerns terminology and definitions. What exactly is *adab* and ultimately, what is Sufism? What do they have in common? Is there a specific Sufi *adab*? How can we set aside restrictive definitions with little historical grounding? How can the alliance between *adab* and Sufism be periodized? Aside from works clearly belonging to Sufi *adab*, the concept is difficult to pinpoint. Sometimes the term is barely used, or it is replaced by *akhlāq* or the various forms of the verb *addaba*. At the same time, *adab* is omnipresent. Starting with quotes from the first masters up until texts from modern brotherhoods, it seems to be constitutive of Sufism. Further investigation is necessary. Attempting a history of Sufi *adab* is writing the history of Sufism itself.

As Fabio Alberto Ambrosio underlines hereafter, an entire vision of Islamology, of the Arabic and Islamic cultures in general, is addressed when considering *adab*. In 1960, Francesco Gabrieli had already observed that the word *adab,* more so than either *dīn* or *ʿilm*, is at the heart of the Islamic civilization.[1] Barbara Metcalf added that *adab* is "the core of what has given the Islamic tradition its richness and resilience throughout times and places of such unceasing diversity."[2] Oscillating between divine law and the life of man, between divine knowledge and human action, between a norm (in the process

1 Gabrieli, "*adab*," 175–176.

2 Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority. The Place of* Adab *in South Asian Islam*, viii.

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of being created) and a (supposed) usage, between texts and actual practice, between ethics and history, between literature and an incorporated habitus, between a shared general culture and specific local cultures; we find these tensions in one viewpoint or another, expressed differently but which can be found in any ethical and spiritual literature. A detailed study quickly unveils the term's plasticity, the heterogeneity of a concept according to a place, a time, and even within a single period or a single author. The weight of past Orientalist conceptions, handy categories that are incessantly reproduced, the neglect of classical literature by specialists of Sufism (and reciprocally), and finally the absence of any clear periodization do not help the historian of Sufi *adab*. However, knowledge of the subject has grown immensely over the past few years thanks to the publication of a number of texts and the explosion of research on the history of Sufism.

Adab and Sufism: Issues and Methodology

We must first establish basic definitions, which can always be debated and which will be clarified later in this volume. In general, *adab* can be simultaneously defined as etiquette, education, manners, and a conformity to an ideal, that of an honest, worldly man, knowledgeable in all things, a lover of literature with its ethical and moral facets. The terminology and etymology of the word is the subject of much debate. The very root, ADB, does not appear in the Qurʾān. For many years, it was believed that in its earliest definition, *adab*, made using the plural of *ādāb* from *daʾb*, "customary usage," was a synonym of *Sunna*, that of the ancient Arabs, and applied to a practical norm of conduct, both laudable and inherited from ancestors (pre-Islamic Arabs). From this ancestral source came education and ultimately knowledge, the other meaning of *adab*. This was the interpretation of Vollers and Nallino,[3] slightly modified by Charles Pellat in 1964.[4] In his article "*adab*" in the second edition of the *Encyclopédie de l'islam*, published in 1960, Francesco Gabrieli added that in the first century of the Hijra (622), the word *adab* took on an intellectual meaning that was specifically Arabic: a cultivated man should know the

3 This is "*adab*" as it is found in Karl Vollers' catalogue, p. 180 n. 1. Carlo Alfonso Nallino uses this theory in 1910–1911 in his classes at the University of Cairo, notably by linking *adab* and *sunna*. The classes were given in Arabic and were posthumously published in Italian in 1948, "La letteratura araba dagli inizi all'epoca della dinastia umayyade" in 1948, then in French in 1950: *La littérature arabe: des origines à l'époque de la dynastie omeyyade*.

4 Pellat, "Variations sur le thème de l'*adab*," 19–37.

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ancient poets, the oratory arts, and the great adventures and feats of the Arabic tribes (*ayyām al-ʿArab*), in addition to rhetoric, grammar, lexicography, and metrics. *Adab* was quickly enriched with the splendours of Persian culture and became synonymous with refinement (*ẓarf*, the equivalent of *urbanitas*), civility, and sociability as practiced by court societies. In an intellectual and technical, almost professional, acceptation, *adab* soon came to mean the general culture needed to perform a social function. Thus, during the fifth to elenventh centuries, the *adab* of *kātib* flourished, along with the *adab* of the judge (*adab al-qāḍī*), or that of the teacher (*adab al-ʿālim wa-l-mutaʿallim*). There was also the *adab* of Princes, the *Mirror for Princes* and the instructive textbooks (*naṣīḥa*) given to princes by the ulemas, which were an integral part of Islamic *adab.* Moral discourse, worldly culture, manners, education, culture, and technical knowledge for princes and administrative servants—medieval *adab* was all of this. This was common knowledge for all Sufis. Starting in the ninth century, in a more restrictive sense, *adab* was also synonymous with entertaining literature, which had the dual goal of exploring formal construction and offering ethical content. It was a literature that addressed everything that was separate from the more demanding religious sciences. However, aside from wanting to vulgarize the topic for pedagogical uses, does this justify qualifying this literature as "profane"? For Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868–869), the religious sciences (*ʿilm*) were linked to moral education (*khuluq*) and the transmission of traditions (*riwāya*), a foundation which includes *adab* as one of its branches. Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889), in his *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, a source of inspiration for many later authors, attempts to synthesize *adab* and Islamic ethics, two continents that were under construction.

In a fundamental article published in 1984, Seeger Adrianus Bonebakker re-examines the question.[5] He states that according to Arabic linguists the etymology of the term *adab* is linked to the idea of an "invitation to the banquet" (*maʾduba*), that of knowledge. Offer a little of everything, take a little of everything: this is the spirit of medieval *adab.* Using Herbert Horst's 1987 work as a starting point, Stephan Guth in 2010 further explored the meaning of *adab*. He noted a number of meanings for both the singular and the plural forms of the concept (*adab* and *ādāb*) in Arabic dictionaries. Underlining the polysemy of the term, his comparative conclusion establishes an intimate and ancient link between the term and literature. He suggests attempting a systematic approach of available sources and situating them in a specific cultural context in order to begin establishing a precise chronology of semantic changes. He states these

5 Bonebakker, "Early Arabic Literature and the term *adab*," 389–421.

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are the prerequisite conditions for progressing in the study of *adab*, a concept at the very heart of Islamic civilization.[6]

As demonstrated in Luca Patrizi's doctoral dissertation in 2012, Sufis did not ignore the different meanings of *adab*; however they continued giving it a more specifically religious and spiritual dimension.[7] A Companion, ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd (d. 32/652), said that the *adab* for God—the education he gave to man—is the Qurʾān, which Ibn Masʿūd presented as "God's banquet" (*maʾdubat Allāh*). In a later chapter, Denis Gril, basing himself on these references, demonstrates that for Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), *adab* and *maʾduba* coexist. *Adab* is simultaneously education; correction, including linguistic correction; knowing how to act and how to be. With Islam, the second form of the root *addaba/taʾdīb* took another path: the Prophet's famous *ḥadīth addabanī rabbī fa aḥsana adabī* (God taught me *adab* and perfected it within me).[8] It established a long lasting proximity between *adab* and *ḥusn*, which is all and good. The insistence on the figure of the Prophet explains the popularity of the *akhlāq*—close relative to *adab* in a more specifically Islamic way. In the 3rd/9th century, *adab* conforms its multiple roots to an Islamic ethic, that Sufism endows with methods (the education of *nafs*) and an ethic (*al-akhlāq*) that draws from the Prophet's Sunna, from Greek ethics (Miskawayh's *Tahdhīb al-akhlāq*, adapted from Aristotle), and perhaps from the customs of the Christian monasticism at a time when the Islamic world was still mostly inhabited by non-Muslims.

The ninth century was a decisive period in the history of *adab* and the history of Sufism. It is not a coincidence that it was an Iranian Sufi from this period who is given credit for the quote above, *al-taṣawwuf kulluhu adab* or *ādāb.* Though the untranslatable *adab* is the subject of much debate, *taṣawwuf* is not any simpler. Beyond the well known debate over the different etymologies of the word, the term *taṣawwuf* is equally multi-facetted. It is all at once a practical and initiatory doctrine, a path towards God, a spiritual attitude guided by a master, who is the image of prophetic exemplarity. Though forced to use "Sufism," we resist the term, which French and English borrowed from a German neologism or more precisely from the "Latin" in 1821.[9] *Sufismus*: this

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6 Horst, "Die Entstehung der *adab*-Literatur und ihre Arten," 208–220. Quoted by Stephan Guth, "Politeness, Höflichkeit, *ʿadab*," 9–30.

7 Patrizi, *Il banchetto divino. Formazione e sviluppo della nozione di adab nell'Islam, dalle origini alla letteratura degli* ādāb al-ṣūfiyya.

8 Sulamī relays this *ḥadīth, Jāwamiʿ ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*, 3. Quoted by Denis Gril further in this volume.

9 Tholuck, *Ssufismus sive theosophia Persarum pantheistica*. Rare occurrences have been noted in France as early as the end of the 18th century, but it is Tholuck who established the concept in Europe.

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translation with its almost ideological suffix tends to put an accent on the particularity of what is not exactly "a current of Islam," as it is usually presented for pedagogical ease. There were Sufis before a Sufi doctrine existed—which, strictly speaking, is the *taṣawwuf.* Once the formative period of Islam ended, many of the characteristics of Sufi piety were shared during centuries by all of Islam, not only the Sunnis. Sufism, in its doctrinal approach, becomes intimately linked with other Islamic sciences, *fiqh, ḥadīth, tafsīr*, lexicography, in a continuum among the various Islamic sciences. For example, Sufism became inseparable from the *ḥadīth*, with Qushayrī during the eleventh century, Munāwī during the seventeenth century, Zabīdī during the eighteenth century.[10] Yet, as underlined by Pierre Lory in his contribution, "this mimetism [with the other Islamic sciences] deliberately masked the profound originality of this mystical teaching" and tensions never waited long before reappearing.

Adab and Sufism share a number of points. *Ab initio*, both involve education and teaching, both fundamental, as explained by Denis Gril in his article. Education is a question of taming and training; this explains the importance of the second form (*addaba*) and of *taʾdīb* that often goes hand in hand with *tahdhīb* (refinement). It is question of taming the carnal soul (*riyāḍat al-nafs*), a discipline prized by the Sufis who drew effortlessly from Greek ethics, adding completely different goals. The *adab* man is thus "well raised" (*muʾaddab* or *mutaʾaddib*), which, as highlighted by Stephan Guth, goes beyond mere "politeness". This is even truer in that *adab* cannot have a hypocritical appearance, a simple veneer of civilization. The *adīb* in turn becomes *muʾaddib.* Far from being limited to a science, *adab* brings the sciences all together and gives them their "general tone", their meaning, and for the Sufi, their mystical goal. *Adab* and Sufism are thus linked to knowledge, as Annabel Keeler and Denis Gril explain later in this volume. Such knowledge is linked to science (*ʿilm*) and gnostic knowledge (*maʿrifa*). Sufism and *adab* deal with texts and examples lived out and retraced by anecdotes (*ḥikāyāt*), with accounts handed down and patiently incorporated. This explains the ties between a spiritual itinerary and literature, especially poetry. Many centuries later, the Ottoman Sufis would turn *adab* not into "a content in and of itself, but a rule for inner construction to interiorize in order to create the discourse and content of the message".[11] A discipline, via literature and spiritual experiences, that is required in order to accept divine grace.

10 This is in reference to the recent and remarkable works of Chiabotti, *Entre soufisme et savoir islamique*; Chouiref Boukabrine, *Soufisme et ḥadīth*, and Reichmuth, *The World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1732–1791)*.

11 See Alberto Ambrosio's article in this volume.

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This *adab*, which was apparently inculcated, did not topple the *khulq*, the profound nature, our innate part (which is so receptive!) that only God can inundate it with his mystical grace. It is our good character (*ḥusn al-akhlāq* or *khulq ḥasan*), inspired by Muḥammad, that allows us to achieve real knowledge—as established by Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) whose wide ranging vision is presented here by Paul Heck. Beyond the Prophet's *akhlāq*, the act of adorning ourselves with God's *akhlāq* (*al-takhalluq bi-akhlāq Allāh*) should spread through the pious scholar—a delicate undertaking as Francesco Chiabotti explains when reading the treaty of the Divine Names written by Qushayrī (d. 465/1072). In his analysis of the *takhalluq*, the echo of more ancient masters resonates, masters such as Tustarī (d. 283/896), Tirmidhī (d. roughly 320/938), and especially Abū Bakr al-Wāsitī (d. roughly 320/923) and Sulamī (d. 412/1021). Shiites would have evoked the *takhalluq* from their imams' *akhlāq.* For a confirmed Sunni, such as Ghazālī, the quest for God must be accompanied by prophetic disciplines (*al-ādāb al-nabawiyya*)—humility and altruism, preference for others, in God—because the knowledge of God (*maʿrifa*) can only be the result of personal effort. The humility and virtue ascribed to the Prophet, allow Ghazālī to moderate the arrogance of scholastic philosophy, while integrating such a philosophy into his own system. Paul Heck concludes that it is a mystical scholasticism, a form of *docta ignorantia*, which is preached here.

Another point in common between Sufism and *adab*: the refusal to separate the "exterior" and the "interior" *adab*. Annabel Keeler shows that during the ninth century, in his commentary of the Qur'ān as in his sayings, Sahl al-Tustarī underlines the ties between the novice's exterior *adab* and the initiate's interior *adab*, in the discipline of the *nafs* and the mastery of the *akhlāq.* In general, *adīb* conforms to the Greek ideal, and when adorning his mind, he must not neglect his appearance or bodily care. On another level, this is a principle shared by the Sufis; interior states can literally "be seen" from outside. The exterior beauty of *adab* suggests the existence of an interior *adab.* It is in this that court *adab* is interesting, as Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek demonstrates in her contribution. When the misleading appearances of flamboyant luxury or an overly assiduous search to keep company with power fools a negligent censor, here we find the supreme discretion of *malāmatī adab*, whose discreet presence Nelly Amri unveils in a Sufi *adab* manual from the fifteenth century inspired by the Shādhilī order.

Adab and Sufism are about relationships: relationship to God and relationship to oneself, relationship to others and to the world, between the exterior and the interior, between the exoteric and the esoteric (*ẓāhir* and *bāṭin*), between norms and practice, between ideals and patient incorporation. Such knowledge goes hand in hand with a moral and ethical component, without

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excluding the paradox of humour and surprise. It suggests the master and the disciple, transmission, pedagogical subtlety, the discipline of *nafs*. When talking of *adab*, we are also referring to the written word, literature, words, language and speech—this is especially true in that we often talk of the *adab* of *dhikr*, formulas to repeat, divine Names to incorporate. However, as Fabio Alberto Ambrosio states in his discussion of an anonymous Turkish treaty from 1588, *adab* is also silence—since teaching *adab* (the *taʾdīb* which is education) means showing the example, using allusions, gestures, acts that do not necessarily need words. It is also possible that the *adab* man, both poet and musician, is one who says words differently. Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen's article focuses on a blind Sufi cantor who improvised poems in Egypt during the interwar period. He transmitted *adab*, in every sense of the term, better than the entire anthology compiled by his friend Ḥalawānī in 1949.

We have already mentioned that *adab* and Sufism are linked by *khulq* or *khuluq*, the profound nature, and by ethics, the *akhlāq*, which in the texts are often the twin echo of *adab*. This is in reference to *makārim al-akhlāq*, the noble virtues, incarnated by the Prophet and transmitted by the corpus of *ḥadīth*: *al-adab wa-l-akhlāq* is a classic duo. *Akhlāq* (ethic, virtues, sometimes translated today by mores or morals) is the plural of the Quranic term *khulq* or *khuluq*, which designates personality or character. Each religion has its *khulq*; in Islam, it is decency (*ḥayā*). H.A.R. Gibb and Walzer, in their entry, *Akhlāq*, in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* suggested that the almost complete correlation between the term *adab* and Persian ethics during the eighth to thirteenth century allowed the term *akhlāq* to flourish and to designate realities that were more specifically Islamic, more essentially prophetic. Starting in the ninth century, links between *adab* and *akhlāq* were firmly established in the austere *Makārim al-akhlāq* by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā (d. 281/894), based on the *ḥadīth*: same undertaking and same title for a shia author such as Abū l-Naṣr al-Ṭabarsī, son of the commentator of the Quran, Abū ʿAlī al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan (d. 548/1153?).[12]

Via the Sunna, it is the Law (*sharīʿa*) that many authors believe is incarnated within Islamic *adab,* which is its discipline. Imam Shāfiʿī (d. 281/820), founder of the Shāfiʿīte law school, was most certainly one of the first to use the term *adab* in its normative sense. Many Sufis insisted, as would later Ibn ʿArabī, on the cohesion between the Law and Sufi *adab*. In a similar vein, the Jewish pietists in Egypt during the thirteenth century, studied by Nathan Hofer and Elisha Russ-Fishbane, explored the relationship between *adab* and the biblical prophets. They selectively borrowed Sufi terminology to analyze

12 Ṭabarsī, *Makārim al-akhlāq*. See Walzer, "*akhlaq.*"

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discipline (*riyāḍa*), a discipline that prescribes repeating biblical commandments (*miṣvot*) to embody the prophetic ideals (*ādāb*) described in the Bible.

Sufi *adab*: A Literary Genre with Multiple Meanings

Sufism quickly created its own ideal moral code, a specific comportment linked to the teachings of the Qurʾān and to the example set by the Prophet. It did not ignore the protocol and refinement of Islamic courts in the Middle Ages and perhaps, as suggested in Patrizi's article, tried to compete with them symbolically.[13] Nevertheless, it was rich with social and political ramifications. Jean-Jacques Thibon, after Fritz Meier and Ahmet Karamustafa, offers us an overview of the place *adab* occupied in ninth century Sufi treatises, including those that have been lost since. A special mention should be made of the *ādāb al-nufūs* by Muḥāsibī (d. 243/847), the *Kitāb al-Riyāḍa wa-adab al-nafs* by Tirmidhī (d. 318/936 or 320/938), and the sayings of Junayd (d. 297/910). In Baghdadian Sufism, the term, early on, designated discipline or relationships between disciples in various circumstances. In one century, observes Jean-Jacques Thibon, the concept of *adab* became an evidence for Nīshāpūr in the education of his disciples. Within the local Sufi heritage influenced by *futuwwa* and *malāma*, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of a real evolution of the technical lexicology and that of Sulamī's desire to manifest a convergence with Baghdadian Sufism. In his contribution to this volume, Pierre Lory points out that during the tenth and elenventh centuries, the plural (*ādāb*) made its appearance just as the living practice of inspired paradox (*shaṭḥ*) began to fade. The *ādāb* are a set of rules and attitudes that fully display Sunni Sufism with Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) and Ghazalī (d. 505/1111).

After persecutions such as the trial of Ḥallāj (d. 309/922), it was certainly important to situate Sufism in a normative framework within Islam. It was equally important to centre *adab* on the shaykh, who, amidst his companions, had taken on the place of the Prophet among his disciples, that of the master of *adab*. Between the ninth and the eleventh centuries, in Nīshāpūr, Fritz Meier, in his famous analysis, noted that the master who offered a religious education (*shaykh al-taʿlīm*) became a master who took charge of spiritual education (*shaykh al-tarbiya*); this education was also that of an interiorized *adab*. After Sarrāj, Qushayrī, then Hujwirī, it was the turn of Ghazālī to focus on maintaining the soul of Sufism all the while rendering it accessible to the majority of society. These norms that governed spiritual life as well as the smallest details

13 See also Toutant, "La réponse du poète chaghatay Nawāʾī."

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of material life, never replaced the more global notion of *adab*, a notion tied to *ẓarf* (refinement) in its spiritual sense as postulated by Junayd or Sarrāj. Florian Sobieroj, in his article on Qushayrī's collections of replies to different aspects of Sufism (*ʿUyūn al-ajwiba*), comes to a similar conclusion. In transmitting poetical verses on love, Qushayrī placed himself within a literary tradition, which he shared with past and contemporary *udabāʾ*. Being intimately familiar with the worldly *adab* culture allowed him to establish a profound dialogue between the *adab* of the Sufis and that of the "refined men" (*ẓurafāʾ*), whom he invited to take part in a shared ideal of spiritual elevation.

New forms of social organisation and the obvious success of Sufism determined the evolution of *adab.* During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the creation of Indian *jamāʿatkhāna*, Iranian *khānqāh*, Arabian *ribāṭ* and *zāwiya*, gave Sufis a social visibility. Daily life (table manners, distinctive garb), as well as collective ceremonies (*dhikr* and *samāʿ*), and retreats, had to be organized and regulated. Such institutions welcomed guests of all kinds: the poor, travellers, *jihād* fighters, the public of spiritual concerts. Recruitment was opened to a larger pool of sympathizers, who were more or less solidly linked to Sufis. As Lloyd Ridgeon points out, this explains the dispensations (*rukhṣa*) made available within the rules of Abū l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 546/1168) in his *Kitāb ādāb al-murīdīn.* Such dispensations can be compared to those obtained by Tertiaries in the Mendicant orders in Western Christendom during the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries. This evolution also explains the defence of a *futuwwat adab*, both legalist and courteous, by Abū Ḥafs ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234), Abū l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī's nephew, in the *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif.*

If we examine literature specifically dealing with Sufi *adab,* which began appearing in the tenth and eleventh centuries, we can see that in the beginning, in an anonymous text such as *Adab al-mulūk fī bayān ḥaqāʾiq al-taṣawwuf*, written around the end of the tenth centuries, the question of *adab* is still marginal. Soon however, important chapters and even entire tomes focused on the question: *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ fī-l-taṣawwuf* by Abū Nasr Sarrāj (d. 378/988) dedicates its entire seventh chapter to the *ādāb* of Sufi rituals, others to *samāʿ*, or to various uses, leaving little room for the *ādāb* of shaykhs and disciples. In Makkī's (d. 386/996) *Qūt al-qulūb, adab* still remains secondary, but there are important pages dedicated to spiritual direction.[14] On the other hand, Kharkūshī (d. 407/1016) in his *Tahdhīb al-asrār*, and especially Sulamī (d. 412/1021) reserve a central role in their work for the concept. For Sulamī, this went so far as to dedicating several different works. His *Jawāmiʿ ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* was certainly one of the first treatises written by a Sufi on the theme of *ādāb*, harmonised

14 Cf. Kebe, "La formation spirituelle du *murīd*."

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with the culture and the methodology of the traditionists. They insist on the importance of *futuwwa* and of the spiritual master in the acquisition of *adab*, on the model of the Prophet. At the start of the 5th/9th centuries, an anonymous Persian author dedicated a chapter to the subject of *adab al-nafs* in his *ʿIlm al-taṣawwuf*. In the *Kashf al-maḥjūb* by Hujwirī (d. roughly 465/1072), a number of anecdotes involve *adab*.

The *Risāla* by Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) definitively imposes *adab* in the technical terminology of the Sufis. The *Kitāb al-bayāḍ wa-l-sawād* by Sirjānī (d. 470/1077) is based on Sulamī and Sarrāj, whereas the *Salwat al-ʿārifīn wa-uns al-mushtāqīn* by Ṭabarī (d. roughly 470/1077) proves the importance of Sufi *adab* for an author who is not a Sufi master. Legal theorist and scholar, he compiled a Sufi anthology of which 2/3 are verbatim quotes of Kharkūshī and Qushayrī. This clearly demonstrates that he intended for this anthology, which he dedicated to someone close to Qushayrī, to fully belong to the tradition of *adab*. The *Ghunya* by ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166), treatises by Najm al-Dīn al-Kubrā (d. 617/1220), and the aforementioned *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* by Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234) round out an extremely rich literature centred on Sufi *adab* on the eve of the Mongol invasions. In a chapter of this volume, Erik Ohlander presents a little known manual of Sufi *adab* written by the son of Abū Ḥafṣ al-Suhrawardī, ʿImād al-Dīn (d. 655/1257), shaykh of a *ribāṭ* in Baghdad, which had been led by his famous father. The very banality of *Kitāb zād al-musāfir wa-adab al-ḥāḍir* is what makes it typical of a now widespread form of literature. ʿImād al-Dīn affirmed *adab* as a sign of identification to other groups that flourished at the time in the other *ribāt* in Baghdad.

The role and the meaning of *adab* in these various works are widely different. We must guard against essentializing Sufism during the classical era—roughly the pre-Mongol period. There is nothing univocal or simple. The persistence with which Sarrāj classified and distinguished between the *adab al-khāṣṣa* (the elite or the divinely elected, *ahl al-khuṣūṣiyya*, the Sufis), the social *adab,* and that of the religious (*ahl al-dīn*) is a clear, *a contrario* sign that definitions were not any simpler for the Sufis of the time than for modern day scholars. Certain correlated Sufi *adab* as corresponding to the necessity of Sufis to discipline their souls (*adab al-nafs*), seeing in *adab* a *sulūk* above all else, a path that, thanks to the *adab al-ṭarīq*, led to the accomplishment of initiatory goals, perhaps even illumination. However, the mystical experience was not always mentioned in these religious texts. Others viewed *adab* as a means to codify the relationship between master and disciple (*adab al-shaykh*) and to create rules for apprenticeships and community life (*adab al-ṣuḥba*). The term and especially the diffuse concept of *adab* quickly became preponderant in

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Sufism, in parallel to the act of qualifying itself with noble virtues (*al-ittiṣāf bi-makārim al-akhlāq*).

Such codification did interfere with the radicalism of the mystical experience. Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) insisted on the fact that knowing God could only come from God himself; not from scholarly efforts, only through mystical revelation. Paul Heck concludes his presentation of Ghazālī's system by arguing that this is the reason for the need for an *adab* and *akhlāq* that lead to humility. Pierre Lory, through his exploration of the "holy fool," highlights the possibility that perhaps the rules of *adab* allowed them to protect the "science of the hearts" against its own impracticality, of the mystical path against the vanity of one's own progress—when only divine grace can lead to illumination.

In hagiographic texts, the first tensions appear between an *adab* tied to rules and a discipline on the one hand and on the other, the aspirations suppressed by *adab*. In the *ʿUqalāʾ al-majānīn* by Nīsābūrī (d. 406/1015), the holy "fools" (*majānīn*) take over from the older *shaṭṭaḥūn* to denounce conventions that are too well established, or the illusion of meritorious acts (*adab*) that pretend they can offer man the possibility of experiencing God—despite the fact that it is always God who remains at the initiative of the irreducible mystical experience. Lloyd Ridgeon observes, on reading Hujwirī, the rise of tensions between the rules of the *jawānmardī* and the *futuwwat* (which became *adab*'s other name in the Iranian world during the eleventh century) and the transgressions of Malāmatism, and even those of the generous vagrant (*ʿayyār*). The very success of the Sufi *khānqāh* led all at once to the triumph of ever more technical rules (such as those established by Nasafī during the thirteenth century on how *khānqāh* and travellers lived) and the appearance of antinomic Sufis, the famous Qalandars, living alone or in eremitic retreats.[15] The Mongol invasions would give the errant Sufis an incredible boost.

After the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, the social and even ideological success of Sufism during the Mamluk and Ottoman period, or in the Mongol court, grew stronger throughout the Islamic world. It took advantage of interest by the rich and powerful, which led to a new form of Sufi *adab* linked to the development of brotherhoods and their highly relative structuring during the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. This all contributed to diversifying the abundant literature on Sufi *adab*. Within the Suhrawardiyya brotherhood, Eve Feuillebois demonstrates that in Iran at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the famous treatises written by Bākharzī (d. 736/1335–36) and Kāshānī (735/1356–7) differed in their choices despite a common foundation: Junayd's

15 Cf. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends*, and Papas, *Mystiques et vagabonds en islam*.

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famous eight rules. One chose to highlight retreat (the relatively recent practice of *khalwa*) while the other preferred apprenticeship (*ṣuḥba*) inspired by the Prophet.

For India, Mikko Viitamäki focuses on Chishtī literature from the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries concerning the *samāʿ*. *Adab* is the careful balance between rules and restrictions on the one hand and effusion and mystical ecstasy provoked by the *samāʿ* on the other hand. Discourse on *adab* deals with the description of mystical states. This leads to a paradox in that the rule is to authorize dancing only when it is involuntary, in an ecstatic state clearly provoked by music and poetry.

For the Arab world at the time, the most important synthesis of Sufi *adab* remains that of Shaʿrānī (d. 973/1565), especially his *Anwār al-qudsiyya fī maʿrifat qawāʿid al-ṣūfiyya.* Even while insisting on the ties between *adab* and religious concerns (*waraʿ*) in his hagiographic texts, he consecrates a large portion to the provocative *majādhīb*, characteristic of Sufism at the end of the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. Also at the end of the thirteenth century, following the Mongol invasions, Lloyd Ridgeon observes, further East, the proliferation of the "deviant dervishes" studied by Ahmet Karamustafa.

During the Mamluk and Ottoman periods (to the West) and the post-Mongol period (to the East), with the help of Sufism's social success, new *adab* rules appeared insisting on the habits, colours, banners, symbols, formulas, brotherhood memberships, and rules of sociability. Furthermore, the growing insistence on material culture was shared by the Qalandars. Each brotherhood thus adopted specific *adab* rules. The evolution was certainly partially linked to the constitution of States such as the Ottoman Empire, which used Sunni Sufism at the core of its renewed moral battle against the Shiites. It battled against the Safavid Shiites who were eliminating the Sufi brotherhoods in Iran despite the fact that their dynasty was issued from the latter. Lloyd Ridgeon suggests that the Sufi associations, such as the *futuwwat*, and their initiatory rites began taking refuge among professional corporations at this time. Certain movements migrated to Central Asia and to India, notably the Qalandars and the "without law" saints (*bi-sharʿ* in Persian; "without *adab*" would also be fitting).

Sufi *adab* triumphed in the Ottoman world. Fabio Alberto Ambrosio is referring to Anatolian Sufism of the seventeenth century when he states that this was "the *adab* century." Many authors were required to write a treatise on *adab* as it related to their brotherhood as well as to a particular aspect of Sufism. They were undoubtedly trying to counter the virulent critics of the Qādizādelis, who were all at once against the Sufis and at the heart of Sufism. Confronted with such threats, each brotherhood established a chart of its *ādāb*. *Adab* was

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reformulated during the massification of what has been called, probably too hastily, the eighteenth century's "neo-Sufism."[16] Sufi *adab* increasingly identified itself with a particular spiritual path or a brotherhood that published its own literature, its own corpus, and its own *adab*—sometimes exclusively as was the case of the Tījāniyya, here presented by Michele Petrone. Such "jealousy of the shaykh" was even a characteristic of the Tijāniyya's peculiar form of *adab*. The founder himself, Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1230/1814), is considered by all his followers as the only one who actually initiates new disciples and educates them. In the *Jawāhir al-Maʿānī*, the brotherhood's text of reference, the word *adab* was rarely used. The expression *makārim al-akhlāq* was preferred; humility (*tawāḍuʿ*), patience (*ṣabr*), and determination (*himma*) remained the classical virtues. Many gestural rules linked to the listening (*istimāʿ*) of texts (Quran, *ḥadīth*, master's speeches) round out the *adab* of modern day Tijānīs.[17]

It is commonly believed that for each of these historic stages, Sufi *adab* was a response to the "institutionalization of Sufism". Clearly, there was a need for *adab* and *ādāb*—rules—when there was something to pass on: material or immaterial goods, foundations, *waqf*s, buildings, books, *ijāzāt*, charisma. Yet, just as anachoretism continued to coexist with cenobitism, so also mystical/ascetic sodalities—even saints with no ties—defied the most established brotherhoods. Each and every time, debate over *adab* was renewed. This is what Lory, Ridgeon, and Ohlander highlight in their articles, each in his own fashion and with different corpora. Furthermore, the most ardent aspirations never disappeared from this far reaching social anchoring and these multiple rules. This is what Nelly Amri and Rachida Chih demonstrate in their respective articles, even though they focus on Sufi "manuals" that appeared in structured movements. "The Institutionalization of Sufism" is a practical if problematic expression that is issued, consciously or not, from Weberian sociology. Ingenuously pejorative, it postulates a form of degradation of the mysticism of origins in a sad reflection of material, social, and perhaps political contingencies. As Viitamäki remarks forcefully when discussing *samāʿ*, this presentation excessively opposes a theory (texts, a norm, an ideal) and a practice (a reality, an experience). This inevitably leads to an evolutionism that starts with the golden age and ends in decadence.[18] It does not allow us to grasp either the diversity of currents or the resurgence of non-institutionalized forms. It is a new version of a colonial viewpoint that overestimates the organization

16 See Chih and Mayeur-Jaouen, eds., *Le soufisme à l'époque ottomane, Sufism in the Ottoman Era*.

17 See also Seesemann, "A New Dawn for Sufism?"

18 Cf. Meier, "Sufik und Kulturzerfall". [”Soufisme et déclin culturel”].

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and structures of Sufism and its brotherhoods, by inversely underestimating the doctrinal circulations and the general fluidity of ideas. This does not even begin to approach the issue of social anchoring, which first appears in texts and archives. A thorough investigation of institutions and institutionalization requires more time spent studying the contemporary period than is at our disposal in this volume. Within the Ottoman Empire, in Egypt in the 19th and 20th centuries, throughout the colonial period, later in Pakistan and even modern day Morocco, the role of the State took on a considerable role. Despite it all, Sufi *adab* never disappeared in its classical sense; but rather took on different meanings in different contexts. Junayd's statements no longer carry the same meaning today as they did when they were first pronounced and handed down.

Rather than examining the institutionalization of Sufism, it would perhaps be of more interest to study the reasons behind its success, and thus the concomitant rise of Sufi *adab*. When the Caliphate disappeared in 656/1258, the Sufis acquired a political weight that was not limited to an imitation of allegories of power, an ancient theme. Denis Gril underlines in his contribution, that the *adab al-khidma* is a fundamental notion that explains the link between *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* and the *ādāb al-ṣalāṭīn*. The Sufi Saint took over from *Sirr al-asrār*'s Alexander and from the Mirror for Princes during the Abbassid period. In the absence of the Caliph, power went to the Sufis. With the Caliphate gone, the path was open for the issue of the "Saint-King" and the "King-Saint" analyzed by Alexandre Papas in his thesis on *khwājagān* naqshbandīs in Central Asia.[19] Luca Patrizi also explores a similar issue that has been thoroughly examined for Mamluk and Early Ottoman Egypt in the works of Jean-Claude Garcin and Éric Geoffroy.

In Morocco, Stefan Reichmuth indicates that the political and economic void left by the decadence of the Saadian monarchy in the seventeenth century allowed the Sufi dynasties of the Dilāʾiyya, in the Middle Atlas and the Nāṣiriyya in Tamgrout to the south, to establish solid kingdoms where *adab* flourished under its most literary of forms: a mixture of poetry, Arab lexicography, and religious sciences. The Sufi al-Yūsī (d. 1102/1691) combined literary and Sufi *adab* in a poem and its commentary in honour of his Sufi master, Muḥammad b. Nāṣir (d. 1085/1674). This long poem is fascinating in that it shows how the aspects of the heritage of Arab literature came together in praise of the shaykh. It also dispensed lessons that were scrupulously gathered together in Western Africa all the way to Ilorin in Nigeria in the middle of the twentieth century; going so far as to translating this writing into Yoruba. The *adab* of the cultivated, genteel man, ancient Arabic poetry, and Persian

19 Papas, *Soufisme et politique.*

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heritage were known by the ulemas in general and a large number of Shaykhs in particular, for they were also preoccupied with rhymes, metrics, and rare languages. As demonstrated by Thomas Bauer for the Mamluk period, it was often the same authors who wrote bacchic verse and *fiqh* treatises, poems on a young man's first beard and Sufi devotional treatises.[20]

Influenced by the Muslim reformism of the end of the nineteenth century and during the twentieth century, Sufi *adab* was reformulated to be increasingly compatible with the secularized demands of new knowledge and the puritan moral of the Reform. Zakī Mubārak's well known work, *al-Akhlāq ʿinda al-Ghazālī,* amply covers this period and this trend. Originally a thesis defended in 1924, it was later expanded and published under the title *al-Taṣawwuf al-islāmī fī-l-adab wa l-akhlāq*. It takes into account European Orientalism, especially that of Massignon. During the twentieth century, *adab* was increasingly identified with profane literature or merely good manners and thus slowly disappeared from religious texts, leaving way for *akhlāq*—the preferred subject of Salafists and the new Islamic preachers. However, the *ādāb*, spiritual decorum, retained a significant presence on the Internet and the websites of the major Sufi brotherhoods. The new editions in Tehran, Beirut or Cairo of major works on Sufi *adab* prove that there has been growing interest over the last 15 years.[21] We still need to examine *adab*'s place in a world where religious studies, which used to have the monopoly of teaching and of the legal system, are today reduced to a marginal role. For the past century, they have had to resort to other media. The implementation of Sufi *adab* by the shaykh and the brotherhood, by the *ḥaḍra* and the *dhikr*, has once again taken on a central role. Oral transmission once again plays an important role.

The Misleading Question of its Origins and Contributions; the Misleading Answer of Categories

If Sufism resides in *adab*, the historian is encouraged to examine the respective or common roots of *adab* and Sufism and to study their reciprocal influences and their divergences. When does *adab*, which accumulates so many influences and which continuously recomposes a culture in a common crucible, become truly Islamic? And even more so, truly Sufi?

20 Bauer, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität*.

21 See also Bilal Orfali's critical editions of several, previously unreleased, key Sufi texts, https://aub-lb.academia.edu/BilalOrfali.

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Tracing the origins of *adab* allows us to glimpse traces of the beginnings of Sufism. The Greek *paideia*'s wider influence on the creation of medieval Islam is well known. Anybody who has read Pierre Hadot, specialist of spiritual exercises in Greek paganism, can only be struck by the resonance between a movement so thoroughly agnostic and devoid of any transcendence such as that of the Stoicians or the Epicureans of ancient Greece, and the rules and morals of the Sufis.[22] We have seen that Greek philosophy inspired authors such as Miskawayh or Ghazālī. Thirty years ago, Peter Brown published an article that is still highly influential. In it, he explores the parallels between the Greek *paideia* and *adab.* The major difference between the two, he concluded, was the religious aspect that *adab* more or less consciously transmits.[23] During the Middle Ages, many values expressed in Arabic were—and were designed to be—the depositaries of an ancient and common past, the very basis of *adab*. The Syriac Christianities, which inherited the philosophy and morals of Ancient Greece, played an important role in its transmission and reinterpretation. Thus the famous *Sirr al-asrār* (*Secretum secretorum*) by Yuḥannā b. al-Biṭrīq (who died during the second half of the 8th century) suggests four occurrences for the term *adab*: punishment, education, knowledge, and—a fundamental point for all eras—table manners (*adab al-akl*). More than the term itself, it is the notion of *adab* that underpins the *Sirr al-asrār*, with Alexander as the prototypical sovereign who practices *adab*.

Beyond the Greeks, Iran—and further off India, the country of fables—is often presented as the birthplace of Islamic *adab*. Khaleghi-Motlagh, author of the entry for *adab* in the 1985 *Encyclopaedia iranica*, underlines in a rather nationalist manner that the Pahlavi *frahang*, and later the Persian *farhang*—Sassanid court culture—is the constitutive core of *adab*, which Islam merely modified slightly without changing its Persian essence.[24] In Persian sources, the term *adab* only begins to appear in 325/936. The Persian *mawālī,* such as Ibn al-Muqaffāʿ (d. after 139/756) author of *Kitāb al-Adab al-kabīr* and *Kitāb*

22 Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*.

23 Brown, "Late Antiquity and Islam: Parallels and Contrasts," 23–37. See also Jakub Sypianski's ongoing research, https://www.academia.edu/10085164/Paideia_and_adab._Models_of_education_and_knowledge_production_in_Byzantium_and_Islam_and_their_interaction.

24 The idea that there is a specific esoteric thread linked to a pre-Islamic Iranian identity, beyond empires and eras, and which had little contact with other esoterisms, can be found here and there in texts of Iranian Sufism, according to Milani, *Sufism in the Secret History of Persia*.

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al-Adab al-ṣaghīr,[25] were most probably trying to find an equivalent to the notions of *farhang* and *āyīn.* Ibn al-Muqaffāʿ's short texts constituted counsel and advice for princes and high ranking administrative officers. They contained very few explicit references to Islam.[26]

Thus, is *adab* a Greek or Persian creation? Arab or Arab speaking authors categorically draw *adab* to their camp thanks to the study of pre-Islamic Arabic *adab,* of its poetry and its ethos. This process sometimes condemns the *adab* of the Islamic era as nothing more than a reformulation of "eternal" Arab values with a thin Islamic veneer and enhanced with a few Persian embellishments, such as chivalresque courage filled with abnegation (*futuwwa*, which is the equivalent of the Persian *jawānmardī*), the virile value linked to kings and lords (*muruwwa* or *murūʾa*), honour and patience (*ṣabr*), and finally *ḥilm*, the forbearance considered by ancient Arabs as a cardinal virtue. These are all traits that are durably constitutive of *adab* and to which the Sufis conferred an important role.

From such a position, it is easy to transform medieval *adab* literature into the secular, worldly, even "*nettement profane* (clearly profane)" (Charles Pellat) core of Islamic culture. Many specialists of Arab literature have done so confidently in a pedagogical desire to classify and define. Such historiographic tendencies have prevailed but they hold little interest for the historian. They assume that there is on the one hand a teleological genealogy (according to which there is indeed an origin, then legacies, which end with a known and simple result), and on the other hand a dichotomy (equally "eternal") between the sacred and the profane, the religious and the secular. The genealogy is the result of a pedagogical reconstruction, carried out after the fact, starting with a *terminus ad quem*. The dichotomy is modern. It comes from a secularized vision of knowledge and religion rooted in the christianism of the modern era (16th–18th centuries) and the social sciences constituted during the second half of the nineteenth century. A close examination would effortlessly prove the considerable role played by Orientalists in establishing such differentiations among Muslims, based on indisputable sources and classifications to separate in Islam the wheat from the chaff, paganism from monotheism, superstition from dogma. Such divisions, which came to light with the history of religions as it was practiced around 1880, have multiplied because they coincide with the puritan tendencies that were indeed at work in Islam at the time. These tendencies were first expressed with the Qādizādeli during

25 Cf. Kristó-Nagy, "On the authenticity of *al-Adab al-ṣaġīr* attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ," 199–217.

26 Kristó-Nagy, *La pensée d'ibn al-Muqaffaʿ*.

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the seventeenth century, inspired by Birgīvī's *Ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya*, enemy of all esoterisms. Then came the rejection and even anathema (*takfīr*) of Sunni Islam by all Wahhabī groups during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Finally, Muslim reformism, born at the end of the nineteenth century and today followed by various Islamist or Jihadist groups that are sometimes radically opposed to it, has its own hazy classification, which is widespread but with little consideration for history.

The dichotomy between the profane and the religious tells us little about *adab* and Sufism during previous centuries. This culture of differentiation is not that of the world of *adab*, whose goal is to englobe and to connect. It is also however, naturally dual, even plural. It is the "culture of ambiguity" celebrated by Thomas Bauer when he adapted the "culture de l'ambivalence"—certainly a more adequate term—studied previously by Jacques Berque and Jean-Paul Charnay.[27] An overly radical distinction between genres that are indeed different, an abrupt separation between tendencies that are indeed varied is no more sensible for classical Islam than it is for Christianity or Judaism during the medieval or early modern eras. This does not mean that ambivalence signifies that everything is religious, that everything is Islamic—which would create the same underlying dichotomy by eradicating the "profane", the "secular", the "non-religious". We will also do away with what is generally the most common Islamic vision: placing a thick layer of normative and univocal Islam over the shimmering pluralism of historical, social, cultural, and religious realities. *Adab* is neither the lay or slightly Islamized virtualization of an underlying "Arabity" or "Iranity", nor is it another term for the Prophet's *Sunna* and Islamic law, even if they are closely linked by many authors. Neither is it radically "other", since it is vigorously inspired by sources that in reality were not unalterable categories. The inevitable study of these "contributions" should put less emphasis on the components than on the links, what *adab* truly is at a given moment, in a given context, in a particular society, in a specific work. Too many publications have either scrupulously presented a version expunged of anything within the Arab culture that might resemble Islam, or they have evinced from the texts, which are indeed normative, any allusion to a more complex and colourful world. Islam is an integral and normal part of *adab,* on the one hand, and culture should be neither overpowered nor obsessed by religion, on the other hand.

Finally, it is important to use other sources to study the milieus in which *adab* was created. Regardless of their formulations, the Sufis and the ulemas

27 Charnay, *L'ambivalence dans la culture arabe*; Berque and Charnay, *Normes et valeurs dans l'islam contemporain*; Bauer, *Die Kultur des Ambiguität*.

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navigated within the same circles as the *kuttāb* and the *ḥukamāʾ*. This was the key hypothesis in Fritz Meier's 1957 article.[28] Far from writing with nostalgia about a "worldly" *adab* carefully protected from the suffocating religious norms advocated by the ulemas, or inversely applauding with application an Islamic *adab* that influenced all of medieval culture, recent historiographic tendencies have insisted on demonstrating that classical *adab* was of course a whole—a coherent culture—that precisely yet subtlely maintained a religious and spiritual dimension, but which never stopped discussing erotology, wine, smooth-faced cupbearers. The wine-obsessed libertine does not belong to another culture than the puritan *ʿālim*. He merely makes different choices. A Sufi, such as Abū Saʿīd, who preached by quoting poetry and hosting banquets where the young danced and played music, probably elicited consternation and even condemnation. This undoubtedly resulted in Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) and Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) avoiding any mention of him in their hagiographic texts. However, as demonstrated by Ahmet Karamustafa with a finesse that can only be rivalled by that of his subject, Abū Saʿīd was not any less representative of Nīshāpūr's cultivated, urban society, the same as that of Qushayrī. Abū Saʿīd enjoyed playing with social conventions (*adab*) with humour, knowing that he had to distance himself from them without however destroying them, to respect the *sharīʿa* and still constantly evolve with finesse, educating his disciples through allusions rather than through direct confrontation. He was the first to compile a set of life rules (*ādāb*) for his disciples. This supreme *adab* would later be heralded and defended by the Qalandars, in various ways, or by the *bi-sharʿ*, the shocking saints of India.

Other genealogical temptations exist. From the start, in a *Spätantike* that more and more scholars are examining today, Islam and soon Sufi *adab* clearly borrowed from the region's religious cultures, including paganism. It is of common knowledge that Judaism considerably influenced many ritual traits of Islam, reconceived in a purely Islamic synthesis. Christianism dominated in Syria and Egypt until the eleventh century—and continued in the countryside to be a dominant religion until roughly the fourteenth century. Christian scholars played a decisive role in the constitution of Arab and Islamic cultures. Furthermore, it has been proven that Muslims often visited Christian convents, during major feasts or holy days, and that Muslim scholars were interested in knowledge (philosophy and medicine), which originated in Greece and was transmitted by the Syriacs. The first hints of what we call Sufism appeared in the southern regions of Mesopotamia, around Basra during the eighth century and began to spread towards Persia, Central Asia, Syria, and

28 Meier, "Ein Knigge für Sufis"; translated into English: "A Book of Etiquette for Sufis."

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Asia Minor,[29] roughly the zone where Syriac monasticism developed during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, thanks to the unprecedented development of mystical and ascetic literature.[30] A reciprocal interest seems to have appeared at this point between ascetics, which can be seen in surprising correlations between Sufi anecdotes and the apophtegms of the Fathers.[31] As for Egypt, Maria Chiara Giorda presents in this volume the rules of confession and penitence of a Coptic monasticism as practiced according to Pacomian rules, based on the solitary meditation (*ruminatio*) of sacred texts. The texts were wide ranging (Giorda wonders if each monastery had its own rules) and would be familiar to specialists of Sufi *adab*, perhaps due to a common, ancient heritage. There was also the role of the spiritual father, then of the abbot—who based his authority first on oral and then written rules— reminiscent of the role of the shaykh. This regulatory process became ever more closely linked to ecclesiastic institutions, notably with Shenoute, at the White Monastery (near modern day Sohag) during the fifth century.

We are not talking here about influences due, rather mechanically, to the anteriority of Judaism and Christianity over Islam—which the term "origins" tends to imply only too well. Once the Islamic world was constituted and Islamization well under way, we can observe a reciprocal interest for Sufi *adab* by representatives from the other two monotheisms. This interest probably lies in the fact that it would have appeared quite close to their own culture, except for the Islamic prophetology, whereas *adab*, as a general culture, was widespread in the social rules of the non-Muslims living in Islamic territories. For example, the Jewish pietism in Egypt at the end of the twelfth and during the thirteenth centuries is explicitly inspired by Sufi *adab*, by its devotional language, and certain practices, as by its system of initiation and obedience (*khidma*) to the master. The biblical precedent of the "disciples of the prophets" and the Messianic hope of restoring the prophecy allowed some Egyptian Jews to welcome with interest, and cautious prudence, the example of contemporary Sufis. This is at the heart of Nathan Hofer's contribution and Elisha Russ-Fishbane's contribution. During the fourteenth century, a Sufi such as Bākharzī, discussed in a further chapter by Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek, extends the field

29 Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism*.

30 Jullien, *Le monachisme syriaque*; Desreumaux, *Les mystiques*.

31 Here, we sum up the ideas presented by Sabino Chialà during the 2012 conference. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as others saw it*; Chialà, "Les mystiques musulmans"; Greppi, "La spiritualità del cuore nella tradizione cristiana siriaca e nella mistica musulmana"; Blum, *Die Geschichte der Begegnung christlich-orientalischer Mystik*; Teule, "Al-Ghazali et Bar ʿEbroyo. Spiritualités comparées."

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of exchanges, comparisons, and competition beyond the three Abrahamic monotheisms. Writing in Iran, Bākharzī recognized that techniques and even events (certain wonders) could be common to Sufis, Brahmans, Yogis, and even monks; but he carefully placed Muslims apart, as being the only ones able to know true spiritual experiences.

Analyzing different exegeses of Q 57:27, Samuela Pagani considers Islamic reflections upon the "invention" of monasticism (*rahbāniyya*). From one side, these exegeses cover the theological debate on the creation of human acts, and from another perspective, they deal with a variety of legal interpretations in which the problem of monasticism is taken in consideration in order to rethink the relationship between divine Law and Islamic Law. Monasticism here, serves as a "double" for Sufism. Poets and Sufi hagiographers drew upon this correspondence, and it has also been exploited by anti-Sufi polemists. Interpretations may differ: either monasticism is viewed as the paradigm of the dissociation between piety and power, or some "morphological affinities" (Fritz Meier) are underlined between *ādāb ṣūfiyya* and monastical rules. Or, again the universal ethical dimension of the *rahbāniyya* may be in some interpretations highlighted, or, on the contrary, its specific relationships with Christianity are examined. These reflections grant the *rahbāniyya* an alternating positive and negative dimension. Does it represent the continuity between Jesus' religion (*dīn ʿĪsā*) and Islam, or rather a form of asceticism that Islam could in some cases include in an encompassing sapiental approach, and could in other cases reject, as the expression of an excess? Ibn ʿArabī's ethical approach is criticized by Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyya, who uses Q 57:27 both in his anti-Christian polemic and his intra-Islamic polemic. Finally, as underlined by Samuela Pagani, the exemplarity of monasticism and of its rules in comparison with Islam has always been evoked in Islamic history: it implies strongly different visions of Islamic ethics.

Beyond the most technical expressions, the *adab* practiced during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period is a culture widely shared by Muslims and non-Muslims: love for poetry and music, values shared by the well-bred, a regard for refinement (*ẓarf*). Viitamäki reminds us that the *samāʿ*, for the first Chishtīs, consisted above all else in listening to sung poetry whose text more than the melody induced mystic states. The *samāʿ* was not the exclusive domain of the Sufis or of Muslims. It was how the public used the musical recital and their motivation (*himma*) that transformed the performance into a Sufi practice. *Adab* became a criterion for the authenticity of mystical states.

As for manners, rules of civility, and even sociability, they were generally shared by all of society, independently of religious norms, which are often purported to have founded such codes. In the Ottoman Empire, as in today's

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Middle East, Christians and Muslims did not produce different educative and cultural norms. “Good manners” for everyone conformed to very similar criteria, where each believed in the beneficial imprint of his own religion but in harmony with the world in order to be fully human, *ein Mensch zu sein*. As noted by Barbara Metcalf concerning India in the nineteenth century, it was times of crises (economic, political, or social) that brought *adab* to more strictly confessional definitions. At different periods and in different places, however, we can find the same sharing of social and cultural norms, a common social ethic, the same education that is in harmony of the constitutive values of human beings.

This harmony went so far as to constitute a certain form of similar thought. The Maronite *Kitāb al-Hudā* of the eleventh century, an Arabic translation from the original Syriac that compiled liturgical text, rules, norms, and short theological treatises; the famous *Bustān al-ruhbān,* a hagiographic text, still read today in Coptic convents; devotional texts of the Syrian-Lebanese Catholics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—even though they were adapted from Catholic literature of the Counter-Reform; all of these texts used a vocabulary, even a structure, that was highly reminiscent of texts on Sufi *adab*.[32] Neither Oriental Christianity, in its mysticism and devotional writings, nor Jewish pietism in its appropriation of Sufi customs blindly reproduced Sufi *ādāb*. Elisha Russ-Fishbane insists on this point, the Jewish Pietists in Egypt only adopted from Sufism what they judged to be compatible with the original prophetic model of Israel. Subject to the opprobrium of a good portion of the Jewish community of the time, they needed to adopt a dissimulation (*kitmān*) that did not allow for an organizational development—not even *ādāb*. Without institutions similar to the Sufi *zāwiya* or *ribāṭ*, they did not leave any texts comparable to the manuals on Sufi *adab.* For Christians, though the Arabic translations of treatises on Catholic piety from the Counter-Reform, similar to that of Ignatius of Loyola’s *Exercises,* allowed cultivated Arab Christians to find clear similarities with Sufi (and non Sufi) *adab*, the translators manifestly sought to forge a vocabulary specific to an Oriental Christianity and to its spiritual path.[33] The key element that indicates the limits of these exchanges were the Sufi rites of *dhikr* and *samāʿ*. They do not seem to have exact equivalents in Jewish Pietism nor in Oriental Christianity, which focused on mass and its liturgy. The sole exception is the repeated prayer called hesychasm.

The jaculatory oration of the *dhikr* has actually been compared to the repeated hesychastic prayers, the “prayer of the heart” or the “Jesus prayer”, that flourished in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria at the beginning of Christianity before

32 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*.

33 Habib, « *La perfection chrétienne* » *chez Jibrâʾîl Farhât, moine libanais et archevêque maronite d’Alep*.

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appearing again in the declining Byzantine empire of the fourteenth century. It became the official doctrine of the Orthodox Church in 1351. Hesychasm is a spiritual attitude that draws its name from the Greek *hesychia*, tranquility. It is accompanied by a search for *nepsis* (sobriety), which implies a strict corporal asceticism, a rigorous moral life, the mastery of one's thoughts, even good ones. All of this is inseparable from the sacraments and requires the indispensable help of a spiritual guide. The Jesus prayer or the prayer of the heart is the core of Hesychasm. It is a monological prayer, the repetition of a simple sentence with a maximum of attention ("Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have pity on us"). Sometimes the prayer is reduced to only the name of Jesus. The final state is that of pure prayer that excludes all images and concepts.

This practice, attested as early as the fourth century amongst the hermits in Egypt and Syria-Palestine, spread later with the help of the development of corporal techniques: respiratory rhythms and their coordination with prayers, the "descent" of thoughts into the heart, specific postures. The main theologian was Gregory Palamas who during the fourteenth century defined the sought after goal: the deification of man through the participation of divine energies, which as opposed to a divine essence, are communicable because such participation is an utterly free gift of grace in answer to human efforts. It would thus appear that if the practice of monological prayer predates Islam, its theorization and the addition of physical techniques appeared much later—with the flourishing of Sufism. Though Hesychasm continued to exist in Orthodox convents after the Ottoman conquests as well as in Russia, it corresponds to an anachoretic movement rather than to constituted groups and did not give rise to spiritual concerts analogous to *samāʿ*.[34]

In conclusion to these methodological questions, *adab* is neither the stratigraphy of "contributions" patiently cumulated, layer after layer; nor the compilation of practical categories; nor is it a linear account that leads from the origins to current interpretations. Rather, it is an ongoing crucible, a "hybridization"—to use a term that has been used excessively in recent years—of encounters and patient effort to continuously create something new. Nothing exists at a chemically pure state in these famous "contributions" that constitute *adab*. Our study of the Islamic culture can only concur with Florence Dupont's brilliant analysis concerning the constitution of Roman and Latin culture, inspired by historical anthropology.[35] The most recent scholarship on literary creations, which exemplify *adab*, such as sapiential literature or the

34 Congourdeau, "Hésychasme."

35 Much insight can be gained by reading Florence Dupont, *L'Invention de la littérature* and *Rome la ville sans origine*, that analyses the notion of citizenship in Ancient Rome with a re-reading of the Aeneid.

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Mirrors for Princes, does not look to untangle their obscure origins (a task that remains impossible) or to establish their similarities (always fascinating), but rather it examines the encounters, day after day, text after text and beyond the texts themselves, of an *adab* that was experienced daily, of literature and ethics, of Islamic habitus and non-Islamic cultures, of the Law and the rejection of the Law. For Sufism, as for *adab*, it is important to write a history that renounces genealogical temptation, banal historicism, cautiously compartmentalized descriptions. Instead, we are confronted with currents, eras, social milieus, breaks, continuities, mutations but also the resurgence of ancient formulas in new contexts or on the contrary, new formulas for ancient practices, texts that never stopped being read and were learned once again, experienced again and differently. They have been recomposed and reconfigured in each culture every time an (always partial) Arabization and Islamization took place. New influences were incorporated and appropriated in a solid recreation of local and cultural values, which Islam never took long to influence forcefully yet progressively.

Adab has always been tied to urban centres, in multilingual and multicultural circles and remains so today. Certain milieus and certain moments more readily favoured a specifically *adab* form of intermingling. This is the case of Andalusia, where ʿAbd Rabbih's (d. 328/940) *ʿIqd al-farīd* juxtaposed the Mirror for Princes and *adab* in two successive chapters. There was also Java in the seventeenth century when Raniri translated into Malaysian the Arabic text on *adab* as an answer to the recent and partial Islamization of the island.[36] There was equally Nigeria, with the translation in Yoruba of al-Yūsī. *Adab* as a crucible is not reserved to the beginnings of Islam. Its origins are continuously renewed in different configurations; but it designates each time and at every step, the quality of the soul, good manners, courtesy, and urbanity.

In the end, the specificity of a uniquely Islamic *adab* lies in its relationship to religion and to the Law, which many authors have underlined. For an author such as Makkī (d. 386/996), *adab* is tied to *fiqh*—hence it is a question of comprehension. The current represented by the Suhrawardī, studied by Erik Ohlander, sees in the science of Sufism a body of knowledge and a praxis that unites, using a mystical path (*ṭarīqa*), Islamic Law (*sharīʿa*) and the interior truth of reality (*ḥaqīqa*). *Adab* as practiced under the direction of masters allows us, at each moment of the Path, to unite exterior and interior realities, as highlighted by Annabel Keeler in her analysis of Tustarī. Most authors, comments Denis Gril in his study of Ibn ʿArabī, consider Sufi *adab* to be an all-encompassing synthesis since it calls upon both knowledge and action.

36 Wormser, *Le* Bustan al-Salatin.

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It directs the faithful in principle in all acts of daily life, "which leads him from his condition of simple faithful to the highest degrees of spiritual realization," as announced by Ibn ᶜArabī. This desire for synthesis resurfaces later within structured brotherhoods, as established by Alexandre Papas concerning the Naqshbandī Shaykh, Ahmad Kāsānī Dahbidī (d. 949/1542), author of two treatises on *adab*.[37] The Sufi order (*ṭāʾifa* or *ṭarīqa*) undoubtedly reflects a specific social milieu, which conforms to the rules of *ṣuḥba* and *khidma*. However, the importance of the Law and its observance unites rituals and spiritual paths whose highest aspirations are never forgotten.

Sufism is thus linked to the Law: *adab, sharīʿa, ṭarīqa*. Here again, *adab*'s subtle capacity to play with transgression eludes hasty categorization. This is what both Ahmet Karamustafa and Pierre Lory demonstrate for Sufi *adab* in their respective articles. *Adab* can also be learned through non-*adab*, by counter-example. In every language of the Middle East, there exists the terrible insult "without *adab*" (in Arabic: *qalīl al-adab*; in Persian: *bī-adab*; in Turkish: *adabsız* or *edepsiz*). It is always violently received because it calls into question the very value of the incriminated person. The famous aphorism attributed to Luqmān, the Persian sage, states: "I learned *adab* from those without *adab*. Everything they did that did not please me, I did my best to never do." A Turkish author quips that without *adab*, we resemble donkeys ... What does lacking *adab* really mean? When *adab* is at the point of becoming unbearably constraining due to social conventions, it is the moment for the Holy Fool, for the Qalandar, for the *majdhūb*—as had the Byzantine *salos*—to call into question the conventional *adab* of rules, of norms, of brotherhoods. It is at this moment that they must remind society of the true demands of interior *adab*. Less shocking, the *malāmatī* buried beneath the obscure mediocrity of daily life and for which the Law is sufficient *adab*, can thwart supererogatory exercises and spectacular piety. Finally comes the moment to abandon *adab* (*tark al-adab*) when, between *adab* people, love is so true and comprehension so complete that we can abandon the norms of *adab* (*shurūṭ al-adab*).

To end, let us come back to the crucible. *Adab* is not a stable entity, handed down from generation to generation. Rather, it is a configuration and a constellation that is constantly shifting according to the moment and the place, which are not simply decorative contexts. Stephan Guth clearly reminds us of this in his work, previously cited.

37 Papas, "No Sufism without Sufi Order."

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Configuring an Indivisible Concept—How to Approach Sufi *adab*?

New definitions of *adab* and more marked dissociations appear at certain periods, those that establish a new relationship to politics. We have already discussed the fall of the Caliphate in 1258 and the Mongol invasions in general. The Mameluk period witnessed the creation of a new world, where recapitulative and encyclopaedic texts emerged. During the Ottoman era, a new configuration of *adab* was underway. During the Ottoman seventeenth century, the Arab scholar, the *adīb*, was not necessarily a Sufi. However, at times he found in Sufism a culture that allowed him to cultivate his melancholy and reject a deceptive world (*al-dahr*). Ralf Elger's precedent scholarship has already mentioned that according to Muḥibbī and Murādī's biographical anthologies, the *adīb* in Ottoman Syria, gripped by melancholy, was indeed not a Sufi but rather an eccentric poet, who cared little for Islamic sciences. Ṭāhā al-Kurdī (1723–1800), presented in this volume by Ralf Elger, is indeed *adīb* and Sufi. In his autobiography, his tone and voice are singular as befitting a man of letters looking to express himself and to be read, rather than a Sufi steeped in the *adab* of brotherhoods of his time and in effacement. Like Nābulusī, he sings about gardens, springtime, friendship, and music. This combination of Sufi *adab* and literary *adab* was no longer frequent among his contemporaries. The tension between Sufi *adab* and literary *adab* grew stronger during the Ottoman period. Fabio Alberto Ambrosio discerns a decisive distinction between *edeb* (that which allows us to reach God) and *adab* (education, literature) in Anatolia during the seventeenth century. This famous dichotomy that Orientalists believed appeared during the Middle Ages actually appears during the Early Modern period.

Sufi *adīb* remains faithful to the general culture of the honest man, such as al-Yūsī or Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, faithful to the Islamic sciences of the past that he attempts to reinvigorate (genealogy, *ḥadīth*) and attentive to the prophetic model, as well as to a keen culture of friendship. For everyone, and at all periods, the importance of literature is cardinal. It is most especially poetry that is a part of *adab*. It teaches *adab*; it conveys *adab*, as does al-Yūsī's panegyric text or the poems in Ḥalawānī's anthology. It is poetry that best depicts the configurations of the soul and the mind, of politics too, which is outlined by *adab*. For the Sufis and the others, *adab* and its poetry are often associated with the idea of meeting, of sitting rooms (*majlis*), of shared meals, of friendship. At different periods and in different ways, it is the company of others, the exchange of ideas and knowledge, the pleasure of socializing that forges and refines *adab*. Ghazālī dedicates a chapter to friendship, to companionship, to intimate relations, to all spiritual fraternities whose members are united by

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love in God (*al-ḥubb fī Allāh*). This explains the importance of Sufi meetings and of the *majālis al-dhikr* whose authors give us the rules of usage, which are precisely *adab*. It is clear that these usages and a love for poetry differ depending on the regions and the Sufis—including within a same period. During the nineteenth century, for someone such as Māʾ al-ʿAynayn (d. 1910) for whom *adab* encompassed the equestrian arts, poetry, magic, and Sufism,[38] how many shaykhs refused "profane" poetry, considering it useless!

A fracture, which stopped short of a schism, appeared within these successive configurations. Towards 1900, notably in the writings of Jurjī Zaydān (d. 1914), the term *adab* or *ādāb* began to designate an entire body of literature, not just Arabic literature. It restrictively re-appropriated the more general meaning of belles-lettres that had prevailed until then. In the Arab world of the nineteenth century, as in Japan during the Meiji era, the idea of a national literature was just emerging. It coincided with reforms and the imminent end of the Ottoman Empire, ultimately with modernity and the appearance of new literary forms: the novel and the play. Identical phenomena took place in Turkey starting in the 1850s–1860s, and in Iran a little later. Nallino (1872–1938) remarked that he saw the term *adab* begin to designate literature in general, whereas in his youth, it specifically meant Arabic literature.[39] Such a phenomenon corresponds to the sudden arrival of modernity, with its categories, in the lives of Arab authors of the time. In 1949, the Egyptian author, Ḥalawānī, identified *adab* with literature in the strictest sense; whereas, several decades before, his grandfather who was a Sufi shaykh (d. 1891), wrote *adab* literature in the traditional sense: poetry, pleasant anecdotes, and *varia* for moral and ethical purposes in which the Sunna was never forgotten. The new *adīb*, finally secularized, distanced himself from the Sufis. Ṭahā Ḥusayn's novel, *Adīb*, published in 1934, evokes a character similar to that of Chekhov's Ivanov, prey to an existential ennui in a disenchanted world, someone very similar to Ḥalawānī himself, who describes his depressive states with ease.[40] In his 1949 anthology, Ḥalawānī attempted to define a new Sufi *adab*: a literature for the Sufis alone, a devotional literature in honour of the Prophet. Ḥalawānī, torn between his literary tastes and his Sufi heritage, manifestly saw hope in maintaining Sufi *adab* in its most traditional sense. His close friend, the blind cantor who improvised poems in honour of the Prophet, was both the illustration and the voice of this

38 Patrizi, "Transmission and Resistance in 19th Century Maghreb: *Naʿt al-bidāyāt wa-tawṣīf al-nihāyāt* by Māʾ al-ʿAynayn (d. 1910)."

39 Bonebakker, "Early Arabic Literature and the term *adab*," 390.

40 The book, published in Arabic in 1934, was translated into French by Taha Husayn's son: *Adib ou l'aventure occidentale* (*Adib*).

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Sufi *adab,* preserved thanks to his poetic improvisation that echoed the most ancient values of the word in Arabic.

When so many kaleidoscopic configurations exist, each defining in reality *adab*, how can we approach Sufi *adab*? Depending on the texts and the authors, sometimes within a single text, there are various possible fields. Specifically Sufi practices such as the *dhikr*, the *khalwa*, the *samāʿ*, initiation, etc. give rise to constantly reformulated definitions and rules, which need to be read and reread before an analysis is possible. It can sometimes be difficult, when the issue is fasting or prayer, to isolate what is specifically Sufi in a Sunna that is studiously applied. As for daily life, *adab* offers a difficult balance between a certain form of asceticism or discipline and the elementary needs of man (food, sleep, clothing, physical intimacy). In both cases, whether it is spiritual life and Sufi practices or daily life, *adab* is concerned with self control, the mastery of one's body and carnal soul (*nafs*), in a tonality that remains faithful to a prophetic model and that establishes itself as an example to all Muslims. The social historian is more apt to be interested in brotherhoods, power, rules for community living that allow pious Sufis to inform their relationship with their masters, their disciples, and their companions, especially when they live in communities within a *khānqāh* or a *zāwiya*. The *ādāb*, after all, are social practices. The relationships between the Sufi and the Prince have given rise to various interpretations of *adab* and its political usage. Finally, the antinomianism of certain Sufi groups, such as the Qalandars or the corporations in the Turkish-Persian world, allows us to diversify and nuance analyses that are often as all-encompassing as *adab* itself.

There are two main methods to approach Sufi *adab*: textual history and anthropology. Textual history is inscribed within the field of the history of texts (establishing a text, a critical edition) or within literature. In both cases, an ocean of texts exist. *Adab* often appears in texts that are not explicitly dedicated to the subject. It is implicit in spiritual autobiographies such as Shaʿrānī's *Laṭāʾif al-minan*, in hagiographies, or short devotional texts for daily use, which present the Sunna to disciples. Sufi *adab* is also present in places from where it seems to have disappeared, for example in Salafi or even contemporary Wahhabi texts, which are obsessed with the question of the *akhlāq*, of decorum, manners, and spiritual propriety. The goal is most probably not the same; it is more a question of appearance than of interior *adab*, more a question of Law rather than a union with God (or the Prophet)… Here there is neither humour, nor paradox, nor subtle allusions; rather is it the meticulous application of reassuring rules that do not require any mystical experience. Not everything though has disappeared from the profound demands of Sufi *adab*. Techniques and uses, certain goals that are either veiled or unexpressed, are

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strikingly similar. Textual history always ends with the question of the application of texts, their use, and their comprehension. Any answer begins with the requirement of not only approaching the periodization, but also of closely studying local contexts, by comparing sources and by leaving behind, when possible, the fascinating and repetitive self sufficiency of Sufi texts.

At first glance, it appears easy to apply anthropology to Sufi *adab*. We need only describe a *dhikr*, community life, the relationships between masters and disciples, a transmission, or to record a ritual, to film a ceremony. Ethnomusicologists have their work cut out for them! Entire portions of Sufi *adab* do not or just barely appear in texts—especially when the practitioners neither read nor write. It is thanks to Russian anthropologists that we know (a little) about the customs of Central Asian Qalandars or the Naqshbandī Sufis. However, certain anthropologists, who leave the texts aside, have not always recognized *adab*, despite the fact that they describe it. They have sometimes excessively underlined the singularity or strangeness of non-Islamic practices, which were already mentioned in medieval texts. However, it is the anthropologist's vision that is needed for these ancient texts that have been polished by the centuries and by a myriad of conceptions.

Ideally, we should bring together both textual history and anthropology, two approaches that are not mutually exclusive. Sufi *adab*, regardless of the period and the type of sources, is in reality a wonderful subject for religious anthropology. Studying a source and comparing it to fieldwork is possible as seen in Rachida Chih's work on Khalwatiyya in contemporary Upper Egypt. There is also Renaud Soler's analysis—still in Upper Egypt—of the text by ʿAbd al-Ḥāfiz ʿAlī (d. 1886) piously conserved by his brotherhood. The *Hidāyat al-rāghibīn,* written in 1849 with the help of Khānī and Dardīr, copiously quoted, became fields of study recreated and nourished by the customs and beliefs of today's Sufis. Far beyond the traditional demonstration of the gap between norms and practices, we can approach an analysis of the incorporation of texts and their roots in society, within a brotherhood and in a given territory.

Still other methods can be applied depending on historiographic trends that allow us, to incessantly ask new questions of corpora that are already well known. The history of the publication and republication of texts would be most useful. Who published texts on Sufi *adab*? How? When? The history of emotions, the way in which they are expressed and controlled, is perfectly adapted to the study of Sufi *adab*. It is with a scrupulous sense of historical anthropology that Viitamäki's article examines the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Chishtīs. His work is informed by contemporary fieldwork all the while ensuring that the realities of today's *qawwālī* are not projected onto a medieval past. Attentive to poetry and music, he prefers to focus on the Chishtīs'

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actual practice of *samāʿ*, rather than on a theory that could too easily fall prey to false coherence. A history of the body and of corporal techniques would also be of use. How do we learn with Sufi *adab*, to live in the most concrete details, without losing sight of the most spiritual aspirations? Without falling into the trap of gender studies, it is important to note that this current volume was mainly written by men (18 out of 25 authors, a fairly accurate reflection of today's scholarly panorama) on books that were written by men, for men. A new reading of the texts is needed, with a preference for hagiographies over *adab* manuals, to discern the presence of women among the Sufis. There is much work to be done and it is one of the fields in which only anthropology can describe a Sufi *adab* for women. It could also suggest the existence in past centuries of women in the Sufi universe. A study carried out amongst the old Algerian *faqīrāt* of the district of Mostaganem may reveal (as other ritual practices may suggest) that the Shaykh al-ʿAlawī (d. 1934) transferred an entire oral teaching in dialect to his niece, whom he had trained in spiritual direction. She seems to have handed down "feminine forms" of specific codes, some of which were exported into Syria by Muḥammad al-Hāshimī (d. 1961).

Whichever theme and method chosen, we are quickly confronted with the inevitable pitfalls: either the folklorization—an ethnographic peril—of rituals that are enumerated, described in detail, losing in the process their meaning; or on the contrary the sacralization of texts isolated from their social contexts or of customs that are not necessarily specifically Sufi. There is always the danger of categorization that we have already denounced ... These are tensions that textual historians know only too well. In the end, the texts we use must be read differently to avoid past mistakes, a challenge the authors of this volume have taken on.

The Historiography of Sufi *adab*: Six Decades of Research

The historiography of Sufi *adab* has until now illustrated the methods discussed above—urgency has led to a preference for the history of texts and their publication. Here, we will outline in broad strokes six decades of scholarship. Sufi *adab*, specifically, and particularly its rules (*ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*), has attracted attention relatively recently. Specialists were first drawn to doctrinal literature, deemed more interesting from a speculative point of view. It is striking that no mention of the literature of the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* was mentioned in the entry dedicated to *adab* in the second edition of the *Encyclopédie de l'islam*, written by Francesco Gabrieli at the end of the 1950s. It was just then that a first wave of scholarship on the question appeared.

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The first study to explicitly mention the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* is that of Meir Jacob Kister in 1954, in his critical edition of the *Kitāb ādāb al-ṣuḥba* by Sulamī, a manual on etiquette. For Kister, this work is influenced by both Sufi and *adab* literature, though it is more generally informed by the latter. Sulamī quotes many poems in his *Kitāb al-Futuwwa*. Kister then demonstrates the correspondences between Sulamī's text and the *Kitāb al-Muwashshā* by al-Washshā' (d. 325/937), who uses over a hundred times the word *adab* for "good manners". Kister also underlines the links between a text by Farabī and one by Sulamī. To these multiple influences are added the role of prophetic exemplarity, the *ḥadīth*s dealing with the *ādāb* of the Prophet and the sayings of the *zuhhād*. Kister concludes that an interest for education was on the rise in Islamic, especially Sufi, societies, starting in the ninth century.

Not long after Kister's article, Fritz Meier published in 1957 a fundamental article, "Ein Knigge für Sufis". According to Meier, a continuity does exist between the *ādāb* of the *kuttāb*, that of the *ḥukamā'* and the ulemas, and the Sufi *ādāb*. In each case, there is a clear need for a practical or technical order combined with spiritual aspirations (*ādāb al-bāṭin*). Meier wonders, in passing without going much further, whether there is a possible influence of the *regulae, constitutiones*, and *consuetudines* of Christian monachism on Sufi rules. He ultimately focuses on the analysis of a manual of Sufi *adab*, the *Ādāb al-murīdīn* attributed to Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 617/1220).

In 1960, Serge Laugier de Beaurecueil published an annotated critical edition and the translation of the same treatise under another title, *Kitāb mukhtaṣar fī ādāb al-ṣūfiyya wa l-sālikīn li-ṭarīq al-ḥaqq.*[41] This time, the text was attributed to ʿAbdallāh al-Anṣārī (d. 481/1089). Laugier de Beaurecueil, who apparently did not know of the existence of Meier's study, admits to being confused by quotes attributed in the text to al-Anṣārī—whose name is followed by a eulogy reserved for defunct saints (*raḥmat Allāh ʿalayhi*). According to him, the text is indeed rooted in the teachings of al-Anṣārī, even if it was not written in the first person by the Persian master. Laugier de Beaurecueil could only have been referring to the relationship between this work and the ancient normative literature of Sufism, which was still only available in manuscript form at the time.

In 1966, a new step was taken when Iraj Afshār published in Tehran the *Awrād al-aḥbāb wa-fuṣūṣ al-ādāb* by Yaḥyā Bākharzī (d. 1335–6), preceded by an introduction. Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek re-examines this text in our current volume and underlines the fact that Bākharzī was the grandson of one of the

41 Laugier de Beaurecueil, "Un opuscule de Khwaja ʿAbdallah Ansari concernant les bienséances des soufis," 203–239.

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direct disciples of Najm al-Dīn al-Kubrā, and that his text dealt both with the *Sunna* and *adab*.

In 1972, Denis Gril defended a thesis at the University of Paris III in which, for the first time, he analyzed the very notion of *adab* in general and Sufi *adab* in particular. Quickly citing Nallino's position on the origins of *adab* and its ancient proximity to the notion of Sunna, he concluded that there was a link between *adab* and *maʾduba*, highlighted by Ibn ʿArabī. "C'est ce double aspect de convenance et de réunion de tous les aspects du bien, donc de synthèse, qui apparaît comme le plus caractéristique de l'*adab*" ("It is this double aspect of decorum and the bringing together of all the aspects of Good, thus of a synthesis that appears as the most characteristic of *adab*"). After a chapter on the question of *tark al-adab* (the abandonment of *adab*), the work concludes with an examination of the original link between Sufi religious rules and the practices of the Prophet defined as "the supreme type of *adīb*," with a chapter dedicated to divine *adab*.

Twenty years later, Gril returns to the question of *adab* and Ibn ʿArabī in an article.[42] There is a transposition of the notion of *adab* within a metaphysical doctrine and not just in the ordinary sphere of Sufi technical customs. The Andalusian master affirms that the *adīb* is the *ḥakīm*, the wise man.[43] The *adīb* is the whole that embraces all things, who at each spiritual station carries himself according to the stations, at each state according to the state, and likewise for each virtue. He brings together all the noble qualities (*makārim al-akhlāq*), without ignoring the flaws that can only qualify him. He knows all the degrees of science, both condemnable or not. In the end, *adab* is the union of the Good (*jimāʿ al-khayr*). Ibn ʿArabī considers four types of *adab*. There is the *adab* of the Law that God inculcates to the Prophet Muḥammad, and which the Prophet then taught to his community. Then there is the service *adab* (*adab al-khidma*) linked to court etiquette since the King of God's men is God himself. Third is the legal *adab* (*adab al-ḥaqq*) that needs to be given to each existing thing. Lastly there is the *adab* of essential reality (*adab al-ḥaqīqa*), the ultimate form of *adab* that involves only God. Though *adab* supposes duality, when everything is brought together in the final station, it is finally necessary to renounce *adab*. Denis Gril's article offers a thorough analysis of the different doctrinal affirmations of Ibn ʿArabī on the relationship between the Qurʾān and *adab*, the *adab* of the prophets, the *adab* of the Prophet Muḥammad, and finally the *adab* of the Seal of Muhammadan Sainthood (*khatm al-walāya al-muḥammadiyya*).

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42 Denis Gril, "*Adab* and Revelation," 228–263.

43 This statement figures as the incipit of chapter 168 in the *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* concerning *maqām al-adab*.

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In 1974, Caesar E. Farah's article focused on the rules governing the relationship between master and disciples. It was based almost exclusively on manuscripts concerning spiritual direction in Sufism. He shows that the *ādāb* between master and disciple appear in the middle of the literature of the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*, in parallel with the development of the social dimension of Sufism.[44] An abridged English translation by Menahem Milson also appeared in 1975 of *Kitāb ādāb al-murīdīn* by Abū Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 1168). The introduction, which remains rather general, underlines the importance of the treatise, one of the first to entirely focus on the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya.*[45] In 1976, the first treatise of the kind was published, the *Jawāmiʿ ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*, published by Etan Kohlberg and later translated by Elena Biagi.[46]

In 1984, a highly interesting article by Gerhard Böwering analyzed the notion of *adab*, affirming that the *ādāb* are parallel to the *maqāmāt*, at the spiritual level, since each *maqām* corresponds to a specific *adab.*[47] The *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* come from three sources: first the prophetic ideal, then the *ijtihād*, or the effort to elaborate new rules tied to the development of institutions linked to spiritual life (*khānqāh, samāʿ, khirqa*), and finally, the same importance given to the doctrine (*tawḥīd*) and to asceticism (*taʾdīb*). Böwering dedicated his efforts to an annotated translation of *Kitāb mukhtaṣar fī ādāb al-ṣūfiyya wa-l-sālikīn li-ṭarīq al-ḥaqq*, by Anṣārī, already published and translated by Laugier de Beaurecueil.[48] Böwering underlines the originality of the text: its concision, concentrated on technical notions and the fact that it was expressly addressed to Sufi faithful, to a group brought together under a single master. Böwering expanded his research in 1996 in "Règles et rituels soufis," all the while remaining focused on the Persian form of Sufism.[49]

In 1993, in addition to the previously mentioned article by Denis Gril, there was also an edition of the *Ādāb al-mutaṣawwifa wa-ḥaqāʾiquhā wa-ishāratuhā* by Abū Manṣūr al-Iṣfahānī (d. 418/1027), in the Iranian journal *Maʿārif.*[50] There was also Ian Richard Netton's interesting study of the *Kitāb ādāb al-murīdīn*

44 Farah, "Rules Governing the Shaykh-Murshid's Conduct," 81–96.

45 Milson, *A Sufi Rule for Novices*, 1975.

46 Kohlberg, *Jawāmiʿ ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*; Biagi, *A Collection of Sufi Rules of Conduct*.

47 Böwering, "The *Adab* Literature of Classical Sufism: Ansari's Code of Conduct," 62–90.

48 As did de Beaurecueil, Böwering attributes without hesitation the work to Ansārī. The fact that the text is entirely independent of Suhrawardī's *ādāb al-murīdīn* (which is unexplainable if the text had truly been written by Najm al-Dīn Kubrā), the absence of any quote by earlier authors, the clear Sunni Hanbali stance, the text's conformity to the style and philosophy of Anṣārī, all point to an Ansarian paternity.

49 Böwering, "Règles et rituels soufis," 145–151.

50 Abū Manṣūr al-Iṣfahānī, "Ādāb al-mutaṣawwifa," 259–76.

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by Suhrawardī. He underlines the fact that the notion of *adab* works well with that of *aḥwāl* and *maqāmāt* and suggests *Kashf al-maḥjūb* by Hujwirī as a model.[51] In 1998, Florian Sobieroj offers up a comparative analysis of the *Kitāb al-Iqtiṣād* by Ibn Khafīf al-Shirāzī (d. 371/982), which he also published in a critical edition, and the *Ādāb al-murīdīn* by Suhrawardī.[52] He shows how the latter text was deeply inspired by the former—despite the fact the first text does not directly concern Sufi *adab.* Rather it is a treatise on sincerity (*ṣidq*) and the purity of intentions (*ikhlāṣ*). This complex question concerning the specificity (or not) of a Sufi *adab* at the heart of Sunni Islam is once again addressed.

In 1999, a thorough study by Muhammad Isa Waley re-examines the *Awrād al-aḥbāb wa-fuṣūṣ al-ādāb* by Yaḥyā Bākharzi.[53] Soon after, a number of articles dealing with the different issues linked to Sufi *adab* were published. There was Gabriel Said Reynolds's 2000 article on dietary issues;[54] Denis Matringe's contribution in 2001 on rules within Sufi convents in medieval India;[55] Jean-Jacques Thibon's article on Sulamī's treatise, *Adab mujālasat al-mashāyikh wa-ḥifẓ ḥurumātihim*;[56] Arley Loewen's work on Wāʿiẓ-i Kāshifī in 2003;[57] and Qamar ul-Huda's research in 2004 on the *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif* by ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī.[58] In 2005, Bernd Radtke takes a less monographic stance and carries out a transversal analysis of the spread of the famous rules of Junayd throughout the Muslim world, from Iran to sub-Saharan Africa.[59]

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51 Netton, "The Breath of Felicity: Adab, Aḥwāl, Maqāmāt and Abu Najīb al-Suhrawardī," 457–482.

52 Sobieroj, "Ibn Khafīf's *Kitāb al-Iqtiṣād* and Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī's *Ādāb al-murīdīn*. A comparison between two works on the Training of Novices," 327–345; idem, *Ibn Ḫafīf Aš-Šīrāzī und seine Schrift zur Novizenerziehung* (*Kitāb al-Iqtiṣād*)*: Biographiche Studien, Edition und Übersetzung*.

53 Waley, "A Kubrawī Manual of Sufism—The *Fuṣūṣ al-ādāb* of Yaḥya Bākharzī," 289–310.

54 Reynolds, "The Sufi Approach to Food. A Case Study in *ādāb*," 198–217.

55 Matringe, "*Ādāb al-ṣūfīya*. Les règles de vie dans les couvents soufis de l'Inde médiévale", 67–86.

56 Thibon, "La relation maître-disciple ou les éléments de l'alchimie spirituelle d'après trois manuscrits de Sulami," 93–124.

57 Loewen, "Proper conduct (*Adab*) is everything: The *Futuwwat-nāmah-i Sulṭānī* of Husayn Vaʿiz-i Kashifi," 543–570.

58 Qamar-ul Huda, "The Light beyond the Shore in the Theology of Proper Sufi Moral Conduct (*Adab*)," 461–484.

59 Radtke, "The Eight Rules of Junayd. A General Overview of the Genesis and Development of Islamic Dervish Orders," 490–502.

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This explosion of scholarship on Sufi *adab* ultimately allowed Ahmet Karamustafa's 2007 volume on the beginnings of Sufism to fully integrate the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* within its historical panorama. He shows the importance of this literature in the systemization and consolidation of Sufism. Jean-Jacques Thibon's monumental 2009 volume on Sulamī offers an overview of the issue of *adab* in Sulamī's work. He demonstrates how Sulamī, during the eleventh century, used the *ḥadīth* and the sayings of the first masters as a foundation, thus bringing together *adab, futuwwa*, and *ḥayāʾ*. *Adab* and *futuwwa* are closely linked, almost interchangeable, notably in his *Kitāb al-Futuwwa*. Luca Patrizi's thesis (2012), after summarizing existing scholarship, presents Sufi *adab* as a divine banquet that belongs to a long, rich tradition such as that of the Greco-Roman banquet or that of the *bazm* in Sassanid Iran. Islam states that the Qurʾān is the "banquet of God" (Ibn Masʿūd according to Darīmī, d. 869) offered to men, his guests on Earth. Are music and song not an integral part of banquets given by the *ẓurafāʾ*, the refined? In 2000, Van Gelder published a chapter on *adab* as a banquet.[60] Several works drew attention to the indispensable and unavoidable Shaʿrānī who decisively summed up Sufi *adab* in the sixteenth century for the entire Sunni Arab world, by closely linking it to *waraʿ*.

Finally in 2012, Erik Ohlander's article for the third edition of the *Encyclopédie de l'islam* gives back to Sufi *adab* its rightful place: "*adab*, in Sufism". In his concise and fundamental contribution, based on wide-ranging knowledge of medieval Sufism and on his particular knowledge of the Suhrawardī, Ohlander offers a clear definition of literature of the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*, from a historical, technical, and spiritual point of view.

Since 2012, there have been a number of publications. Lloyd Ridgeon, using Persian sources, links *adab* and *futuwwat*.[61] A conference on *adab* and the Qurʾān should soon appear.[62] In 2013, Nelly Amri has translated and annotated an Ifrīqiyan "manual" on Sufi *adab* from the thirteenth century.[63] The list presented here is not exhaustive and is expanded regularly ...

Interest for *adab* does not stop at the uncertain borders of Sufi *adab*. It belongs to a more general renewal of the literary and cultural history of Islam. While it has become impossible to constitute an exhaustive bibliography concerning

60 Van Gelder, *God's Banquet: Food in Classical Arabic Literature*, 39–79.

61 Ridgeon, *Morals and Mysticism in Persian Sufism: A History of Sufi-Futuwwat in Iran*; Id., *Jawanmardi: A Sufi Code of Honour*.

62 Alshaar, *The Qur'an and Adab: The Shaping of Literary Traditions in Classical Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

63 Amri, *Un « manuel » ifrîqiyen d'adab soufi. Paroles de sagesse de ʿAbd al-Wahhâb al-Mzûghî (m. 675/1276), compagnon de Shâdhilî*.

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Sufi *adab*, this is even truer for the new readings of *adab*. A team, with Regula Forster, works in Germany on the Mirror for Princes. Finally, it is of note that current interest for Sufi *adab* does not come only from professional researchers but also from a large public in the Muslim world, as demonstrated by the interest of publishing houses in the Arab, Persian, and Turkish worlds. A number of editions and re-editions of texts continue to appear, accompanied by translations in Western languages, often used by the Sufis themselves within a globalization process that generates ignorance, anxiety, and which begs for rules. Though this volume is largely focused on medieval and Ottoman *adab*, the study of a more immediately contemporary Sufi *adab* through brotherhoods and on the Internet remains to be carried out in a systematic and reasoned manner. There is work to be done.

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