

Ethics and Spirituality in Islam

Sufi adab

Edited by

Francesco Chiabotti
Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek
Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen
Luca Patrizi



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

For use by the Author only | © 2016 Koninklijke Brill NV

Contents

Preface: A Project, a Conference, a Book IX

*Francesco Chiabotti, Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek,
Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, Luca Patrizi*

Notes on Contributors XII

Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab* 1

Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen and Luca Patrizi

PART I

Formation and Formulations of Sufi adab

Adab et éthique dans le soufisme. Quelques constats et interrogations 47

Denis Gril

The Concept of *adab* in Early Sufism with Particular Reference to the Teachings of Sahl b. ‘Abdallāh al-Tustarī (d. 283/896) 63

Annabel Keeler

Adab et éducation spirituelle (*tarbiya*) chez les maîtres de Nishāpūr aux III^e/IX^e et IV^e/X^e siècles 102

Jean-Jacques Thibon

Reading Medieval Persian Hagiography through the Prism of *Adab*:

The Case of *Asrār al-tawhīd* 131

Ahmet T. Karamustafa

Literary Perspectives in Qushayrī’s Meditations on Sufi Ethics: The *‘Uyūn al-ajwiba fī funūn al-as’ila* 142

Florian Sobieroj

Éthique et théologie : la pratique de l’*adab* dans le traité sur les Noms divins d’Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī (*al-Taḥbīr fī ‘ilm al-tadhkīr*) 165

Francesco Chiabotti

Adab al-mulūk : L'utilisation de la terminologie du pouvoir dans le soufisme médiéval 198

Luca Patrizi

PART 2

Adab as Ethics: Norm and Transgression within the Three Monotheisms

L'invention des *ādāb* : « innovations » soufies et monachisme dans l'exégèse du verset 57 : 27 du Coran 223

Samuela Pagani

Un système de règles de conduite dans le monachisme chrétien égyptien (v^e-vii^e siècles) 276

Maria Chiara Giorda

Adab in the Thought of Ghazālī (d. 505/1111): In the Service of Mystical Insight 298

Paul L. Heck

Training the Prophetic Self: *Adab* and *riyāḍa* in Jewish Sufism 325

Nathan Hofer

Fellowship and Fraternity in Jewish Pietism of Medieval Egypt 356

Elisha Russ-Fishbane

Reading Sufi History through *ādāb*: The Perspectives of Sufis, Jawānmardān and Qalandars 379

Lloyd Ridgeon

Le saint fou comme modèle de l'éthique 403

Pierre Lory

PART 3

Genres of Sufi Adab: Manuals, Hagiographies, and Adab as Literature

Situating Group, Self, and Act in the Medieval Sufi *ribāṭ*: The *Kitāb zād al-musāfir wa-adab al-ḥādir* of ‘Imād al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Suhrawardī (d. 655/1257) 419

Erik S. Ohlander

‘Izz al-Dīn Kāshānī and Abū al-Mafākhir Yahyā Bākharzī: Proper Sufi conduct (*adab*) through the Eyes of Two Persian Authors from Different Brotherhoods in the 13th–14th Century 449

Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek

Shādhilisme et malāmatisme : l'éthique soufie d'un maître ifrīqiyyen d'après les *Manāqib* du cheikh ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Mzūghī (m. 675/1276) 479

Nelly Amri

The Praise of a Sufi Master as a Literary Event: Al-Ḥasan al-Yūsī (1631–1691), his *Dāliyya (Qaṣīdat at-tahānī)*, and its Commentary (*Nayl al-amānī*) 504

Stefan Reichmuth

Le livre pour guide : éthique (*adab*) et cheminement spirituel (*sulūk*) dans trois manuels sur la Voie d'époque ottomane (*Al-Sayr wa-l-sulūk* de Qāsim al-Khānī m. 1697, *Tuḥfat al-sālikīn* de Muḥammad al-Samanūdī m. 1785 et *Tuḥfat al-ikhwān* d'Aḥmad al-Dardīr m. 1786) 520

Rachida Chih

PART 4

Sufi Adab and Modernity

L'époque de l'*adab* : le miroir soufi au XVII^e siècle 547

Alberto F. Ambrosio

Ṭāhā al-Kurdī (1136/1723–1214/1800) between Sufi *adab* and Literary *adab* 566

Ralf Elger

The Delicate Balance: *Adab* and Mystical States in the Musical Assemblies of Sufis in Medieval India 584

Mikko Viitamäki

***Ādāb* with an Absent Master: Sufis and Good Manners in the Tijāniyya** 608

Michele Petrone

L'adab soufi en Égypte à l'heure du réformisme musulman : l'anthologie d'Alḥmad al-Ḥalawānī en 1949 630

Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen

Transmission and Practice in Sufi *adab* of the Ḥāfīziyya Khalwatiyya, a Sufi brotherhood of Middle-Egypt (19th–20th Century) 649

Renaud Soler

Index of Qur'anic Verses 669

Index of Proper Names, Places and Titles 670

Index of Keywords and Notions 680

Ādāb with an Absent Master: Sufis and Good Manners in the Tijāniyya

Michele Petrone

In the twentieth century, the Tijānī *ṣūfī* order spread its influence in West Africa, due to the presence and contribution of different masters, including the Ibrāhīm Niyāss (Ibrahim Baye Niassé, d. 1974),¹ who became a central figure in Senegalese and Nigerian Sufism. Niassé became the main focus of his disciples' devotion (regardless of whether or not they were directly linked with him).²

This centrality is an active factor in the relation between the *murīd* and his master as developed in the West African "niassene" branch of the Tijāniyya, despite the fact that the founder of the order, Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1814), is considered by all his followers as the one who actually initiates disciples and educates them. Hence the particular *adab* that *tijānīs* have with their *shuyūkh*. In Northern Nigeria and in the Kaolack region, the master mentioned in invocations for the purpose of *tabarruk* (to look for blessings) and *tamaddud* (to look for spiritual influence and support) is often Niyāss instead of al-Tijānī. This led to misunderstandings between the different branches of the order and, sometimes, to open polemic.³

This study is based on some fundamental texts of the Tijāniyya and other works like the *Risālat al-faḍl wa-l-imtinān* of 'Alī Ḥarāzīm, heir and successor to al-Tijānī, and the poem titled *Rūḥ al-adab*, composed by Ibrāhīm Niyāss, in which he advises his fellows and disciples regarding both good manners and the proper spiritual attitude towards God and the shaykh.⁴ The poem

-
- 1 His name is spelled in different ways according to the transcription system adopted. Here the name of those who wrote in Arabic will be translated according to the transcription system adopted for this language in the present volume. A different (often more common) spelling will be given in brackets, before the date of death.
 - 2 Social and spiritual implications of the figure of Ibrāhīm Niyāss are far too complex to be analyzed in this paper. Here I consider not directly his figure, but his teachings as exposed in a didactic poem, nowadays widely read and commented on, as demonstrated by the existence of a number of commentaries and public readings, and as demonstrated by videos found on the Internet (see the sitography for further details).
 - 3 For a general account of the Niyāssene phenomenon, see Seesemann, *Divine Flood*; Hill, *Divine Knowledge*, 112–67.
 - 4 Unfortunately, I was not able to conduct a field study; this led to a purely textual approach although it cannot provide an account of practical aspects involved in the notion of *adab*, the sitography at the end of the article aims to partially fill this lacuna.

was composed during Ibrāhīm Niyāss' youth, before he conceived and built an efficient *da'wa* apparatus, through which he was able to convert thousands of people to Islam and to the Tijāniyya. The notion of *fayḍa* played a central role in this expansion. It can be translated as the “*fluxus of baraka*” that would inundate the world and guide Muslims until the end of the world.⁵ The figure of Niyāss has become central in Senegalese (and in general African) Tijāniyya, fostering polemics with other groups that thought to be more faithful to the seminal figure of al-Tijānī. My main aim in this study is to determine whether this shift in attention affects the actual perception of the role of the master and the *adab* towards him, based on an analysis of the *Rūḥ al-adab* and commentaries on this work, such as that of Ḥassan ‘Alī Sissī (Hassan Ali Cisse, d. 2008).⁶

Overview of *adab* in Early Tijānī Sources

Tijānīs believe that their order was founded by the Prophet Maḥammad himself, who appeared to Aḥmad al-Tijānī while he was awake, compelling him to abandon his previous masters (he had been initiated into many orders, above all the Khalwatiyya of Egypt and the Sammāniyya) because the Prophet was his actual master and the initiator of his new order.

Although he is not the actual originator of the *ṭarīqa*, Aḥmad b. Maḥammad⁷ al-Tijānī is for his disciples not only their master, but also the *Quṭb al-maktūm* (the Hidden Pole) and the *Khatm al-awliyā'* (the Seal of the Saints);⁸ and he presented himself as encompassing the sanctity of all other Muslim saints (using the same expression used by al-Jilānī, “my two feet are on the nape of every saint, from Adam until the end of the world”).⁹ From its prophetic origin and given the peculiar role of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the *ṭarīqa* derived one of the most specific prescriptions for its affiliates, namely the prohibition of visiting non-Tijānī saints, dead or alive, for the purpose of *istimdād*, seeking subtle spiritual support.¹⁰ This exclusiveness, called the “jealousy of the shaykh,” is conceived as a form of *adab* towards the founder of the order, the Prophet Muḥammad

5 For an explanation of the notion of *fayḍa* and a wide historical contextualization of the figure of Ibrāhīm Niyāss, see Seesemann, “Three Ibrāhīms,” 299–333.

6 See Niyāss, *Spirit of Good Morals*; this work has been published only in English.

7 In the texts the name often carries this vocalization, following the custom of the name of the Prophet to avoid that someone bearing his name could be insulted.

8 For a general explanation of this concept, see Chodkiewicz, *Le sceau des saints*. For a discussion of the seals of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, see Urizzi, “Il Segreto del Sigillo.”

9 Urizzi, “Il Segreto del Sigillo,” 27.

10 This prohibition does not include the prophets and Muḥammad's Companions (*ṣaḥāba*).

and, on his behalf, towards Aḥmad al-Tijānī. This is a negative form of *adab*, a prohibition, not an actual indication of the proper behavior with the master whether he is dead or alive. Instructions for good manners to be shown towards Shaykh al-Tijānī are seldom mentioned among the pillars of the *ṭarīqa* and are not deeply analyzed in the sections about *adab* in the texts dating from the first decades of the existence of the order.

The *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*, the fundamental book of the Tijāniyya, originated from a *kunnāsh*, a collection of Aḥmad al-Tijānī's speeches made by ʿAlī Ḥarāzīm, who also added his own observations to clarify certain passages or to give a complete account of key episodes.

In the words¹¹ of the founder of the Tijāniyya, the term *adab* is seldom present. Rather, he refers to the same notion using the expression *makārim al-akhlāq*. The *murīd* has to develop good manners in body and spirit, following the *uswa ḥasana* of the Prophet, who said: "I was sent to bring you nobility of character." In the *Jawāhir al-Maʿānī*¹² ʿAlī Ḥarāzīm gives a clear definition of the notion of *adab*, which he includes in the middle of the biography of Aḥmad al-Tijānī:

According to the *fuqahāʾ*, the word *adab* indicates everything that goes beyond the basic duties and the *sunan* [that every Muslim has to accomplish] sleeping and while awake and in every other condition, without interruption during one's life.¹³

This definition is accompanied by the one attributed to the *ṣūfiyya*, who consider the term *adab* as defining all qualities of goodness and piety that mark the difference (and the relation) between the attributes of the *ʿubūdīyya* and of *rubūbiyya*; the one who acquires these qualities can be considered qualified by the *ādāb* (plural). The distinction between the two levels is quite clear: if for the jurists *adab* is in the actions, for the *ṣūfīs* it is found in the qualities of the servant (*ʿabd*). There are two complementary dimensions to the notion of *adab*: acts, on a horizontal level, are duties and actions that have their dimension in the external world; whereas qualities, also called *akhlāq* in the text, on a vertical level, mark the relationship between the servant and God, not through a single act of worship, but through the servant's own essence.

11 Aḥmad al-Tijānī did not leave written works, save for several letters to his disciples.

12 Ḥarāzīm, *Jawāhir*. I have referred to this version, as it is the one most diffused among Tijānis.

13 *Jawāhir*, 110.

It is quite obvious that, at least in the *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī*, the main perspective is the second one: when speaking of *adab*, Aḥmad al-Tijānī is said to have focused his attention on the attitude towards Allāh or *al-ḥaḍra al-ilāhiyya* (divine presence) While describing his master's *adab*, 'Alī Ḥarāzīm says:

He was well mannered, and instructed others to have good *adab* towards Allāh and His Messenger, because this encompasses other kinds of *adab*, and *Sayyidunā* unified both of them, in worldly and spiritual matters (*zāhīran wa bāṭinan*).¹⁴

'Alī al-Ḥarāzīm continues to exemplify these two aspects. As for the *zāhir* he reports that Aḥmad al-Tijānī never stretched out his leg in the direction of the *qibla*, never raised his voice while sitting in a mosque and observed similar proper manners that every good Muslim should know and apply in his daily life. As for the *bāṭin*, al-Tijānī never chose anything but God, and abandoned his *tadbīr* (meaning "self-determination") to the point that, when making a *du'ā'* for something doubtful or completely unknown, he did his invocations only with his tongue, while his heart was constantly ready to accept what Allāh had decreed. The *adab* of Aḥmad al-Tijānī is summarily defined by 'Alī Ḥarāzīm as humility (*tawāḍū'*) towards God, his Messenger and all his disciples, the commonalty (*'amm*) and the elite (*khāṣṣ*), patience and a particularly strong *himma* ("determination").

For a more detailed account of the *adab* in the Tijānī *ṭarīqa*, one has to refer to the *Bughyat al-mustafīd bi-sharḥ Mīniyat al-murīd*.¹⁵ Muḥammad al-'Arabī Ibn al-Ṣā'ih (d. 1821) authored the commentary on this poem written by Tijānī Ibn Bābā al-Shinḡī. Approximately a fourth of the commentary (the sections 2, 3, 4 and 5, comprising approximately 100 printed pages) is devoted explicitly to the discussion of forms of *adab*. The reader of the *Bughya* should not expect anything revolutionary: practices and theories are almost all taken from earlier Sufi manuals. The second section (*maṭlab*) of the *Bughya* is "About what alludes to the inner reality of *adab*"¹⁶ and begins with a citation of the *ḥadīth* "*Addabanī rabbī fa-aḥsana ta'dībī*." Then the author reports Ibn 'Arabī's thoughts about *adab*, subdividing them into different typologies. *Adab al-sharī'a*, being the *adab al-ilāhī*, the acts and attitudes that God bestows by the means of revelation, to teach his servants how to worship Him. Then he proceeds to quote the *adab al-khidma*, being the one related to the kings.

¹⁴ *Jawāhir*, 110.

¹⁵ Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*, 28.

But since God is the only real King, this constitutes a particular kind of *adab al-sharī'a*. The third and fourth *adabs* are those of *ḥaqq* and of *ḥaqīqa*: the former is to follow the Truth in every manifestation, giving everything its *ḥaqq*, its right; the latter is the so-called *tark al-adab*. He says: "Abandoning *adab* means that *adab* has to be abandoned in what is visible (*fī-l-shuhūd*) not in essence (*fī-l-wujūd*), as is in other *muṣṭalāḥāt* found in the works of the *shaykh* as the *Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*."¹⁷

Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, quoting anonymously various commentators of the *risāla* of Ibn 'Arabī on this subject,¹⁸ defines the *ḥaqīqat al-adab* as the refinement (*ḍabt*) of the senses, attention to the breath and meditation (*tafakkur*) upon the creation.¹⁹ After this he embarks on a long series of quotations from the *Awārif* of Ibn al-Mubārak and other sources dating from the first centuries of Islam, such as the *Qūt al-qulūb* of Abū Ṭalīb al-Makkī, but also from later Sufis, such as Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh al-Iskandarī and Ibn 'Abbād al-Rundī.²⁰ Each of the quoted passages aim to encourage the disciple to master his senses, avoid excess in eating and drinking (and the prohibition of smoking *ḥashīsh*; smoking tobacco is also prohibited to Tijānīs), and to maintain good behavior in every aspect of public and private life, conscious that every event or state is nothing but the manifestation of God. Ibn al-Ṣā'ih summarizes the content of the quotations stating: "Know that what God wants from you is exactly your condition in this instant; your abidance in worshipping God in the condition in which He placed you is exactly what you are entitled to (or what God has entrusted to you)."²¹ This passage appears to be a re-elaboration of the definition of *adab* emerging from his analysis of Aḥmad al-Tijānī's biography. At both the horizontal and vertical levels, the attitude of the *murīd* has to be pure acceptance of God's will.

Additionally, *talqīn al-dhikr* (transmission of the litanies) is considered as an aspect of *ṣuḥba* with the master, by which is meant the relationship between master and disciple. Tijānī manuals affirm that every Muslim, male or female, rich or poor, pure or sinner, can enter the *ṭarīqa* after a "positive" *istikhāra* (prayer asking God for a sign guiding to the good in a doubtful affair).²² The

17 Gril, "Adab and Revelation."

18 See Gril, "Adab and Revelation."

19 Al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*, 29.

20 Being impossible to find in the original text, quotations appear to have been learned by heart and passed down orally.

21 Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*, 57.

22 The *istikhāra* is a very common rite, based on Prophetic traditions, asking God for guidance concerning a matter of uncertainty or during severe hardship. There are also other basic conditions to adhere to for the Tijāniyya: the *Fayḍ al-rabbānī* lists 14 conditions that

texts stress the importance of this prayer before the *bay'a* (the pact linking a person to a *ṭarīqa*) made between the disciple and the master. This seems quite odd, when, in the same texts, the *murīd* is commanded to consider his master as the best possible guide. But the master's actual role, as described in the *Bughya*, is that of a simple intermediary, transmitting the spiritual influence and guidance of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. This humble attitude often implies that, at the very moment of *talqīn*, some *shuyūkh*, after reciting a special prayer on the Prophet (giving the merit to Aḥmad al-Tijānī), seek permission from him (*istī'dhānuhu*) "to teach the *wird* to this man who asks for it with his heart and tongue." And, when giving him the *wird* he further recites: "This man asked me to teach him the *wird* and now I will teach him with your permission and your benediction" and similar invocations.²³

This practice is not mandatory, but is intended as a rule of *adab* that every *muqaddam* should observe towards the founder of the *ṭarīqa*, again the Prophet Muḥammad and, on his behalf, Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the latter being a permanent presence in the life of every Tijānī. The *muqaddam* is considered, in the manuals, always a disciple of al-Tijānī and so he has to maintain perfect *adab* towards his master. One of the pillars of the Tijāniyya is the belief that the actual one who initiates disciples is Aḥmad al-Tijānī. So at the very moment of the initiation of the *murīd* is the presence of the Shāykh who is manifested in the *muqaddam*.

In the main texts of the *Tijāniyya* it is difficult to find an explicit and practical definition of the master-disciple relationship and its rules. As indicated above, the focus of these works centers on mastering one's attention and always looking to the actual presence of al-Tijānī as a means to proceed along the path. As such, the image of the master that emerges is that of a simple intermediary whose role during the initiation is to guarantee an effective link with the founder of the order.

An exception to this tendency is the *Risālat al-faḍl wa-l-imtīnān* by 'Alī Ḥarāzīm, where the author devotes the introduction to the proper behavior of the disciple towards his master.²⁴ This text discusses the *adab al-murīd* in

range from the *ḥusn al-ẓann* to the commitment to recite the *award* until death comes; see 'Irāqī, *Fayḍ*, 52–61.

23 Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*, 57.

24 The epistle is included in a biographical dictionary of *Tijānis* written by Aḥmad Sukayrij (d. 1944) and titled *Raf' al-niqāb ba'd Kashf al-ḥijāb 'amman tulāqī Shaykh al-Tijānī min al-aṣḥāb* that is the appendix (*dhayl*) of the better known *Kashf al-ḥijāb fi man li Sīdi Aḥmad al-Tijānī min al-aṣḥāb* (Sukayrij, *Raf'*). The epistle is included in the fourth volume of the *Raf' al-niqāb*. The first two volumes were published at Tiṭwān by 'Abd al-Karīm

two parts. In the first one, ‘Alī Ḥarāzīm briefly defines the perfect disciple as a “seeker” (*tālib*) until he quits following his soul’s lust and begins to submit himself to God’s love and mercy. Then the disciple has to devote himself to a single type of litany (*dhikr*) and avoid mixing it with other forms of remembrance because of the confusion in his mind this can cause. Finally the *murīd in pectore* can look for a master and, when he meets him, the murid should make himself ready before the shaykh, and be as a corpse in the hands of his funeral washer.

This attitude implies both an inner and an outer *adab* that should enable the *murīd* to start his spiritual journey. The *Risālat al-faḍl wa-l-imtīnān* enumerates some of these characteristics to be fostered, beginning with “The disciple has not to believe that the shaykh is an infallible human being nor that he can ever reach the status of a Prophet.”²⁵ This is followed by recommendations about the shaykh’s belongings and affairs—that have to be regarded with the highest respect and not used or misused—and about the attitudes of the body—sitting in front of him like one does during the *tashahhud* of the ritual prayer and gazing at the master’s face with humility and concentration. The list ends with advice that both recalls and better defines the opening caution: “The disciple in the presence of his shaykh has to be possessed of strong inspiration and correct behavior and his every breath is to be measured, bearing in mind that the shaykh is within the Muḥammadan presence.” This last cautionary advice may lead to a misunderstanding of the role of the shaykh. The *Risālat al-faḍl wa-l-imtīnān* pinpoints this concern:

As for the inadequate attitude that the disciple may hold towards the human appearance of the Shaykh, such an attitude emanates from the disciple’s ignorance that Almighty Allah can manifest Himself (*tajallā*) in different forms.²⁶

The role of the master is, thus, paradoxical: the disciple should not to consider him as a perfect, divine creature, but he also should avoid focusing on

Sukayrij, son of the author. The third volume was published in Rabat in 1971 with a preface by the then *muqaddam* of the Tijāniyya in Fes, Idrīs al-‘Irāqī (although the frontispiece refers to the “two last parts,” *al-rub‘ayn al-ākhirayn*, of the work). The last volume is available only in an electronic edition (often presented with the other three parts) revised by Muḥammad al-Rāḍī Kannūn (Gennun). For detailed information please refer to the bibliography at the end of the article.

25 Ibn al-Ṣā‘īh, *Bughya*, 58. In fact the *‘Awārif al-ma‘ārif* is the main source of some *Tijānī* texts dealing with *adab*.

26 Ibn al-Ṣā‘īh, *Bughya*, 59.

the shaykh's defects. Rather, the *adab* has to be directed towards the Divine Presence that manifests Itself in the spiritual guide who cares for his disciples. Whoever attributes his progress on the Path only to his master and not to God loses "the pact" that links him to the *ṭarīqa* and is virtually obliged to repent and renew his affiliation.

In the *Bughyat al-mustafīd* there is no section explicitly devoted to the *adab al-murīd* towards his master. When discussing the *adab al-istimā'*, the proper way to listen to the recitation of the Qur'ān, the recounting of *aḥādīth* and to the master's speeches, Ibn al-Ṣā'ih considers audition as a proof of and as a means towards obtaining a pure heart, quoting the *'Awārīf al-ma'ārif*. It is interesting that book reading is considered as a kind of *istimā'* and a section is devoted to the *adab* to be adopted with books. There is no mention of the possibility of substituting a master with books, but some statements reveal Ibn al-Ṣā'ih's thoughts about books.²⁷ He affirms that God is the actual hearer (*musmi'*) and sometimes He listens to the words of the prophets, sometimes to the people reading books as they are sacred ones or collections of pious stories.²⁸ So the *murīd* has to conform himself to the role of *masmū'*, the one God is listening to while he is reading. The section closes with a *du'ā* by Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, inviting the reader to recite it with concentration (*ḥuḍūr*) before reading a book or, with slight variation, before sitting in front of a master:

Fa-yatarawwaḥ bi-l-muṭāla'a kamā yatarawwaḥ bi-mujālasat al-nās wa-mukālamatihim [. . .]

*Allahumma innī astawdi'uka jamī' mā astafīdu min hādha al-sayyid aw min hādha al-majlis ḥattā taruddahu 'alaya fī waqt iḥtiyājī ilayhi.*²⁹

What comes from reading [books] can likewise be gained from sitting with people and [listening] to their talks; [. . .]

O God, I entrust to you what I will obtain from this man or from this assembly as You will give it back to me when I will need it.

27 This topic has been discussed by Nasr, see "Oral Transmission and the Book in Islamic Education," 57–70; this article has been updated by Pagani, "Il libro come maestro: sufismo e storia della lettura nel medioevo islamico," 144–85.

28 Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*, 60.

29 Ibn al-Ṣā'ih, *Bughya*, 61. The order of the two quotations is inverted in the original text. Another edition of the *Bughya*, edited by Muḥammad 'Uqayyil, 77, reports another version of the *du'ā*: *Allahumma innī astawdi'uka jamī' mā anḥuru fī hādha al-kitāb ḥattā tarurradhu 'alaya fī waqt iḥtiyājī ilayhi*, meaning "O God, I entrust to You all that I will see in this book, as You will give it back to me when I will need it."

This parallelism is the only (rather) explicit reference present in the *Bughya* to the proper attitude of the disciple in front of his master. Otherwise, there are only a few other moral statements without any practical reference. On the other hand, there are long chapters devoted to the conditions necessary to become a *muqaddam* (the master who is permitted to “give the *wird*” to other people). The *ādāb al-talqīn* are discussed in detail in several paragraphs, in which the main feature aims to encourage humility and respect for previous masters, as the following episode clearly explains:

The author of the *Minyat al-murīd* told me that, when he decided to enter this noble *ṭarīqa*, he and one of his friends (*rafiq*) went to the great savant, the bestower of *baraka*, the well-known Abū ‘Abdallāh b. Sīdī Muḥammad called Muḥammad b. Sīdī ‘Abdallāh al-‘Alawī, *khalīfa* of Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Alawī pose some questions about the transmission (*talqīn*) of the *awrād* and the guidance [of the disciples]. When they asked him for the covenant he was not certain of doing it until they went together to visit the tomb of Sīdī Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ, where ‘Abdallāh al-‘Alawī ordered the two [aspirant disciples] to stand aside from the mausoleum; then he began speaking (while the two were listening) with humbleness, humility and contrition, saying that Fulān b. Fulān asked him for the *wird* of the Path of our Shaykh and he was transmitting it to them on his [al-Ḥāfiẓ’] behalf and on behalf of the Shaykh al-Tijānī.³⁰

This episode, involving some of the most important figures of the early Tijāniyya, is an explicit example of Tijānī taste in *adab al-murīd* and shows how a master always had to consider himself both a disciple and a transmitter of a legacy. It is curious that the best example of discipleship is represented by a well-known shaykh. It is a common *topos* used to represent the piety of a saint. But, in the context of the discussion of *adab*, it represents also the attitude and the actual role of *Tijānī* masters: mirrors of the seminal and central role of Aḥmad al-Tijānī as the continuously active presence within the *ṭarīqa*. The texts maintain that, at the very moment of the transmission of the *awrād*, the *muqaddam* has to be considered simply as a substitute for the Shaykh (al-Tijānī) because it is he and no other who gives the permission to enter the path.³¹

This central role of the founder is present in the daily ritual of the *wazīfa*. Al-‘Arabī b. al-Ṣā’ih devotes a passage of the *Bughya* to the particular *adab* to be displayed during this ritual. While reciting the *Jawharat al-kamāl* that closes the

30 Ibn al-Ṣā’ih, *Bughya*, 67.

31 Ibn al-Ṣā’ih, *Bughya*, 67.

ritual, those present spread out a white cloth wide enough to permit six people to sit on it. This delimits a pure space reserved for the six spiritual presences of the Prophet, the four *khulafā' al-rashidūn* and Aḥmad al-Tijānī. During these rites, the reciters remain seated on their knees as a sign of respect, whether they are *shuyūkh* or novices. Al-'Arabī, while talking of the *adab* of sitting and leaving enough space for others to sit, reports from Aḥmad al-Tijānī, that he commanded his disciples to sit wherever they found room, abandoning both the desire to sit in a higher place (which is evidence of conceit) and also the opposite attitude, that of pretending humility (that comes from a deception of the *nafs*).

In this context, discipleship should be considered a life-long condition that can be broken only by willfully abandoning the *ṭarīqa* or by ceasing to love and respect the founder of the order, Aḥmad al-Tijānī and, before him, the Prophet himself. So visiting other masters or reciting other *awrād* is felt by Tijānīs as a lack of *adab* toward “the” Shaykh, who is the actual master of every *murīd*. Aḥmad al-Tijānī, although physically absent, shifts the *adab* of the disciples away from the actual master, who is a disciple like them. To stress the importance of this aspect, it is noteworthy that all previous quotations are from a single chapter of the *Bughya* that is intended to deal with the *ādāb al-ṣuḥba wa'l-ikhwān*: this puts *shaykh* and *murīd* on the same level when confronted by the active presence and role of al-Tijānī.

The same attitude is found in a later source, *al-Durrat al-kharīda* of al-Nazīfī who comments on his own *Yaqūtāt al-farīda*, a poem that returns to the basic teachings of the Tijāniyya.³² This text is a collection of quotations from earlier Tijānī sources³³ and aims to be a final compendium of the opinions of the first generations of the *ṭarīqa*. The discussion of the actual practices of *adab* towards a master is divided into different chapters, each dealing with a single form of devotion and respect. Here we find again a profusion of rules and hints about the relationship between “brothers,” but there is no direct mention of the rules of conduct for the disciple with his master. The only exception is the comment on the verses:

Wa-lā budda min ta'zīm kull muqaddam / wa-khalīfa min ins wa-jinna
Lahum ḥurma ka-ḥurmat al-Shaykh fa'r'ahā / wa-kun bādḥilan la hum
*ṣafā' mawadda*³⁴

32 Bayrūt, Dār al-Fikr, 1984. The Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya edition replicates the text of the latter, with a different numbering of the pages.

33 All sources are always mentioned, even if in some cases only the name of the author is given] and in others only part of the title.

34 *Al-Durra al-kharīda*, 3: 106.

It is compulsory to revere every *muqaddam*/ and *khalifa*, being human or jinn.

They deserve the same respect of the Master/ so foster it and offer them pure love.

Most of the commentary is devoted to the distinction between the *muqaddam* and the *khalifa*, both deputies of the founder of the order, but each having different degrees of responsibility. The necessity for maintaining reverence towards the master is the occasion for the author to variously shed light on the *adab al-murīd*. Here a number of practical and behavioral issues are addressed, that help the reader figure out how to behave in front of a master. The discussion of this relationship is only a few pages long and is framed by a larger analysis of the role of the masters as deputies of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the one alluded to by the term *al-shaykh* in Tijānī poems. Honoring the master who authorized the *murīd* to recite the *awrād* is presented as actually revering the founder of the order, and maintaining this state is a condition (*shart*) of the Tijāniyya: breaking the love for the master and the respect for his representatives breaks also the “pact” that has to be renewed.³⁵ Al-Nazīfī warns the disciple: “Opposition [to the master] with the heart or the tongue is a sharpened sword that cuts off the bond between the master and the disciple, so do not refuse anything coming from the master,”³⁶ even after his death. The author does not further detail to show respect but only cites instead verses mentioning well-known topoi of *ṣūfī* literature, such as the story of Moses and al-Khiḍr.

In a couple of *tanbīhāt* (remarks) the author mentions, as a form of reverence towards the master, keeping secret what the master reveals to the disciple privately during the *majālis*. But also the master is compelled to keep his *murīd*'s secrets, shaping their relationship as mutual, although their roles are clearly distinguished. Another, more practical, rule of *adab* that al-Nazīfī relates to his reader is to abstain from anticipating the master's words while speaking with him. The author underlines that this is not because of master's rank or role, but because he is actually asking God's help while speaking; so, waiting for him to finish is an act of respect of the Divine Presence and a way to train one's patience.³⁷

35 For a detailed discussion of the actions that invalidate the link between the Tijānī *murīd* and his master, see Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Miṣrī, *Faṣl al-maqāl fīmā yarfa' al-idhn fī l-hāl*, Cairo, private edition.

36 Nazīfī, *al-Durrat al-kharīda*, 3: 108.

37 Nazīfī, *al-Durrat al-kharīda*, 3: 110.

The discussion of *adab al-murīd* ends here. The rest of the chapter addresses the need to be granted permission before calling people to God's path, and analyzes the different aspects of sanctity in relation to prophecy.³⁸ Looking at the above quoted sources, all from the first generations of *Tijānī* disciples, the idea of *adab* that emerges is quite vague: no practical or behavioral rule is given, with the exception of some basic norms. The main focus is on the inner aspect of *adab*, on the presence of God, and of Aḥmad al-Tijānī as the actual object of a disciple's courtesy. This metaphysical attitude is clearly connected with the belief that all *Tijānī* masters are nothing but deputies to the founder of the order, and his spiritual function is active in the *talqīn* and in the *tarbiyya* processes that lead the disciple to spiritual realization. This idea of *ṭarīqa* is still present in modern texts, as, for instance, those of the Moroccan shaykh Idrīs al-ʿIrāqī (d. 1996?), who in his *al-Fayḍ al-rabbānī fīmā yaḥtāj ilayhi al-murīd al-Tijānī*³⁹ still advises the reader to seek a *muqaddam* with a sound *idhn* that guarantees the actual link with Aḥmad al-Tijānī and the Prophet Muḥammad,⁴⁰ all the other masters being nothing but deputies.

Master-disciple Relation in Later Sources

The devotion to a master who is the deputy of al-Tijānī also seems to be a central idea in several of the fundamental texts on the *ṭarīqa*, written in modern times. This impression is however contradicted by discussions of *ādāb* found in such other sources, as the *Kitāb rimāḥ ḥizb al-Raḥīm ʿalā nuḥūr ḥizb al-Rajīm* by ʿUmar al-Fūtī (d. 1864),⁴¹ and in a collection of quotations from earlier sources circulated in Sudan called *al-Hidāya al-muḥammadiyya fī ṭarīqat al-khatm al-tijāniyya*, of Badr ʿAbd al-Hādī Salāma.⁴²

38 Naẓīfī, *al-Durrat al-kharīda*, 3:113–17.

39 Fès, private ed., n.d.

40 ʿIrāqī, *Al-Fayḍ al-Rabbānī*, 36–44.

41 The literature about the political and religious role of al-Ḥājj ʿUmar Tall (Ṭaʿal) is wide and looks at his biography from different points of view. The *Kitāb al-Rimāḥ* was probably completed in 1839–41, when al-Fūtī settled in the capital of his reign, Diagoukou; the text was probably written during the holy war, as is confirmed by some passages in which the quotations are explicitly given by heart. The text was printed on the margins of the 1901 Egyptian edition of the *Jawāhir al-Maʿānī*, which was used for this study.

42 Published in Cairo, *Dār ṭibāʿa al-ittiḥād al-sharqī*, n.d. The author is an Egyptian master of the *Tijāniyya*, but among his masters counts Shaykh Alfā Ḥāshim (d. 1349/1911). Among his works see also *al-Nafḥa al-faḍliyya fī ṭarīqat al-khatm al-tijāniyya*, Cairo, *Dār al-Ṭibāʿa al-Miṣriyya*, 1924. The *Hidāya* is conceived as a compendium and also an integration of

The former is conceived as a manual, which in 55 chapters discusses the main tenets of the Tijānī way. Its author was the promoter of a *jihād* in West Africa against the Bambara infidels and later extended to other kingdoms in the region, building a short-lived state in the Futa Jallon region.⁴³ His role as *khalīfa* (general deputy) of the Tijāniyya is testified in the *Rimāḥ*, where he sets out the basic rules for the functioning of a spiritual community and the guidelines for his deputies. It is in fact a comprehensive and structured manual whose influence was fostered by the fact that it was printed together with the *Jawāhir al-Maʿānī*.⁴⁴

The *Hidāya* is a relatively short manual where the author subdivides the rules of *adab* taken from the *Rimāḥ* (which is not directly mentioned) into three levels: the attitude towards one's *nafs*, the good manners with one's master and with one's companions on the spiritual path. The first level is practically identical with the application of the *sharīʿa* aiming to prevent the disciple from following his *nafs al-ammāra bi l-sūʿ*, the soul which incites to evil. The second, is a list covering both spiritual attitudes and everyday actions: the disciple has to honor his master in all his inner and outer states, not to use his *subḥa* (prayer beads) while in his presence, nor to sit while he is standing, to avoid mentioning him in front of his enemies, and in general, to focus himself on his presence as the actual source of every spiritual benefit. This advice is not only for the novice, but also for the *muqaddam* concerning his own master and, above all, the general *khalīfa* of the *ṭarīqa*, who is the actual intermediary of the *madad* (spiritual influx) of Aḥmad al-Tijānī and the Prophet Muḥammad.⁴⁵ As for the

the *Nafḥa*. Christopher Gray describes Alfa Hashim as “a nephew to Umar Futi, exiled in Medina and Mecca, who was also an important figure [...]. He provided the primary link between West African and Arab Tijaniyya. Later, when descendants of Ujjidud and Alfa Hashim submitted to Ibrahima Niassé, their followers in the Kano Fulani mallam class went along with them, in “The rise of the Niassé Tijaniyya from 1875 to the present,” in *Islam et sociétés au Sud du Sahara*, 2 (1998), 44. This puts the *Hidāya* just midway between the umarian and the niassé traditions concerning *adab* rules, although Ibrāhīm Niyāss does not directly quote al-Fūṭī. The *Hidāya* may be conceived as part of a different, more practical, strand in describing *adab* that involved these branches of the Tijāniyya.

43 See Robinson, *The Holy War of Umar Tal*; Schmitz, *Autour d'al-Hājj Umar Taal*; Willis, *In the Path of Allah*; Gomez, *Pragmatism in the Age of Jihad*, 123–36.

44 This is true only for the 1901 edition and subsequent reprints. Although both texts have been printed recently in different editions and also translated into French, this version remains the one that also circulated in the years when Niyāss was alive. See Mbaye, *Perles des significations*; there is also a separate edition of the *Rimāḥ*, which I was unable to consult, see Fūṭī, *Kitāb al-Rimāḥ*.

45 Fūṭī, *al-Hidāya*, 104–105.

third aspect, the author does not detail specifics; rather, the text shifts back to mention basic forms of *adab* and devotion, like controlling one's tongue and mind, or loving the Companions of the Prophet.⁴⁶

This reworking of the *Rimāḥ* presents a first differentiation of the master-disciple relationship, by introducing guidelines for daily actions and actual behaviors towards a living master. The shaykh is pictured in more lively fashion, as a man actually interacting with his disciples, a man with his belongings (the prayer-mat, the *subḥa*) and his relations with the *dunyā*.

The reasons behind this shift are not evident in the *Hidāya*, nor are they retraceable in a period of production or fruition of the work (primarily middle twentieth century Sudan). Its main source for the discussion of *adab*, the *Kitāb al-Rimāḥ*, was written in the context of a general diffusion and institutionalization of the Tijāniyya in West Africa. It is in fact a systematization of the teachings conveyed by other texts, as the *Jawāhir* or the *Bughya*, put together to form a broad synthesis for the *muqaddams* appointed by 'Umar al-Fūtī as general *khalīfa* of the order.

Both texts (the *Hidāya* and the *Rimāḥ*) urge the disciple to respect a detailed series of bodily attitudes that may reflect an inner state of respect for the master. According to al-Fūtī, being in a state of purity in front of the master and avoiding taking his hand while it is otherwise employed are all required because the shaykh represents for his disciple the actual presence of God. Al-Fūtī also defines the master *wālid ma'nawī* (spiritual genitor), as a figure parallel, but of higher rank than the actual parents (*wālid ḥissī*, lit. perceptible father).⁴⁷ Among the conditions of the Tijānī *wird* is respect for the parents. Al-Fūtī further develops this point, defining the *murīd* as part of the *shaykh* in the same manner as the son is part of his parents, save for the difference that on the Day of Judgment the former will be able to intercede for the latter.⁴⁸ At the beginning of the chapter the author refers explicitly to the practice of home schooling spread throughout Africa and to the consequent overlap of the two roles of parent and of master. He does not criticize the practice, but defines a ranking based on the excellence of *ilm* over worldly life. This attention to a social aspect of knowledge can be read as part of a general renovation (*tajdīd*) of Islam carried out through the *jihād* in West Africa by al-Fūtī, involving both Sufism and politics.

The *Rimāḥ* can be considered a systematic exposition of basic rules and principles of the Tijāniyya, like those regarding *adab al-murīd* with his master

46 Fūtī, *al-Hidāya*, 108.

47 Fūtī, *Rimāḥ*, 1: 157.

48 Fūtī, *Rimāḥ*, 1: 159.

taken from earlier sources whether or not explicitly Tijānī. From this point of view there is no actual shift in the definition of the master-disciple relationship: the ways of behaving are only classified and delineated in their details giving birth to a set of rules, more codified if compared to earlier Tijānī sources. Nonetheless this codification of the *adab* made in the *Rimāḥ* and in the *Hidāya* focuses more on the actual, living master than on Aḥmad al-Tijānī as the unique initiator of all his disciples. The master is conceived as an image of God, more than a deputy of the founder of the order, as is clear when al-Fūtī explicitly compares the *‘ibāda* without any object other than God to the company (*ṣuḥba*) of a shaykh, to be sought only to reach Allāh’s presence.⁴⁹

The movement of expansion that originated from Ibrāhīm Niyāss was comparable to the one started by ‘Umar al-Fūtī in its dimensions and in its mixing of politics and sufism, while the former never called people to a *jihād* nor did he found anything that could be considered a state. Nonetheless, his political influence in West Africa and in general in the Islamic World is undeniable.

The peculiar aspect of the Niyassene Tijāniyya is the popularization of its practice of *tarbiya*, a series of rituals based on spiritual retreat that are usually reserved for the élite among the disciples: staying alone for a few days in a dark room, fasting and constantly reciting invocations is objectively difficult to do without previous training. Ibrāhīm Niyāss considered his *ḥaḍra* (coming from Aḥmad al-Tijānī) powerful enough to lead all his disciples during this practice.

Considering these elements, one would expect to find in the teachings of Ibrāhīm Niyāss the same focusing of *adab* on the figure of the living master as is found in the *Rimāḥ*. His very first work explicitly addressed this topic. The *Rūḥ al-adab* is, in fact, considered to be his first poem, probably written in 1924.⁵⁰ This poem has also been translated into English by Niyāss’ successor who headed the Kaolack (and in general Senegalese) Tijāniyya, Ḥassan Cisse (Sīssi), and is still considered an authoritative document about *adab*, although it was produced before Niyāss’ claim of being *ṣāḥib al-ḥaḍra*. Ḥassan Cisse’s approach to the topic in his version repurposes the steps already seen in earlier texts, ignoring most of the “practical” issues considered by ‘Umar al-Fūtī.

Defining the relation with the master during the recitation of the daily *awrād*, Ibrāhīm Niyāss says in his *Rūḥ al-adab*: “And picture in your mind the shaykh who brought you up, as he is his shaykh, without doubt.”⁵¹ He asserts

49 Fūtī, *Rimāḥ*, 1: 138.

50 See Seesemann, *The Divine Flood*, 37. The English translation reports 1920 as the date of “origination” of the work; see *Spirit of Good Morals*, ii.

51 Niasse, *Spirit of Good Morals*, 22; the “he” (the English translation reports “his” instead of “he is”) alluded to here is Aḥmad al-Tijānī. The same attitude is recommended by

that a disciple (whether he be a novice or a *muqaddam*) has to focus his attention on the image of his own master, considering it as the actual image of Aḥmad al-Tijānī,⁵² or at least a mirror of it. The concentration finds its focal point in this image, being never an actual picture (a photo or a drawing), but a mental figure on whose characteristics the *murīd* is instructed by his master.

While performing the rites of the *ṭarīqa* a disciple has to observe a perfect outer and inner *adab* (*fī l-ẓāhir wa-l-bāṭin*), because by the means of *adab* a disciple could ascend through the stations or stopping places (*manāzil*), says again the *Rūḥ al-adab*. These good manners consist in the way one sits (as the *julūs* of the *ṣalāt*), in lowering one's gaze and in avoiding eating, drinking and talking during a recitation. As for the *bāṭin*, the poem stresses again the importance of focusing one's attention on the image of the master.

The particular concern Tijānīs have with their *wird* is based upon a saying of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, to whom the Prophet granted the blessing that everyone who recited his (the Prophet's) *wird* during his life without interruption would not die without becoming a saint.⁵³ More than the knowledge of secrets (*asrār*) or the recitation of particular Names or *qaṣā'id*, Tijānīs seem to strive for perfection of attention while performing their obligatory rites, to the point that there are additional rites to make up for any lapse in concentration or the wrong number of repetitions of an element of the *wird*. As for their *wazīfa*, it is considered an *adab* to spread a pure and white cloth on the ground as sign of respect for the presence of the Prophet and of the Shaykh al-Tijānī that manifests itself during the recitation of a particular prayer called *Jawhārat al-kamāl*. As stated in various Tijānī manuals (such as the *Qaṣd al-sabīl* of Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Miṣrī)⁵⁴ the reciter has to remain on his knees until the end of the recitation and the *izār* (the cloth spread on the carpet) is folded up and stored.

This attention for the founder of the rites is accompanied by frequent recommendations urging the novice or the aspiring disciple to look for an accomplished master, who can be a *murabbī*, meaning a teacher of the *tarbiyya*, the shaping of the inner and of public attitudes. The *Rūḥ al-adab* and two of its commentaries, devote several passages to this topic.⁵⁵ In one verse Ibrāhīm

Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Miṣrī (d. 1978) in his *Qaṣd al-Sabīl*, 24. Al-Ḥāfiẓ is a respected personality in both North and West African Tijāniyya, although his figure remains understudied.

52 See *Nayl al-Arab*, 12.

53 Fūṭī, *Rimāh*, 1:89.

54 Ḥāfiẓ, *Qaṣd*, 18.

55 The same topic is dealt with in other early sources, evidencing the extent to which the reliability of the *silsila* and the experience of the master are central to the Tijānī path;

Niyāss urges: “And ask for an experienced *murabbī*, who will give you good instructions and whose knowledge is complete (*kāmil fī l-maʿrifā*).” It is interesting that in a commentary on this poem—by the hand of Naṣr al-Dīn Yūsuf, a prominent figure of contemporary Nigerian Tijānīyya⁵⁶—it is said that, if a disciple does not find an accomplished master, he has to perform the *tayammum* with pure sand. This alludes to the necessity of a master, although he is not the most perfect, in the same manner as the state of purity is a mandatory condition to perform the ritual prayer. The *murabbī* is considered a necessary condition to proceed through the stations of the path: if he does not encounter the most perfect *murabbī*, the *murīd* has to be satisfied with the one he is able to find. This is possible because the real *murabbī* is again the Shaykh al-Tijānī, who is not only the actual initiator, but also the real guide for both the master and the disciple, as is clearly stated in *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*.

The poem continues to report well-known recommendations, such as the instruction to abandon one’s self into the hands of the master and live as if there is no world at all. The opinion of the master is unquestionable: it can be wrong, but an error of the master is better than the right opinion coming from the *naḥs* of the *murīd*. Then Ibrāhīm Niyāss admonishes: “for the disciple there is no one except this Saint (*dhā al-walā*) besides the Prophet and his High Lord (*Mawlā*).”⁵⁷ In the commentary Nāṣr al-Dīn Yūsuf explains that

There is nothing good for the disciple who has completely abandoned his will for Allāh’s will except this shaykh to whom God entrusted the guidance and surveillance of the *murīd*, leading him to purity and proximity to God. *Al-Walā*—continues the commentator—is singular word with a plural meaning and indicates no one but our *mumidd* (bestower of grace) Aḥmad b. Maḥammad al-Tijānī and his companions, who are as prolongations of his essence.⁵⁸

These verses are the core of Niyāss’ discussion of *adab* regarding the disciple-master relationship. The rest of the poem devotes itself to the definition of science and of the means to acquire it, including various forms of *adab al-taʿallum*, like organizing one’s time. The approach to this topic follows the

see *Bughya*, 124; *Jawāhir*, 114–25; see also *Jawāhir*, 108–109, where the master—and his disciples—are compelled to follow a more knowledgeable and perfect master.

56 He is the *khādim* of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥusaynī. I was unable to gather any other information about him.

57 Niasse, *Spirit of Good Morals*, 22.

58 Yūsuf, *Nayl al-Arab*, 45.

path of earlier Tijānī sources, placing the founder of the order as the main focus of the disciple's attention.

Practical indications of how to behave are very few in the *Rūḥ al-adab*. One of them is as follows:

Be at all times with the shaykh in order to profit [from him]. Be at all times tenderly in love that you may prosper.

In proportion to your love for him you receive his spiritual influence, the people (*al-qawm*) have said this repeatedly.

Spend out of your new and old possessions in seeking his satisfaction. [...]

And obey your shaykh even if he makes you weep, because he guides you to spiritual success.⁵⁹

Ibrāhīm Niyāss defined the notion of *ḥayḍa* and the method of *tarbiyya* in the *Kāshif al-Ilbās*,⁶⁰ a fundamental text detailing his perspective on the Tijānī doctrine and the disciple-master relationship. In it, he outlines the tenets of his revolutionary approach to the education of disciples and defines the proper conduct to be followed while practicing his method.

A chapter of the *Kāshif* is devoted to "Seeking the Shaykh, his Character and the State of Discipleship."⁶¹ As in earlier Tijānī sources, the main focus is on the definition of the perfect master: Niyāss describes him quoting primarily from the *Jawāhir* in several passages, that urge disciples to sincerely seek an accomplished spiritual guide, look for God's presence and nothing else. Along with sincerity and the exclusiveness of a disciple's relationship with his master, nothing else related to *adab* is quoted from the Tijānī sources.

To provide information about the actual behavior a *murīd* should follow with his master, Niyāss quotes extensively Mukhtār al-Kuntī (d. 1811),⁶² a well-known figure of West African Qādiriyya and former master of Usman Dan Fodio (ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, d. 1817). Al-Kuntī, although he was not Tijānī, was credited by Niyāss as having predicted the advent of *khatm al-awliyāʾ* in the

59 Niasse, *Spirit of good manners*, 21.

60 Niyāss, *Kāshif al-ilbās ʿan ḥayḍa al-khatm Abī al-Abbās*, translated in English as *The Removal of confusion concerning the flood of the saintly seal Aḥmad al-Tijānī*, 2010. I quote directly from the English translation.

61 Niasse, *Removal*, 117–30.

62 About him, see Hunwick-O'Faye, *Arabic Literature of Africa*, 4:67–94, and Seesemann, *The Divine Flood*, 273, n. 50.

twelfth century of the Hijra, the period when Aḥmad al-Tijānī was alive.⁶³ The guidelines reported by al-Kuntī regarding the proper outward attitude towards one's shaykh are:

Beware of walking beside him with shoes on your feet, or while wearing any signs of luxury, unless he permits you to do so because of a valid excuse. You must not sleep in a house in which he is sleeping, nor spit in his presence, nor blow your nose, nor stretch out your legs, nor show a great deal of curiosity, nor sit on his carpet. You may handle his clothes for the sake of blessing, for the masters used to avail themselves of their shaykh's garments for that purpose. This was likewise the habit of the Companions of the Messenger in respect to his clothing, his hair, his cleansing agents, the remnants of his ablutions, his blessed saliva, his perspiration, his riding animal, his drinking vessel, the sites of his ritual prayer, and his private seclusion.⁶⁴

While different in some aspects, these indications are of the same kind as those presented by al-Fūtī. Also both the *Rimāḥ* and the *Kāshif* focus on the fact that the master is the image of God, not of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. Nonetheless, Niyāss did not mention al-Fūtī's work while speaking of *adab*, nor did he while speaking of other topics, thus not marking a difference in the actual set of rules in the general reference framework, because al-Kuntī sought to promote an idea of *tarbiyya* similar to the one outlined in the *Kāshif*. So the same kind of *adab* is put in a rather different doctrinal context regarding the tenets governing spiritual training and its practice.

There is no actual shift in Niyāss' own idea of inner and outward attitudes of the *murīd* from the *Rūḥ al-adab* to the *Kāshif* because the former concisely defines a form of *adab* not at all different from the one presented in the *Jawāhir* or in the *Bughyat al-mustafīd*. The latter reprises the ideas of the *Rimāḥ*, which are fully compatible with those of earlier Tijānī texts, while they focus on other details given the different social environment in which they were construed.

Conclusions

Early manuals and didactic poems, implicitly or explicitly, invite the disciple to focus his attention during the recitation of the *awrād* and to devote his *adab*

63 Fūtī, *Rimāḥ*, 2:35–38.

64 Niassé, *Removal*, 126.

to his master who is in fact absent: the real presence is that of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the only path to true spiritual success for a *Tijānī*.

How does this affect the actual rules of *adab*? Apparently there are no particular changes: from the texts analyzed and their sources, emerges a general adherence to the rules found in older and “classical” manuals and books, cited without further discussion or re-contextualization. The only peculiarity is in the shifting of the attention of the disciple, whose focus has to be directed externally (*bi l-ẓāhir*) solely toward his living master, while his heart has to be with The Master, Aḥmad al-Tijānī, who is the true *murabbī* and *mu’addib*.

As for the peculiarities of the “niyassene” branch of the Tijāniyya, they clearly derive from Niyāss’ idea of *tarbiya* as a basic means to train every disciple, thanks to the flood or fluxus of *baraka* coming from him. His actual presence as *ṣāhib al-fayḍa* and his religious and political role in Senegal, provoked a shift in the perception of what constitutes the correct *adab* towards the master, when he is still alive. Ḥasan Sissī, commenting on the *Rūḥ al-adab*, says:

A man once came to Shaykh Ibrahim Niyāss and said: “O Shaykh, from today I am going to do whatever I like.” The Shaykh asked him, “Based on what?” He replied: “Based on the fact that on the Day of Judgment, I know you will not enter the Paradise and leave me behind.” To this Shaykh asked him: “Who told you that I am going to Paradise?” The man said: “I know it myself, for you are learned, teach people with your knowledge, help the sick and feed the poor. Above all these, you are using your entire life and effort to see to the uplifting of the religion of Allah. There is therefore no doubt that Paradise is yours.” Shaykh said: “Get away from here for you are *Shaytan!!!*”⁶⁵

This undated episode shows how Niyāss’ figure could be perceived by his disciples, although narrated to prevent such attitudes. There is no mention of the *fayḍa* or of the *tarbiyya*, but it is clear that the main focus of the niyassene *murīd* is the bestower of the Divine Flood. There is no actual difference in the definition of the disciple-master relationship in the *Rūḥ al-Adab* or in the *Kāshif al-ilbās* and in earlier Tijānī sources, as emerges from a contextual analysis of *adab* rules. What marks the distance (if there is one) is the way in which the disciple is trained, not how he should behave in front of his master.

65 Niasse, *Spirit of Good Morals*, 15–16.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Bousbina, Said. "Analyse et commentaire du livre *Rimāḥ Hizb al-Raḥīm 'alā Nuhūr Hizb al-Rajīm* d'al-ḥājj 'Umar al-Fūṭī." Diplôme d'études supérieures, Université de Dakar, 1967.
- Fūṭī, 'Umar Ṭall. *Hādhā kitāb rimāḥ hizb al-raḥīm 'alā nuḥūr hizb al-rajīm*. Tunis: Maṭba'at al-dawlah al-Tūnisīyya, 1978.
- Ḥāfīz, Muḥammad. *Qaṣd al-Sabil*. Cairo: np, 2007.
- Ḥarāzīm, 'Alī Barrāda. *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī fī bulūgh fī bulūgh al-amānī fī fayḍ Sayyidī Abī al-'Abbās al-Tijānī*. Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1901.
- Ḥarāzīm, Sidī 'Alī Barrāda. *Perles des Sens et réalisations des vœux dans le flux d'Abū-l-'Abbās at-Tijānī—Jawāhir al-ma'ānī wa bulūgh al-āmānī fī fayḍ Abī al-'Abbās al-Tijānī*. Translated by El Hadj Ravane Mbaye. Beirut: Éditions Al Bouraq, 2011.
- Ḥarāzīm, Sidī 'Alī Barrāda. *Perles des significations. Jawahir al-Maani*. Translated by Ahmed Skiredj. Tunis: Publications Tijani, 2013.
- Iniyās, Ibrāhīm. *Kāshif al-ilbās 'an fayḍat al-khatm Abī al-'abbās*, 1975.
- Iniyās, Kashif al-Ilbās. *Tijānī, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdallāh and Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdallāh Tijānī*. Cairo: np, 1952.
- 'Irāqī, Idrīs. *Al-Fayḍ al-rabbānī*. Fès: n.p., 2013.
- Naṣr, Yūsuf. *Nayl al-arab bi-sharḥ rūḥ al-adab*. Cairo: n.p., nd.
- Nazīfī, *al-Durrat al-kharīda. Sharḥ Yaqūtāt al-farīda*. 4 vols. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 1998.
- Niasse, Ibrahim. *Spirit of Good Morals: Ruh al-Adab*. Medina, Kaolack, Detroit: African American Islamic Institute, 2001.
- Ṣā'iḥ, Muḥammad al-'Arabī -and Sa'īd Maḥmūd 'Uqayyal, eds. *Bughyat al-mustafīd fī sharḥ miniyat al-murīd*. Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 2005.
- Sukayrij, Aḥmad. "Raf'al-niqāb ba'd kashf al-ḥijāb 'amman tulāqī Shaykh al-Tijānī min al-aṣḥāb." In *Kashf al-ḥijāb fī man li Sidī Aḥmad al-Tijānī min al-aṣḥāb*, s.n. 1961.

Secondary Sources

- Gomez, Michael A., *Pragmatism in the Age of Jihad: The Precolonial State of Bundu (African Studies)*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Gril, Denis. "Adab and revelation. One of the foundations of the hermeneutics of Ibn 'Arabī." In *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī—A commemorative volume*, edited by S. Hirstenstein and M. Tiernan, 228–63. Shaftesbury, Dorset and Rockport, MA: Element Books, 1993.
- Hill, J. "Divine knowledge and Islamic authority: religious specialization among disciples of Baay Ṣas." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2007.

- Hunwick, John. *Arabic Literature of Africa*. Vol. 4. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003.
- Martin, B.G. "Notes sur l'origine de la t'arīqa des Tijāniyya et sur les débuts d'al-H'ājj 'Umar." *Revue des études islamiques*, 37/2 (1969): 267–90.
- Robinson, David. *The Holy War of Umar Taal: the Western Sudan in the mid-nineteenth century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.
- Schmitz, Jean. "Autour d'al-Ḥājj Umar Taal. Guerre sainte et Tijaniyya en Afrique de l'Ouest." *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 100/24–4 (1985): 555–65.
- Seesemann, Rüdiger. "Three Ibrāhims: literary production and the remaking of the Tijāniyya Sufi order in twentieth-century Sudanic Africa." *Die Welt Des Islams* 49/3–4 (2009): 299–333.
- Seesemann, Rüdiger. *The Divine Flood: Ibrahim Niasse and the roots of a twentieth century Sufi revival*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Urizzi, Paolo. "Il segreto del Sigillo dei Santi." *Perennia Verba*, 2004–2005: 4–40.
- Willis, John Ralph "Al-Hājj 'Umar Sa'id al-Fūtī al-Tūrī (c. 1794–1864) and the doctrinal basis of his Islamic reformist movement in the Western Sudan." Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1970.
- Willis, John Ralph. *In the Path of Allah: the Passion of Al-Hajj 'Umar: an essay into the nature of charisma in Islam*. London: Franck Cass, 1989.

Sitography

- Series of videos of the public commentary to the *Rūḥ al-adab* in Arabic and the Hausa language by Ibrahim Mansur Kaduna: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFOfcKoROog> (accessed 19 February 2015).
- Series of audio recordings of the oral commentary of Barham Diop to the *Rūḥ al-adab*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n27cTfrQ9rw&list=PL-rq8r8N7gHMqdqaWv1GoFJTHaufPk_8w (accessed 19 February 2015).