From the History of Sufism: Excerpts of Digital Manuscripts from the History of Sufism in the Islamic World

When speaking about Sufism, or even the History of Sufism, voices in support of this spiritual path arise, as do other voices in rejection, justifying this by stating that it is a departure from customand the prophetic tradition (*sunna*). Some people disagree linguistically, concerning which of the two etymologies one ought to apply for Sufism, *taṣawwuf*, not deriving from Arabic and meaning “a pure heart for God,” or *al-ṣūfiyya*, from the word wool (al-ṣūf in Arabic) – the clothing of the ascetics in this world. Either of them is appropriate; however, the etymological meanings are intertwined between, “taking hold of realities and rejecting what is in the hands of creatures,” which is the case in the expression, *taṣawwuf*, and “purity of heart for God” with the term al-*ṣūfiyya*, as it came off the tongue of the Sufi Abū al-QāsimJunayd.

Sufism is considered to be one of the elevated levels of religiositysince it falls under the third level;namely, excellence/beautification (*iḥsān*) which is embodied in knowing reality (*al-ḥaqīqa*) and witnessing the Real (al-Ḥaqq) in external forms, and then bearing witness to all this by educatingthe heart and the soul. There is a difference between scholastic Sufismand practical Sufism. The first form of Sufism is through the early spiritual leaders without the need for spiritual masters or adepts, and the second one is by following a specific oral *Ṭarīqa (Sufi order)*. Some of the Sufi orders are the Shādhiliyya, the Qādiriyya, the Rifāʿiyya, and many others. The mentality of Sufis varies by order according to their spiritual taste and their sociological environment. Each path has a share of severity and lenience. As for severity, there is enduring hunger, fasting, keeping vigil, silence, and isolation from people. As for flexibility, there is a reduction in fasting and the night prayer, as well as not requiring extreme insolation or retreat.

Through the library of Sufism, it is possible to become acquainted with the Sufism of Ibn\* al-Ghazālī, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī, Shams al-Dīn al-Tabrīzī, ibn ʿArabī, ibn ʿAṭāAllāh al-Iskandarī, Aḥmadal-Rifāʿī, Abū al-Hasan al-Shādhilī, and many other masters who have influenced the history of Sufism across time, even to our present day.

You will find on this page a diverse collection of manuscripts and books from the National Library about the History of Sufism and Sufis from diverse regions and time periods of the Islamic world, scanned and available. It is possible to download them on your personal electronic devices and study or use them without the need for internet.

The Library of Sufism: is a diverse and immense collection of manuscripts consisting of supplication and specialized commentaries on the philosophy and spirituality of Sufism from a multiplicity of time periods and geographical regions. You can find all of the digital materials from the Library of Sufism inside collections of the library here.

The Divine Perfections in the Muhammadan Traits 1754

Technical Terms of Sufism 1785 -1776

A Collection about Spiritual Beings 1892-1873

A Collection of Supplications and Prayers 1920

Giving Preference to The Light of Knowledge over The Light of the Intellect 1247

A Collection of Letters about Dhikr 1654

A Collection about the Prayers of The Sufi Masters 1765-1743

A Collection of Writings from Muṣtafā al-Khalwatī 1751

The Sufism of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī: Rumi is one of the most prominent Sufis, he renounced the world seeking refuge in the love of God, and wrote Sufi poetry in Farsi, Turkish, and Arabic. One of the most outstanding of his manuscripts is the poetry of *The Masnavi* (*al-Mathnawī al-Maʿnawī*) which was copied over many years in many languages on a number of displays. Available in this exhibition are two manuscripts in Persian and Ottoman Turkish.

(For more about Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī)

The Spiritual Couplets (al-Mathnawī al-Maʿnawī) – Iranian Display 1416

The Spiritual Couplets (al-Mathnawī al-Maʿnawī) – Indian Display 1750

The Spiritual Couplets (al-Mathnawī al-Maʿnawī) – Persian Display 1814

The Sufism of al-Ghazālī: You can find in this exhibition a collection of Sufi manuscripts which Imām al-Ghazālī wrote concerning Sufism and Sufi philosophy. The displayed manuscripts are from many different time periods and concern many different topics of Sufism. (For more about \*ibn al-Ghazālī in the corners of the library)

The Illuminated Treatise Concerning Knowledge of The Path 1658

The Revivification of The Religious Sciences 1713

The Gift of the Travelers and The Guide for The Wayfarers 1740

The Method of The Worshipers for Arriving at The Heaven of The Lord of The Worlds 1849

Sufism of ibn ʿArabī: Muḥammad ibn ʿArabī, raised in Andalusia, is the most famous Sufi in the Islamic world. He wrote a number of texts about Sufi philosophy, Sufi poetry, and several spiritual supplications. You will find in this exhibition many displays about the writings of ibn ʿArabī in addition to several commentaries across different time periods. (For More on ibn ʿArabī in the Library)

A Treatise About Defining the Aspirant 1270

Disclosing the Secrets for the Seekers 1659

The Extracted Drink in Commenting on the Poem of al-Shushtarī 1853

Spiritual Stations and Divine Emanations 1913 – 1911

The Commentary of ibn ʿAṭāAllāh al-Iskandarī: ibn ʿAṭāAllāh al-Iskandarī, or as he was called, “the translator of those who arrived”, is one of the most prominent Sufis who followed the Shadhilī order. He wrote about Sufi spirituality to the point that his writings were called, “al-ʿaṭāʾiyyāt.” There are some displays specifically onImāmal-Iskandarī in this exhibition, which were copied in the early part of the last century. (About ibn ʿAṭāAllāhin the library)

A Commentary on the Wise Sayings of ibn ʿAṭāAllāh 1591-1582

The Illumination in Withholding Contemplation 1675

Wise Sayings of ibn ʿAṭāAllāh 1814 – 1805

The Overpouring of Divine Gifts in Explaining the Wise Sayings of ibn ʿAṭāAllāh 1846