



ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ / RESEARCH ARTICLE

## *al-Ādāb al-Marḍiyya*: Celebrating Shaykh-Veneration in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Moroccan Reforms\*

*el-Ādābu'l-Marḍiyye*: XVIII. Yüzyıl Fas Reformları Karşısında  
Şeyhe Hürmetin Müdafaası

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### *el-Ādābu'l-Marḍiyye*: XVIII. Yüzyıl Fas Reformları Karşısında Şeyhe Hürmetin Müdafaası

**Abstract:** The 18th century witnessed significant religious revivals and reforms throughout the Islamic world, including Morocco. While both *sūfi* and non-*sūfi* reformist movements advocated a return to foundational Islamic principles, often through purist-orientated approaches that rejected popular *Sūfi* practices, the Darqāwī *Sūfi* order took a distinct path. Formed by al-Arabī al-Darqāwī (d. 1239/1823) as a sub-branch of the Shādhilī order, Darqāwiyya was characterized by a revival of asceticism and popular *Sūfi* practices, such as self-striving, seclusion, begging, and dhikr gatherings, and aligned them with *shari'a* principles. Above all, the teachings of Darqāwiyya revolved around the reverence (*ta'zim*) and veneration (*hurmah*) of *Sūfi* shaykhs and emphasized their central role as intermediaries between the Prophet and disciples. However, these *Sūfi* practices and emphasis on shaykhs faced condemnation from the Moroccan ruler, Mawlāy Sulaymān (r. 1792 to 1822) who favoured the Wahhābī teachings, despite not fully embracing its doctrines. In quest of exercising control over the *zāwiya*s, he targeted their religious legitimacy and restricted their *Sūfi* activities, including those of the Darqāwiyya. In this context, *Al-Ādāb al-Marḍiyya li-sāliki tariq al-šūfiyya*, a *Sūfi* manual written by the Shadhilī-Darqāwī shaykh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī (d. 1229/1814), serves as both an apology and a *Sūfi* manifesto. Written in the *ādāb al-murīd* (*Sūfi* etiquette) genre, this text acted not only as a guide for Darqāwiyya disciples but also as a proclamation of the central role of *Sūfi* shaykhs, as well as it sought to legitimize the criticized *Sūfi* practices of the order. This article studies the unique conventional position of the Darqāwiyya Order during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Moroccan reforms and present *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya* as a significant text defending the reverence and veneration of *Sūfi* shaykhs, as well as their practices during this period.

**Keywords:** Sufism, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Morocco, Religious Reforms, *Sūfi* etiquette, Shādhilī-Darqāwī Order, *ādāb al-murīd* genre, *Al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*.

**Öz:** İslam dünyası 18. yüzyılda önemli dinî tecdîd ve reformlara şahitlik etmiştir, bu durum Fas için de geçerlidir. Hicaz'da ortaya çıkan Vehhâbilik öğretilerinin Mağribli hacılar yoluyla müslüman batıya ulaştığı bu dönemde, tasavvufi gruplar da popüler tasavvuf pratiklerini reddeden yaklaşımları benimseyerek değişimden geçmiştir. *Sūfi* olsun ya da olmasın, dönemin ana akım grupları popüler tasavvufun pratiklerine ve geleneksel tasavvufi eğitimin şeyh merkezli yapısına karşı ortak bir tavır sergilemiştir. Bu değişim dalgaları arasında Derkâviyye farklı bir yol izlemiştir. el-Arabî ed-Derkâvî'nin (ö. 1239/1823) Şâzelî tarikatını zühd ve mücâhede merkezli uygulamalarla ihya etmesi sonucu oluşan Derkâviyye uzlet, yamalı hırka giyme, dilenme ve zikir meclisleri gibi uygulamaları teşvik ederek popüler tasavvufu şeriat ekseninde canlandırmıştır. Hz. Peygamber ve müridler arasında bir aracı olarak şeyh, Derkâviyye'de merkezi bir role sahip olmuştur. Ne var ki bu öğreti ve uygulamalar Fas sultanı Mevlây Süleyman'ın (1792-1822) tepkisini çekmiştir.

Mevlāy Süleyman'ın popüler tasavvufa yönelttiği eleştiriler, kısmen dinî inanışından ve halkın dinî doğru bir şekilde yaşayışına duyduğu endişeden ileri gelmiştir. İtikadî doktrinlerini bütünüyle onaylamasa da Vehhâbî öğretilerine yakınlık duymuş ve bu yönde adımlar atmıştır. Esasında Nâsiriyye tarikatı müntesibi olan sultan sadece Nâsiriyye'yi değil, yönetimle güçlü ilişkiler kuran diğer tarikatları da desteklemiştir. Derkâviyye ve diğerlerini ise münzevi yaşam tarzlarının toplum için sosyal ve ekonomik bir yük olduğunu söyleyerek hedef göstermiştir. Mevlāy Süleyman'ın bu tutumunda sadece dinî görüşleri değil, kırsal bölgelerdeki kabileler arasında hızla yayılan tarikatları merkezi otoritesine tehdit olarak görmesi de etkiliydi. Zira kabile topluluklarının dinî yaşamını yönlendiren zaviyeler, aynı zamanda sosyal ve ekonomik açıdan da belirleyici bir etkiye sahipti. Mevlāy Süleyman otoritesini güçlendirme arzusuyla zaviyelerin dinî meşruiyetlerini hedef almış ve iki dinî grubu kutuplaştırmıştır: Merkezi otoriteye bağlı şehirli alimler ve kabilelerin müttefiki olan zaviye şeyhleri. Böylece, zaviyeleri itibarsızlaştırıp faaliyetlerini kısıtlayacak ve kabileler üzerindeki hakimiyetini güçlendirecektir. Bu zaviyelerin aleyhinde, Vehhâbî öğretilerine mutabık bir propaganda başlatmıştır. Yayınladığı risâle ve hutbelerde şeyhlerin tasavvufî eğitimdeki rollerini hiçe saymış, faaliyetlerini ise bidat sayarak yasaklamıştır. Bu yaptırımlar zaviyelerin dinî, sosyal ve ekonomik alanlarını daraltmış, bu politikalarla Derkâviyye de etkilenmiştir.

Derkâvî'nin halifesi Muhammed b. Ahmed el-Büzîdî (ö. 1229/1814), tasavvufî risâlesi *el-Ādābu'l-marḍīyye li-sâliki tarikîs-süfiyye*'yi bu dönemde yazmıştır. Aleyhlerinde sürdürülen propagandanın büyük olasılıkla farkındadır ve şeyhin seyrüsülükteki rolünü yeniden tesis etme ihtiyacı duymuştur. *el-Ādābu'l-marḍīyye* müridin Allah'a, Hz. Peygamber'e, şeyhine ve diğer müridlere karşı riayet etmesi gereken edepi açıklayan bir risâledir. *Ādābü'l-mürîd* türünde yazılan eser, Derkâviyye müridleri için yolun gereklerini açıklayan kapsamlı bir kılavuz iken modern araştırmacılar için de 18. yüzyılda bir Derkâvî müridinin hayat tarzı ve dünya görüşünü bütüncül biçimde tasvir eden bir belgedir. Eser hem ideal davranışları kapsayan zâhiri edepi (*el-edebü'z-zâhir*) hem de kalbin hallerini ilgilendiren bâtinî edepi (*el-edebü'l-bâtin*) açıklamaktadır. Bu temalar tasavvufî literatür için bir ilk olmamakla birlikte, Büzîdî'nin metnini farklı kılan, şeyhe karşı tazim ve hürmeti kitabın merkezine yerleştirmesi ve diğer tüm edepi bu kavramların etrafında işlemesidir. Nitekim kitabın önemli bir bölümü tazim ve hürmetin önemine ayrılmıştır. Büzîdî, Kur'an ve hadis kaynaklarına başvurarak okuyucunun zihninde bu mefhumları meşrulaştırır. Ona göre, mürid manevî ilerleme için şeyhe karşı tazim ve hürmet beslemelidir; diğer yandan şeyh, Allah'ın yeryüzündeki halifesi olarak buna layıktır. Büzîdî yamalı hırka giymek, inzivaya çekilmek ya da dilenmek gibi tarikatın eleştirilen uygulamalarını da benzer şekilde meşrulaştırır. Öte yandan, tüm bunların kendi başına amaç olmadığını, seyrüsülükta önemli araçlar olduğunu söyler. *el-Ādābu'l-marḍīyye*'de yaptığı şey, şeyhin merkezi rolünü güçlendirmek, tepki çeken tarikat uygulamalarını şeriat sınırları içinde meşrulaştırmak ve tüm bunları velî kültürden ayırmaktır.

Bağlamı dikkate alındığında, *el-Ādābu'l-marḍīyye* sadece tasavvufî bir risale olarak değil, döneminin püriten söylemlerine ve reformlarına karşı bir müdafaa ve manifesto olarak okunabilir. Şeyhsiz tasavvuf fikrini reddederek mürşidin rehberliğinde klasik seyrüsülük anlayışını yeniden tesis eder. Bu çalışmada 18. yüzyıl Fas'ının dinî reformları karşısında Derkâviyye'nin özgün pozisyonu ortaya konulmakta ve *el-Ādābu'l-marḍīyye*, bir âdâb metni olmasının yanında, şeyhlere tazim ve hürmeti savunan ve tasavvufî uygulamaları meşrulaştıran önemli bir bildiri olarak incelenmektedir.

**Anahtar kavramlar:** Tasavvuf, 18. Yüzyıl Fas'ı, Dinî Reformlar, Tasavvufî edep, Şâzelî-Darkâvî tarikatı, *âdābü'l-mürîd*, *el-Ādābu'l-marḍīyye*.

## Introduction

“From the adab (etiquette) of the murīd, he should not sit next to the shaykh, even if he is invited to do so. Instead, murīd should sit in front of the shaykh, face to face, eyes to eyes, and heart to heart. Entering the presence of the shaykh is akin to entering a mosque... The shaykh is the qibla for the murīd. In terms of respect and veneration, he holds even a higher position than the qibla. As the Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) said addressing the Ka’bah: “How great and venerable are you. Whereas a believer is greater than you.” If this applies to any believer, imagine the status of a saint... So, my brother, understand the elevated rank of the people of Allah, and elevate whom Allah has exalted. If you act otherwise, you will be abhorred.”<sup>1</sup>

This passage from *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*, written by the Shādhilī-Darqāwī Shaykh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī (d. 1229/1814), emphasises the significant role of the shaykhs and the reverence they are due. While this theme is not uncommon in Sūfī literature, what distinguishes this passage is certainly its historical context—a period marked by religious renewal and reforms that sought to decrease the influence of the Sūfī masters.

The late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries marked a significant turning point in Morocco, characterized by political, social, and religious instability as well as transformative developments. However, this wave of changes was not exclusive to Morocco; indeed, the late 17<sup>th</sup> century witnessed several religious reform movements throughout the entire Islamic world within the Ottoman periphery.<sup>2</sup> These movements, though independent of each other, had different motives and profiles. On the one hand, there were Sūfī groups such as Idrīsiyya, Sanūsiyya, Nāṣiriyya<sup>3</sup>, and Tijāniyya ṭarīqas in North Africa with a purist orientation.<sup>4</sup> These ṭarīqas transformed into organized, shari’a-based ṭarīqas with a moderate stance towards worldly affairs. They rapidly expanded their influence across various geographic and social areas.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, there was the anti-Sūfī fundamentalist movement known as Wahhābiyya in Hijāz. In his article, Hopwood explores the shared characteristics

1 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Būzīdī, *Al-Ādāb al-Marḍiyya*, 40-41. Translated by myself.

2 Mostafa Zekri, “La Tariqa Shadhiliyya-Darqawiyya: les ‘empreintes’ du cheikh Al-Arabi al-Darqawi (m. 1239/1823)”, 231.

3 The Nāṣiriyya Order, a branch of the Shādhiliyya, was on good terms with Moroccan rulers. Its shaykh, Aḥmad al-Khalīfa (d. 1129/1717), pledged allegiance to Mawlāy ‘Ismāil and established zāwiyyas with his approval. Mawlāy Muḥammad and Mawlāy Sulaymān were also affiliated with this order, which embraced a reformist approach and did not approve popular Sufism. See Nehemia Levtzion and Gideon Weigert, “Religious Reform in Eighteenth-Century Morocco”, 189-193.

4 Fazlur Rahman characterizes these groups as “neo-Sūfī”, to say “Sufism reformed on orthodox lines and interpreted in an activist sense”. See Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 206-207. Zekri highlights the central role of Prophet Muḥammad when discussing the concept of “neo-Sufism”. The term “Muhammadan Way” (*tariqa muḥammadiyya*) is frequently used in this context, and its shaykhs are often distinguished with addressing political issues in their countries. However, some scholars suggest being cautious about the term “neo-Sufism”, even recommend avoiding it. Zekri, “La Tariqa Shadhiliyya-Darqawiyya”, 231.

5 For an overview of changes in Sūfī ṭarīqas, see Nehemia Levtzion, “Eighteenth Century Sufi Brotherhoods: Structural, Organisational and Ritual Changes”, 147-160.

of these reformist groups. Although they differed in their approaches to Sufism, they shared a common objective and discourse centred on returning to the original beliefs and practices. They idealized earlier periods and regarded the practices of popular Sufism<sup>6</sup> as innovations, all advocating for “the need for a return to a stronger faith.”<sup>7</sup> Voll explains this development through a transregional network of scholars, suggesting that a cosmopolitan group of scholars who travelled for pilgrimage and engaged each other in Mecca and Medina provided a purist foundation for the Sūfī groups that experienced a revival in the early nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> As for the Darqāwiyya ṭarīqa, it emerged as a third party during this period, taking a different approach from the aforementioned reformist Sūfī groups. While it also underwent a revival process during this time, it moved in the opposite direction by promoting popular Sufism and its criticized practices in Morocco. This stance attracted criticism from the authorities and resulted in the imposition of restrictions.

While the Moroccan sultans were patrons of the purist-orientated Sūfī groups, such as the Tijāniyya and the Nāṣiriyya, they adopted a rigorous stance against popular Sufism, gradually weakening the social, religious, and political influences of its affiliates. Given their close links with certain Sūfī groups, it would be too simplistic to attribute the reformist policies of the Moroccan Sultan Mawlāy Sulaymān (r. 1792–1822) and his father solely to the Wāhhābī influence. As Levtzion and Weighert argue, a wave of religious renewal concurrently spread across the Islamic world during this period. These movements emerged independently but interacted with scholars along the pilgrimage route in Cairo and the Hījāz region.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, it may be more appropriate to contextualize Mawlāy Sulaymān’s reforms within the broader framework of reformist Sūfī groups, rather than attributing them entirely to Wāhhābiyya. Nevertheless, his interactions with the Wāhhābī movement cannot be overlooked, so it is still important to outline the gist of his relationship with it. In 1803, Mawlāy Sulaymān was introduced with the ideological principles of Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Wāhhāb (d. 1206/1792) through Moroccan pilgrims arriving from Hījāz. This period coincided with his religious policies which restrained prevalent Sūfī practices, including the denouncement of annual commemorations at the saints’ tombs, commonly referred to as “mawsīm”, the discouragement of wearing patched cloaks, Sūfī dhikr rituals, and seclusion.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Mawlāy Sulaymān expressed explicit disapproval of the veneration of saints,

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6 Popular Sufism, here, refers to a form of Sufism commonly practiced among rural communities, differing from the purist and scholarly Sufism of urban centers. It is characterized by the practices such as dhikr gatherings, tomb visitations, ascetic practices, seclusion and other rituals that are less emphasized, and at times disapproved, by urban Sūfī scholars.

7 Derek Hopwood, “A Pattern of Revival Movements in Islam?”, 155.

8 John Obert Voll, “Hadith Scholars and Tariqas: An Ulama Group in the 18th Century Haramayn and Their Impact in the Islamic World”, 273.

9 Levtzion and Weigert, “Religious Reform in Eighteenth-Century Morocco”, 173-175.

10 Levtzion and Weigert, “Religious Reform in Eighteenth-Century Morocco”, 187-189; Mohamed el-Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco during the Reign of Mawlāy Sulaymān 1792-1822”, (PhD diss.), 257-260.

visiting their tombs, and seeking their intercessions. It is noteworthy, however, that, unlike the Wahhābis, he refrained from categorising these beliefs and practices as acts of apostasy (*takfīr*) and instead characterised them as sinful or innovative acts.<sup>11</sup> Undoubtedly, these criticisms and restrictions had a direct impact on the Darqāwiyya, as the criticized Sūfī practices formed an integral part of its spiritual education.

Al-Būzīdī wrote *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya* at a time when the doctrines and practices of his tariqa -the Darqāwiyya- faced fierce attacks and sharp censures. Although he presented the book in the form of a didactic Sūfī manual, one can recognize an underlying tone of apology or even a Sūfī manifesto in its lines. By emphasising the significant role of shaykhs in the spiritual journey, stressing the reverence (*ta'ẓīm*) and veneration (*ḥurmah*) they deserve, and legitimizing popular Sūfī practices such as seclusion, begging, and wearing patched cloaks, he responds to the primary criticisms of the Sultan's anti-Sūfī propaganda. Before addressing these speculative arguments, it is essential to introduce our author and the Sūfī tradition he belongs to.

## 1. The Author and his spiritual tradition

### 1.1. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Al-Būzīdī

Details concerning the life of al-Būzīdī remain somewhat obscure, and there exists limited hagiographical information about him. Among these, Al-Būzīdī's contemporary al-Mu'askarī's *Kanz al-asrār* stands as the primary hagiographic account providing a comprehensive portrait of his life. Likewise, al-Talīdī's *al-Muṭrib bi-mashāhīr awliyā al-Maghrib* may also be considered a significant source. Al-Būzīdī's own work *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*, along with writings by his disciple Ibn 'Ajība,<sup>12</sup> provide valuable anecdotes related to his life after his training under his shaykh. Based on these sources, we will present a concise biography of the author.

His full name, Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Būzīdī al-Sharīf al-Salmānī al-Ḥasanī al-Ghumārī, remarks his lineage tracing back to Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>13</sup> Born into the Banū Salmān tribe in Ghumāra, Morocco, al-Būzīdī grew up in a family who internalized the Sūfī way of life.<sup>14</sup> He confined himself to the basic knowledge of Islam. It is worth noting that he was illiterate, and he dictated his writings. He openly admitted that he had never engaged in scholarly circles.<sup>15</sup> Instead, he dedicated his early years to worship, *mujāhada*

11 Mansour, "Political and Social Developments in Morocco", 279-283.

12 Ibn Ajība's books, specifically *al-Fahrāsa*, and his commentaries on *al-Rāiyya* and *Al-Ṭāiyya* have been referenced.

13 'Abdullāh bin 'Abd al-Qādir al-Talīdī, *al-Muṭrib*, 216; Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Timsamānī, *Al-Imām Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī*, 7-8.

14 Mu'askarī notes that al-Būzīdī's mother was a noted Sūfī lady in her time. Devouts and ascetics would visit her from different areas, seeking her blessings. See al-Timsamānī, *Al-Imām Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī*, 7-8.

15 'Abd al-Salām bin 'Abd al-Qādir bin Sūda, *Ithāf al-muṭālī'*, 112.



(self-striving), and *zuḥd* (asceticism). He wandered on desolate mountains, practicing *ītiqāf* (isolating himself with the sole intention of dedicating himself to Allāh) in caves.<sup>16</sup> After many years of seclusion, he embarked on a journey from Tangier to Fez, seeking the *Quṭb*, a spiritual pole whom he and others believed to be al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī (d. 1239/1823). In 1196/1781-2, they met<sup>17</sup> during a time when al-Darqāwī had been left alone after the passing of his shaykh ‘Alī al-Jamal (d. 1193/1779). Despite his appointment as the successor of ‘Alī al-Jamal, al-Darqāwī was not acknowledged by his fellow brothers as the new leader of the ṭarīqa. Therefore, Al-Būzīdī became his first disciple.<sup>18</sup> Not long after, the Darqāwī branch flourished and attracted numerous followers.<sup>19</sup>

As the first and, for a period, sole disciple in the zāwiya, al-Būzīdī received special attention from his shaykh. He served al-Darqāwī for sixteen years, and in 1212/1797-8 he obtained permission to guide murīds on their spiritual journey and returned to his tribe in Ghumāra where he established a zāwiya and invited people to the Shādhilī Order.<sup>20</sup> His influence extended beyond his tribe, such that the Būzīdiyya-Darqāwiyya sub-branch was established after his name.<sup>21</sup> Al-Darqāwī himself affirmed al-Būzīdī’s spiritual legitimacy, sending letters to his disciples across Morocco that designated al-Būzīdī as his legitimate successor in both life and death.<sup>22</sup> Throughout his life, al-Būzīdī enjoyed recognition among his Sūfī contemporaries. He passed away on Muḥarram 10, 1229 (January 2, 1814), and was buried in his own zāwiya. Subsequently, a tomb, a well, and a mosque were erected near his resting place.<sup>23</sup> This place has been welcoming visitors for the *mawsims* organized by his descendants and disciples where they gather to recite Sūrah Yāsīn, praise the Prophet and the late saint, and perform the Shādhilī dhikr.<sup>24</sup>

Al-Būzīdī’s spiritual legacy is sustained through his writings; *Al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya li-sāliki ṭarīq al-sūfiyya* (The pleasing etiquettes for the seekers of the Sūfī path), which forms the focus of this study. Additionally, he authored two Sūfī poems: *Al-Rāiyyah* (The Poem of Letter Rā), a 29-lined poem illustrating the principles of Sufism, and *al-Ṭāiyyah* (The Poem

16 Aḥmad b. al-Hayyāt al-Zukārī, “Taḥdīm”, in *Majmu‘a Rasāil Maghribiyya*, author Abū ‘Abdullāh bin Aḥmad al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī, 56; ‘Abd al-Kabīr b. al-Majdhūb, *Tadhkira al-muḥsinīn*, 2492.

17 Talīdī, *al-Muṭrib*, 216.

18 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 315-317. In a different narration, al-Būzīdī joins a group of believers who devote themselves to worship in a cave. After a while, he learns that they are believing jinns and disciples of a shaykh called al-Darqāwī. So, he heads towards Fez to find him. Majdhūb, *Tadhkira al-muḥsinīn*, 2492.

19 Būzīdī, *Al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 315-318.

20 Talīdī, *al-Muṭrib*, 216; Ibn ‘Ajība, *Sharh al-Rāiyya wa Sharh al-Ṭāiyya*, 57.

21 J. Spencer Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 111.

22 Ibn ‘Ajība, *Sharh al-Rāiyya wa Sharh al-Ṭāiyya*, 21, 92. Evidently, al-Darqāwī has been taking precautions to secure the authority of his successor within the Shādhilī-Darqāwī ṭarīqa, aiming to prevent any disagreeable affairs he once experienced.

23 Timsamānī, *Al-Imām Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī*, 15, 30.

24 Timsamānī, *Al-Imām Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī*, 316-319. These annual celebrations are recorded between the years 1814 to 1912 and 1942 to 2003. There is not any up-to-date information on the celebrations today.

of Letter Ṭā),<sup>25</sup> a 366-lined composition exploring the concept of “*al-khamra al-azaliyya*” (the eternal wine), which refers to the secrets of the Divine Essence (*Dhāt*).<sup>26</sup> A collection of twenty-six of his letters has also been compiled and published.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, there is a treatise, *Ādāb al-murīd al-ṣādiq* attributed to al-Būzīdī and translated and published by Guezzou under the title “The Adab of the True Seeker” which is available only in English.<sup>28</sup>

## 1.2. Al-Būzīdī’s spiritual tradition: The Shādhiliyya-Darqāwiyya Order<sup>29</sup>

Al-Būzīdī’s spiritual lineage traces back to the Prophet Muḥammad through the Shādhili Sūfīs.<sup>30</sup> Key figures in this lineage include the eponymous founder Abu’l-Ḥasan al-Shādhili (d. 654/1256), his successor Abu’l-Abbās al-Mursī (d. 686/1287), and Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh al-Sakandarī (d. 709/1309)<sup>31</sup> as well as the later Sūfī scholar Aḥmad Zarrūq (d. 899/1493-4).<sup>32</sup> To provide a context and a doctrinal basis, it’s necessary to identify the Shādhili background and the doctrines of its early representatives.

In its formative phase, the core teachings of the Shādhili Order were formulated in the writings of Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh al-Sakandarī, especially in his hagiographical work, *Laṭā’if al-minan*. This work sheds light on the Shādhiliyya’s early doctrines, particularly through the stories of al-Mursī and al-Shādhili. Principally, the Shādhili path, as presented by Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh, advised disciples to maintain a balanced life. In other words, unlike the common Sūfī emphasis on renunciation and self-striving, disciples were allowed to remain in their present lifestyles, social relationships, occupations, and socio-economic status.<sup>33</sup> Following this teaching, Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh himself maintained his scholarly pursuits, promoting the idea that a Sūfī can spiritually advance while enjoying worldly comforts, possessions, and marriage, as long as his/her heart remains detached from them.<sup>34</sup> Considering these, the early Shādhili

25 *Al-Ṭā’iyya* was first published separately. Aḥmad bin ‘Ajība, *Sharh Al-Ṭā’iyya*.

26 Ibn ‘Ajība, *Sharh al-Rā’iyya wa Sharh al-Ṭā’iyya*, 187. Being an illiterate, he did not know the science of poetry, his objective in these poems was solely to convey the message, not to make an art of rhyming or meters. Ibn ‘Ajība, *Sharh al-Rā’iyya wa Sharh al-Ṭā’iyya*, 57, 94. Both poems have commentaries written by Ibn ‘Ajība, which are available in English, see Ahmad ibn ‘Ajība, *Two Sufi Commentaries*.

27 In these letters al-Būzīdī warns his murīds against worldly desires and directs them to seclusion, contemplation, asceticism, and remembrance of Allāh. See Timsamānī, *Al-Imām Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Al-Būzīdī*, 32-77.

28 Muhammad ibn Ahmad Al-Buzaydi, *The Adab of the True Seeker*. Translated by Mokrane Guezzou. Birmingham: Serenity Productions, 2013.

29 For a modern comprehensive study on the Shādhili ṭarīqa, see Éric Geoffroy, ed., *Une voie soufie dans le monde*.

30 Ibn ‘Ajība gives the full list of the Shādhili Sūfīs in his chain that goes through Al-Būzīdī. See Ibn ‘Ajība, *Al-Fahrāsa*, 62; Mustafa Salim Güven, “Şāzeliyye”, 383.

31 For a study on Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh, see Paul Nwyia, *Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh (m. 709/1309)*.

32 For a study on Aḥmad Zarrūq, see Ali Fahmi Khoushaim, “Aḥmad Zarrūq his life and works”, (PhD diss.).

33 Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh al-Sakandarī, *Laṭā’if al-minan*, 72-73. Al-Mursī, differing from the customary understanding of “Sufism” as derived from “ṣūf” (wool garment), suggested that the term originates from “ṣafā” in “ṣafāhullāh”, meaning “the one whom Allah purified.” Thus, he discouraged wearing wool garments which reveal the Sūfī identity and advised his disciples to conform to the social norms. This practice allowed his disciples to avoid claims of spiritual rank and worldly expectations from people. See Sakandarī, *Laṭā’if al-minan*, 131.

34 Sakandarī, *Laṭā’if al-minan*, 141-142.



masters were congruent with the *malāmah*<sup>35</sup> teachings.<sup>36</sup> They maintained close ties with Mālikī and Shāfiʿī legal scholars. They also had moderate to distant relationships with rulers. These connections reinforced the Shādhiliyya's religious legitimacy, facilitated the propagation of its teachings, and allowed al-Shādhilī to intercede on behalf of his disciples before the rulers.<sup>37</sup> The Shādhilī Order rapidly flourished in North Africa, spreading to the Levant by the 15<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, its Darqāwī branch reached Istanbul, Anatolia, India, Europe, and the United States.<sup>38</sup>

The late 18<sup>th</sup> century and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a revival of the Shādhilī ṭarīqa in Morocco and the establishment of its Darqāwī branch. During this period, various branches of the Shādhilī ṭarīqa had significant influence in their respective regions. However, they either claimed local authority opposing the state or formed alliances with ruling authorities for their worldly interests. Consequently, they compromised their original purpose of providing religious and spiritual guidance.<sup>39</sup> During this period of spiritual decline, al-Darqāwī appeared as a reformer, reviving the ṭarīqa with a significant emphasis on asceticism and self-discipline. His teachings, differing from the other orders, stressed the importance of seclusion from the social and political spheres.<sup>40</sup> In this regard, he followed his master ʿAlī al-ʿImrānī al-Jamal (d. 1193/1779)<sup>41</sup> of Fez whose teachings emphasised stringent self-discipline, the subjugation of the ego, and the restraint of even permissible desires (*mubāḥ*).<sup>42</sup> ʿAlī al-Jamal himself adhered to these ascetic principles, resigning his prestigious position and fine attire. He implemented begging on the streets to humble his ego<sup>43</sup> and conveyed these transformative teachings to his successor al-Darqāwī.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, it is essential to briefly introduce al-Darqāwī, in his role as the spiritual guide of al-Būzīdī.

35 According to Suhrawardī's description, the malāmatis conceal their worship and states. They embrace the customs of the people in their attire and way of life, in order not to appear different from them. See Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī, *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif*, 51.

36 For an article on the inclination toward malāmah in the teachings of the Shādhilī ṭarīqa during this period, see Nelly Amri, "Shādhilisme et malāmatisme: l'éthique soufie d'un maître ifrīqiyyen d'après les Manāqib du cheikh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Mzūghī (m. 675/1276)", 480-503.

37 Sakandarī, *Laṭāʾif al-minan*, 146.

38 Güven, "Şāzeliyye", 383.

39 For detailed information about the relationship between the Shādhilī branches and the Moroccan government during this period, see Mansour, "Political and Social Developments in Morocco", 316-329.

40 Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 105-106.

41 ʿAlī bin ʿAbdurrahmān b. Muḥammad al-ʿImrānī al-Jamal al-Sharīf al-Ḥasanī, a former government official during the reign of Mawlāy ʿIsmāʿīl (d. 1139/1727), sought refuge in Tunisia after the accession of Mawlāy Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad (d. 1171/1757) from the new officials. In Tunisia, he delved into Sufism and became a disciple of Abu'l-Mahāmid al-ʿArabī bin Aḥmad bin ʿAbdullāh Maʿn al-Andalusī. After sixteen years of spiritual journey, he was appointed as the successor of his shaykh. Muḥammad bin Jaʿfar al-Kattānī, *Salwa al-anfās*, 1:406; al-Timsamānī, *Al-ʿArabī al-Darqāwī*, 13-14. He passed away in 1193/1779 in Fez and was buried in his zāwiya in Ramilah. See Darqāwī, *Rasāil*, 61.

42 His teachings can be followed through his book *Naṣīḥa al-murīd fī ṭarīq ahl as-sulūk wa-l-tajrīd* which focuses on various aspects of Sufism, including the ego (*nafs*), the soul (*rūḥ*), Sūfī states (*ḥāl*), and stations (*maqām*), as well as ascetic spiritual practices like hunger, self-discipline, and seclusion. See ʿAlī al-Jamal, *Naṣīḥat al-murīd fī ṭarīq ahl al-sulūk wa-l-tajrīd*, 312.

43 Al-Timsamānī, *Al-ʿArabī al-Darqāwī*, 13.

44 In his counsel to al-Darqāwī regarding the duties of a novice, he advises his murīds to emulate the Prophets and

Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad al-‘Arabī bin Aḥmad al-Ḥusayn al-Darqāwī al-Ḥasanī al-Idrīsī comes from a distinguished Darqāwiyyūn family, the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>45</sup> Born into the Banū Zirwāl tribe, al-Darqāwī received a thorough Islamic education at the Miṣbāhiyya madrasah in Fez.<sup>46</sup> Then, he delved into Sufism, devoted himself to worship, *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), and struggle against his ego (*nafs*). In his earnest quest for a Sūfī guide, he met ‘Alī al-Jamal in 1182/1768-9. Following his shaykh’s instructions, al-Darqāwī profoundly changed his way of life. It is possible to read the strict practices and struggle he experienced in his letters,<sup>47</sup> where he mentions how he wore patched garments, begged on streets, and carried fruit baskets on his shoulders like a common porter in the markets, which offended him deeply.<sup>48</sup> Al-Darqāwī, nevertheless, applied these humbling practices and explained their spiritual benefits in purifying the heart and attaining divine knowledge. He eventually made them foundational principles of his spiritual path.<sup>49</sup> He passed away in Ṣafar 23, 1239 (October 29, 1823) in Banū Zirwāl and was buried in his zāwiyah.<sup>50</sup>

The Darqāwī branch arose from this revival based on abstinence, seclusion, and ascetic practices. Although Trimmingham suggests that it gained recognition as an individual branch after al-Darqāwī’s death,<sup>51</sup> Ibn ‘Ajība, during al-Darqāwī’s lifetime referred to it as “*at-ṭāifa al-maymūnah al-Darqāwiyya*” in his commentary on *al-Ṭāiyyah* poem.<sup>52</sup> The Darqāwiyya flourished during the lifetime of its eponymous founder, becoming one of the most influential Sūfī orders in Morocco. Al-Darqāwī tutored numerous novices, and his first successor was al-Būzīdī. Assigned as a spiritual guide for the disciples of the Shādīlī-Darqāwī Order, al-Būzīdī served as an independent guide for seventeen years, until he died in 1229/1814, a decade before his shaykh’s death, and therefore, he did not have the opportunity to carry

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the Companions by adopting practices such as walking with a stick, wearing patched garments, carrying a rosary around their necks, walking barefoot, enduring hunger, sleeping little, and spending their nights in prayer. He emphasises isolation from people, particularly from those in positions of power. He further instructs to maintain passive obedience to their shaykh. See Louis Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan*, 233.

45 Al-Kattānī, *Salwa al-anfās*, 1:188; Muhammad b. Qasim Kūhin, *Tabaqat Al-Shadhiliyya Al-Kubra*, 186.

46 Kūhin, *Tabaqat Al-Shadhiliyya*, 176-177.

47 For two different editions of the Arabic text of these letters see Abū ‘Abdullāh bin Aḥmad al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī, *Majmu‘a Rasāil Maghribiyya* (edited by Bassām Muḥammad Bārūd). Abu Dhabi: Al-Majma‘u al-saqafī, 1999; Muḥammad al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī, *Rasāil Mawlay al-‘Arabī Al-Darqāwī* (edited by Āsim Ibrahim Al-Kayyālī). Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 2009. For a partial English translation see al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī, *Letters of a Sūfī Master*. Translated by Titus Burckhardt. London: Perennial Books, 1973; and the full text translated in English see Muhammad al-‘Arabī ibn Ahmed ad-Darqāwī, *The Darqāwī Way: The Letters of Shaykh Mawlay al-‘Arabī ad-Darqāwī*. Translated by Aisha Bewley. USA: Diwan Press, 1981; Mulay Al-Arabi al-Darqawi al-Hasani, *Letters on the Spiritual Path*. Translated by Mohamed Fouad Aresmouk and Michael Abdurrahman Fitzgerald. USA: Al-Madina Institute, 2018.

48 Talidī, *al-Muṭrib*, 206-210; Darqāwī, *Rasāil*, 61, 72.

49 Darqāwī, *Rasāil*, 72.

50 Darqāwī, *The Darqāwī Way*, 18.

51 Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 105-106, 111-112.

52 Ibn ‘Ajība, *Sharh al-Rāiyya wa Sharh al-Ṭāiyya*, 123.

on al-Darqāwī's spiritual legacy after him. This may explain why he has not received due recognition in modern literature. In fact, he played an instrumental role in supporting the ṭarīqa through his zāwiya, activities in various parts of Morocco, the books he authored, and the guidance he provided to his disciples. Among his disciples, Ibn 'Ajība ascribed the ṭarīqa's revival and its widespread acceptance throughout Morocco to al-Būzīdī together with al-Darqāwī.<sup>53</sup> His *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya* itself was a unique contribution to the Shādhilī-Darqāwī literature. Written in the adab genre, it efficiently explained the order's teachings. The full motives of the book, both as a Sūfī manual within the Darqāwiyya and as an apology in Moroccan society, will become clearer in the context of the Moroccan Sultan's religious and political policies and his reformist ideas once they are established.

## 2. The Darqāwiyya during Mawlāy Sulaymān's religious reforms

In 18<sup>th</sup> century Morocco, while other reformist Sūfī groups advocated a common objective of "the need for a return to a stronger faith," the Darqāwiyya distinguished itself by not aligning with this purist-orientated notion. Instead, it revived popular Sufism and connected it to shari'a rule. It also centred on the role of the shaykh, highlighting his vital role in a spiritual journey and intermediary position between the Prophet and disciples. This was also a departure from others who downplayed the shaykh's role and advocated a direct connection to the Prophet. Another distinguishing feature of the Darqāwiyya was its avoidance of any interaction with the authority. It emphasized detachment from worldly life, maintained distant relations with rulers and did not pursue social or political reforms. Rather, its reforms were rooted in mysticism, as the French diplomat Estournelles de Constant described the ṭarīqa as a peaceful and harmless order, preserving purely mystical doctrines and avoiding political or worldly ambitions.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, it still faced opposition from rulers and local communities. In 1795, Ibn 'Ajība and his companions were imprisoned for their spiritual activities in Tetouan, their zāwiya was closed, and Ibn 'Ajība was forced to abandon his Sūfī activities.<sup>55</sup> Bliss notes that the animosity towards the order extended beyond rulers, as some local communities vehemently opposed Ibn 'Ajība and his zāwiya. Ibn 'Ajība's autobiographical work, *al-Fahrāsa*, narrates the divisions and animosity within Moroccan society, reflecting the challenges he faced in the society.<sup>56</sup> It is evident that his shaykh al-Būzīdī was aware of these tensions and may have sought to defuse them through his book.

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53 Ibn 'Ajība, *Al-Futūḥāt al-ilāhiyya*, 15.

54 Paul d'Estournelles de Constant, "Les Sociétés Secrètes chez les Arabes et la Conquête de l'Afrique du Nord", 107-108.

55 Muḥammad Dāwūd, *Tārīkh Ṭiṭwān*, 3: 210-211.

56 Margaret Bliss, "Violence, Division and Opposition: How Neo-Sufi Wali Ahmad Ibn Ajība's Hagiography Illustrates Political and Religious Tensions in Early Nineteenth Century Morocco", 38. After these attacks, they migrated to Tlemcen and settled in the highlands away from the state control. Dāwūd, *Tārīkh Ṭiṭwān*, 3: 210-211.

Shortly after the arrest of Ibn ‘Ajība and his companions, al-Darqāwī developed a favourable relationship with Mawlāy Sulaymān (1792-1822).<sup>57</sup> His intercession for the poor was accepted by the Sultan who also benefited from the shaykh as a mediator. However, this rapport was brief, as it was not long before Mawlāy Sulaymān launched anti-Sūfī religious policies in 1806, publishing a treatise that condemns popular Sufism. These measures placed the Darqāwiyya at odds with the Sultan.<sup>58</sup> In 1815, Mawlāy Sulaymān further restricted Sūfī activities, including those of the Darqāwiyya, which led to a decay in their relations.<sup>59</sup> To better understand the motivations behind the Sultan’s anti-Sūfī policies, it is essential to examine his stance towards the Sūfī groups and the broader context that influenced his approach to popular Sufism.

Mawlāy Sulaymān was a devout and ascetic ruler who devoted himself to worship and seeking knowledge. Despite his initial refusal to ascend the throne, he ultimately accepted the responsibility while maintaining a modest way of life.<sup>60</sup> He followed Mālikī-Ash‘arī schools and held scholars in high regard, seeking their counsel in critical decisions and prioritizing shari‘a rules over economic interests.<sup>61</sup> His personal piety and asceticism influenced his governance and approach to religious reform. In a period of religious renewal, he advocated the need for “a return to stronger faith”. He supported urban Sūfī groups that had close ties with rulers and scholars. He was affiliated with the Nāṣiriyya ṭarīqa, which aligned itself with a sober form of Sufism, abstained from extreme asceticism and seclusion, and allowed dealing with trade and worldly wealth. Mawlāy Sulaymān also supported a similar-minded Sūfī, Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1230/1815), who provided him with a residence and financial support.<sup>62</sup> Both ṭarīqas experienced a revival with a purist basis and aimed at refining popular Sufism.

Seeking to control and regulate Sūfīs, Mawlāy Sulaymān proposed restricting Sufism within scholarly circles, as he believed that common people lacked the necessary understanding and he accused popular Sūfī ṭarīqas of distorting religion and leading the masses astray. This included the Darqāwiyya.<sup>63</sup> Mawlāy Sulaymān suggested that Sufism should be restructured based on al-Ghazālī’s *Iḥyā*. He aimed to diminish the central role of shaykhs and discouraged

57 Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 111.

58 Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 335-337.

59 Jeannine Drouin, *Un Cycle Oral Hagiographique dans le Moyen-Atlas Marocain*, 13.

60 Majdhūb, *Tadhkira al-Muḥsinīn*, 2448.

61 For instance, when taking decisions in international trade, his concerns were not merely about the economy but also preserving the people’s religion. See Domingo Badia y Leblich, *Travels of Ali Bey*, 1:173; Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 251, 254.

62 Levtzion and Weigert, “Religious Reform in Eighteenth-Century Morocco”, 192-195.

63 Levtzion and Weigert, “Religious Reform in Eighteenth-Century Morocco”, 192. It is important to note that Mawlāy Sulaymān does not specifically mention the Darqāwiyya in his criticisms; rather, he explicitly names the ‘Isāwiyya and Jalāliyya Orders. Dāwūd describes these two orders as ignorant people who danced in the streets, frightening women and children with their vulgar behavior. However, while officials largely ignored these groups, they imposed restrictions on the Darqāwiyya. See Dāwūd, *Tārīkh Titwān*, III, 211-212.

dhikr gatherings, tomb visits, and mawsīms. He also criticized passive life in seclusion.<sup>64</sup> He even authored a Friday sermon as the “amīr al-mu’minīn” (commander of the faithful) in which he openly condemned these practices, considering them as innovations, and invited people to follow the rulers rather than the shaykhs.<sup>65</sup> For Gholaichi, Mawlāy Sulaymān’s objective in this sermon was to discredit the zāwīyas and consolidate his political power.<sup>66</sup> His primary aim was to exert authority over tribal communities. To achieve this, he targeted their powerful allies, the zāwīyas. By condemning mawsīms, he blocked the economic income of zāwīyas, thereby weakening the tribes’ economic and political position. Mawlāy Sulaymān sought to curtail the privileges of these groups. He also polarized religious understandings between two groups: The central authority with urban scholars, and tribal communities with zāwīyas. To achieve these goals, he aligned himself with the Wahhābī discourse, although he did not fully adopt its creedal doctrines.<sup>67</sup>

Mawlāy Sulaymān and Moroccan scholars were introduced to Wahhābī teachings for the first time in 1803 when a Moroccan scholar Aḥmad al-Bannānī returned from Mecca after the pilgrimage, with two documents that outline Wahhābī teachings. Al-Bannānī presented these documents to the scholars, who found the Wahhābī creed problematic and issued an oppositional statement. However, Mawlāy Sulaymān sympathized with some of their teachings. This alignment became evident in both his religious reforms and public statements. After this encounter, Mawlāy Sulaymān’s opposition to widespread Sūfī practices, such as the veneration of saints, visiting their tombs, seeking their intercessions, and building tombs over their graves, intensified. These practices became the focal point of his religious reforms. It must be noted that, unlike the Wahhābīs, Mawlāy Sulaymān did not consider these practices blasphemous or unbelief. Instead, he considered them as innovations or sins when practiced by commons who lacked the required religious understanding. Yet, he still took steps in line with them. In 1805, he removed the dome over his father Mawlāy Muḥammad’s grave and relocated it to a mosque, and in 1809, he removed the gravestone.<sup>68</sup> Later, he published a Friday sermon prohibiting the mawsīms for late Sūfī saints which was then a common practice in zāwīyas.<sup>69</sup> Finally, in 1811, he openly expressed his favorable inclination towards Wahhābī teachings through an official letter where he said: “This letter aims to dissipate any possible suspicion in your part according to which we would be opposed to your ideas.” He

64 Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 3: 257-260.

65 Abu’l-Qāsim al-Zayyānī, *Al-Tarjumānah al-kubrā*, 467-469.

66 Sharif tribes and Sūfī zāwīyas have been allied power authorities in the Moroccan rurals, almost independent from the central authority. The zāwīyas would take the role of urban scholars in rurals, developing the tribe’s religious identity. They not only offer religious education but meet the spiritual, psychological, and social needs of its people. Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*, 8; Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 257.

67 See Fatima Gholaichi, “Of Saints and Sharifian Kings in Morocco: Three Examples of the Politics of Reimagining History through Reinventing King/Saint Relationship”, (Master’s thesis), 33, 35-37.

68 Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 271-283; Gholaichi, “Of Saints and Sharifian Kings in Morocco”, 32.

69 For the complete text of the sermon, see Zayyānī, *Al-Tarjumānah al-kubrā*, 467-469.

praised the Wahhābīs for their asceticism, adherence to the ways of the pious ancestors (*al-salaf al-ṣālih*), emphasis on monotheism (*tawhīd*), and opposition to innovations.<sup>70</sup>

Taking these into account, it becomes evident that the Moroccan Sultan had his reasons to oppose the Darqāwiyya. The Darqāwī shaykhs believed that depending solely on outward knowledge was insufficient and thus they claimed spiritual authority over scholars.<sup>71</sup> They organized Sūfī gatherings characterized by loud dhikr<sup>72</sup> and encouraged practices such as extreme poverty, seclusion, asceticism, begging, and wearing patched garments, which were common among rural Sūfīs of the period. Mawlāy Sulaymān strongly condemned their withdrawal from active social and economic life, criticizing them for being a burden to society. Mansour suggests that he specifically targeted the Darqāwī Order with this criticism.<sup>73</sup> His religious policies that restricted the activities of zāwiyas and weakened the authority of Sūfīs undoubtedly had an impact on the Darqāwiyya as well. In this context where reverence for shaykhs and saints was deemed as innovation or a major sin, *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya* would have been controversial in its time. Considering its emphasis on etiquette and reverence toward the shaykhs, as well as its legitimization of popular Sūfī practices, it would not be inaccurate to view the book as an anti-thesis to the mainstream discourses of its time.

### 3. *Al-Ādāb al-Marḍiyya*: A Manifesto Disguised as a Sūfī Manual

#### 3.1. An Overview of the Book

*Al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya li-sāliki ṭarīq al-ṣūfiyya* is a comprehensive manual for disciples demonstrating the essential etiquettes and manners they should adhere to in their relationship with Allah, their shaykh, and fellow brothers. Falling within the *adab* (Sūfī etiquette) genre,<sup>74</sup> this book provides valuable insights into the lifestyle and worldview of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Darqāwī Sūfī. It comprises twelve parts and approximately sixty-five chapters. Each chapter begins with an outward etiquette to be observed in interaction with the shaykh or brothers, then explains the underlying spiritual principles derived from Quranic verses and the teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad, often including their esoteric interpretations (*al-tafsīr al-ishārī*). Encompassing a wide spectrum of aspects of the Sūfī path, these etiquettes can be divided into two categories: the outward (*al-adab al-zāhir*), physical actions like serving the shaykh, maintaining silence in his presence, and eating less, and the inward

70 Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 277.

71 According to Dāwūd, this was the main reason for Ibn ‘Ajība’s imprisonment in 1795. While ignoring other ṭarīqas who even cause fear among people, the rulers seek to suppress the Darqāwiyya. Dāwūd, *Tārīkh Ṭiṭwān*, III, 211-212.

72 During that period, dhikr sessions were practiced by all disciples in mosques, zāwiyas, or homes. Al-Darqāwī did not approve women to attend these gatherings; instead, they conducted their own sessions in private places. See Zukāri, “Taqdim”, 55-56.

73 Mansour, “Political and Social Developments in Morocco”, 260.

74 For a comprehensive collection of studies on this genre, see Francesco Chiabotti et al., *Ethics and Spirituality in Islam*.



(*al-adab al-bāṭin*), which concerns the heart and includes notions such as holding the shaykh in high regard, submitting to his guidance, nurturing love and reverence towards him, and developing virtuous qualities.<sup>75</sup>

Fourty-three chapters of the book focus on etiquettes towards one's shaykh, eight chapters address etiquettes towards fellow murīds, while the remaining chapters delve into various subjects of the spiritual journey. These include self-striving, ascetic practices, purification of the nafs (*tazkiya al-nafs*), good character, contemplation, reliance on Allah, as well as spiritual states and stations. This comprehensive scope demonstrates al-Būzīdī's broad understanding of the concept of adab. According to him, adab encompasses all dimensions of the spiritual journey. To have perfect adab means to complete this journey, annihilate the self, and purify the soul.<sup>76</sup> This means that only one who has completed the spiritual journey can truly embody perfected adab, both inwardly and outwardly.

A key emphasis in the book is al-Būzīdī's shift of focus from behavioural etiquettes to the inner states a murīd should attain. Throughout the text, he emphasises that inward etiquettes hold a higher rank than outward ones. For example, while a breach of outward etiquette may be amended with an apology, neglecting inward etiquette requires sincere repentance from the heart, placing a heavier burden on a murīd.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, for a murīd who has perfected inward etiquettes, outward etiquettes become less necessary. The text illustrates this with an instruction that a murīd should not look at the shaykh's face to preserve his ta'zīm. However, once he has completed his spiritual journey, this rule no longer applies, because his ta'zīm remains unaffected, and his spiritual journey remains secure, regardless of his behaviour.<sup>78</sup> Thus, the book not only outlines the etiquettes of the spiritual path but also serves as a roadmap, guiding murīds toward the ultimate objective of their spiritual journey.

The Arabic edition of this book was initially published by Bārūd in 2001, and it included footnotes explaining the related Sūfī terminology.<sup>79</sup> A following edition, although with a confusion that mixed our author up with another Būzīdī, Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥabīb al-Būzīdī (d. 1327/1909), was published by Dr. al-Kayyālī in 2006.<sup>80</sup> The most recent edition which collects all of al-Būzīdī's works, including his poems, letters, and hagiographical accounts, was compiled by al-Timsamānī.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, there exists a partial English

75 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 309.

76 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 241-242.

77 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 53.

78 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 42.

79 Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Al-Būzīdī, *Al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya li-sāliki tariq al-sūfiyya* (edited by Bassām Muḥammed Bārūd). Amman: Dār al-Fath, 2011.

80 Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Al-Būzīdī, *Al-Ādāb al-Marḍīyya li-sāliki tariq al-sūfiyya* (edited by Āsim Ibrahim Al-Kayyālī). Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2006.

81 Muḥammad al-Mahdi al-Timsamānī, *Al-Imām Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī: Tarjamatuhū wa ba'du āthārihi*. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2006.

translation of this work within *The Adab of the True Seeker* by Guezzou who drew from two manuscripts in his library.<sup>82</sup>

*Al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya* has maintained its relevance and influence within Shādhilī circles to the present day. So much so that the late Shādhilī Sūfī ‘Abdurrahmān al-Shāghūrī (d. 2004)<sup>83</sup> taught this book in his study circles alongside famous Sūfī classics such as Ibn al-‘Arabī’s *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, Al-Jilānī’s *Futūḥ al-Ghayb*, and al-Suhrawardī’s *Awārif al-Ma‘ārif*.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, the Syrian scholar and the Shādhilī Sūfī Muhammad al-Yaqoubi delivered a course on the book in South Africa in 2007. His students later produced a concise summary of the sixty-five etiquettes in English and published it on their website.<sup>85</sup>

### 3.2. The book as a Sūfī manifesto

Al-Būzīdī explains that his aim with this manual is to guide fellow disciples who were unaware of the required etiquettes for the spiritual path, and troubling their shaykh al-Darqāwī, thus harming their own journeys. As he says, “Our path is travelled only through correct manners, without it the seeker slips and perishes.”<sup>86</sup> Still, when the thematic emphasis of his book and its socio-religious background are considered, a dual purpose is perceived in his writing. In fact, the work not only plays an instructional role, but also contains the hallmarks of an apologetic treatise or even a Sūfī manifesto, but without any political undertone.

In a period when the practices and *zāwiya*s of his *ṭarīqa* faced severe scrutiny and censure, al-Būzīdī may have sought to seize the opportunity to legitimize the practices of popular Sufism as well as to reinforce the central position and spiritual authority of the shaykhs.<sup>87</sup> This is reflected in *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*. For example, while Mawlāy Sulaymān, both as a descendant of the Prophet and as the *amir al-mu‘minīn* (possessors of authority), was inviting people to obedience to the *ūlu’l-amr* in a Friday sermon mentioned before, Al-Būzīdī firmly asserted that a true *murīd* should recognise his shaykh as the *ūlu’l-amr* and obey him.<sup>88</sup> Throughout the book, he emphasised the critical role of shaykhs in the spiritual

82 al-Buzaydi, *The Adab of the True Seeker*.

83 Al-Shaghouri’s spiritual lineage in the Shādhiliyya traces back to Aḥmad al-Alawī through Muḥammad al-Hāshimī of Damascus. Al-Shaghouri was appointed as a successor of Muḥammad Sa‘īd al-Kurdī as well. See Nuh Keller, “Obituary Sheikh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Shaghouri: Light Upon Light in Damascus”, 353-357. The relevant chapter does not appear in al-Kūhin’s *Tabaqāt* as it was added later by the translator.

84 Keller, “Obituary”, 358.

85 “Course: Tasawwuf | Adab Mardiyya”, Damas Cultural Society, [https://damas.nur.nu/13656/madrassa/tasawwuf\\_adab-mardiyya](https://damas.nur.nu/13656/madrassa/tasawwuf_adab-mardiyya) (23.10.2023)

86 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*, 33, 252.

87 Guezzou states that Al-Būzīdī’s works could be considered as “reinstatement of the importance and sacrosanctity due to the heirs of the Prophet (may God’s blessings and peace be upon him.)” See Buzaydi, *the Adab of the True Seeker*, preface, 6.

88 See Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*, 103. Here, we should note that this statement was not a political discourse against the ruler, as he says, this rule is valid only for a true seeker who does not delve into worldly matters. As for the beginners, who constitute the majority, they should follow the political rulers.

journey of seekers, regarding the observance of proper ādāb and taʿzīm towards them as non-negotiable requirements. Seeing them as Allah's vicegerents on the earth and inheritors of the Prophet's legacy, al-Būzīdī stated that showing respect and reverence to them is, in fact, an act of devotion to Allah and His Messenger.<sup>89</sup> Hence, the shaykhs and their legitimate authority over disciples become an indispensable means for Sūfī education. In this respect, a considerable portion of the book is dedicated to the required ādāb towards shaykhs, with an emphasis on taʿzīm and ḥurmah as foundational elements. Al-Būzīdī explains the vital role of these themes by referring to Quranic and Prophetic sources.

On the other hand, al-Būzīdī follows the same method in legitimizing popular practices of the ṭarīqa such as seclusion, begging, and withdrawal from social life, etc. For him, these etiquettes and practices were not ends in themselves, but indispensable tools for spiritual progress. He explains their necessity and benefits, framing them as means to gain inward qualities and ultimately attain mystical knowledge and spiritual transformation. In doing so, he directs the reader's perspective towards the spiritual stations that murīds can achieve through such practices. This approach may also be considered as an address to the criticisms directed at these practices.

This approach is particularly evident in the fourth part of the text, which is devoted to the criticized practice of begging, detailing its conditions and rulings. He explains that begging is permissible under Islamic law and serves as one of the most effective methods for Sūfī training. It encompasses the essence of servanthood by humbling the ego, detaching from people, and renouncing worldly attachments. It cultivates virtues such as humility, sincerity, and generosity, as well as helps murīds to attain the knowledge (*maʿrifa*) of Allah. Al-Būzīdī approaches this subject with great care, binding it to strict preconditions and rules. He insists that it must only be practiced with the shaykh's permission, and sincere intention, and not for worldly purposes, closing the door to its misuse. Like other outward etiquettes, begging is also no longer required for those who have completed the spiritual journey, as they have already annihilated their self, purified their heart, and attained the *maʿrifa* of Allah.<sup>90</sup>

From his writings, it's clear that al-Būzīdī was aware of the influence of the reformist ideas on society and aimed at providing responses and justifications for Sūfī practices within the framework of Islam. Evidently, his approach is a defense of the teachings and practices of the Darqāwiyya against the state's censures. In summary, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya* was written with three primary purposes: as a Sūfī manual to guide the disciples of the Darqāwiyya ṭarīqa, as a means to reclaim the central role and authority of Sūfī shaykhs, and as an apology that seeks to legitimize the practices of popular Sufism. In particular, we will focus on his emphasis on the central role of shaykhs, and taʿzīm and ḥurmah they deserve, as this constitutes the core essence of the text.

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89 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 38, 47.

90 See chapter on begging, Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 147-166.

### 3.3. Ta'zīm (reverence) and ḥurmah (veneration) in *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*

Al-Būzīdī lays a significant emphasis on the concepts of ta'zīm and ḥurmah for the shaykh in his book, weaving all other etiquettes around them. He deems these concepts interrelated as he states in the first chapter: “Outward adab originates inward adab, which is ta'zīm. Discourtesy originates from lack of ta'zīm; when ta'zīm is present, adab will come true; when adab is present, realization (*tahqīq*) will come true.”<sup>91</sup> This idea of showing deep respect and reverence for the shaykh was not unique to al-Būzīdī, it has been addressed in both Sūfi literature and Shādhilī sources. In these sources, ta'zīm and ḥurmah towards the shaykh appear mainly in two primary aspects: firstly, they reflect the disciple's attitude toward Allāh, and secondly, they are necessary for benefiting from teachings and states of the shaykh and advancing on the spiritual journey.<sup>92</sup> For example, Ibn al-'Arabī asserts that showing ta'zīm to the shaykh is, in effect, showing ta'zīm to Allāh. He dedicates a chapter to “al-Shuyūkh” (the shaykhs) explaining the significance of having ḥurmah in the heart, while in the presence and service of the shaykh. Lacking this ta'zīm and ḥurmah may block the spiritual progress of a murīd, and even deprive him of entering the presence of Allāh.<sup>93</sup> In the Shādhilī tradition, Abu'l-Abbās al-Mursī demonstrated profound respect and reverence for his master al-Shādhilī and his family and highlighted the spiritual benefits of these qualities.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, 'Alī al-Jamal expresses that the ta'zīm and adab towards the servants are, in fact, shown towards Allāh, and the spiritual progress of a disciple depends on how he respects and reveres his shaykh.<sup>95</sup> Overall, the earlier Sūfis emphasized the critical role of ta'zīm and ḥurmah for the spiritual journey and considered them as its preconditions. These concepts are directly related to the meanings murīds attribute to their shaykh and play a fundamental role in their spiritual progress.

Al-Būzīdī discusses the ta'zīm and ḥurmah for the shaykh in similar veins, however, he places them at the centre of his book. Such that one-quarter of the book's chapters are devoted to explaining their significance.<sup>96</sup> Al-Būzīdī establishes the structure of the spiritual journey based on ādāb while constructing the concept of adab around the ta'zīm and ḥurmah, thus making them essential conditions for spiritual progress in the Darqāwiyya. He explains this from the perspectives of both shaykhs and murīds: Murīds must have respect and veneration towards their shaykhs, if they wish to benefit from them

91 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍiyya*, 35.

92 They were present in other eighteenth-century ṭarīqas as well. Radtke briefly introduces Sūfi teachings of different ṭarīqas in this period, the perception of “shaykh”, as well as the essential role and rights of the shaykh, which are similar to that of al-Būzīdī. See Bernd Radtke, “Sufism in the 18th Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal”, 343-345.

93 Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, 3: 546-548.

94 He would be overwhelmed in his presence and recite these lines of poetry: “I have masters of honor; their feet are above foreheads. Even though I am not among them, my love for them is an honor and glory.” Sakandarī, *Latāif al-minan*, 206-207.

95 'Imrānī, *Naṣiḥa al-murīd*, 55, 350.

96 In the fourteen chapters out of sixty-five, the importance of ta'zīm and ḥurmah is discussed.

and spiritually progress on the path. On the other hand, as the vicegerents of Allāh on earth, shaykhs already merit such respect and veneration.

From the perspective of the murīd, the concepts of taʿzīm and ḥurmah are expected from him consistently, both in the shaykh's presence and absence. As for the times in the shaykh's physical presence, it is only through taʿzīm and ḥurmah that a murīd benefits from him as they are channels of benefit.<sup>97</sup> Murīd must also be present in the company of the shaykh with all heart and spirit, not merely in body. This is so crucial that entering in the presence of shaykh, without regarding him with taʿzīm and ḥurmah, may be harmful, while with taʿzīm and ḥurmah he could benefit from him even from a distance.<sup>98</sup> According to al-Būzīdī, revering the shaykh guides a murīd to receive spiritual help (*madad*) from the shaykh and spiritual openings (*futūh*) from Allah. Thus, he eventually acquires taʿzīm for all creation by perceiving the divine presence in each of them, as he perceives it in his shaykh. This perception enables him to benefit from all individuals and entities, each one can lead him closer to Allah in proportion to the taʿzīm he holds for them.<sup>99</sup>

As for the merits of shaykhs deserving reverence, al-Būzīdī emphasises their closeness to Allah, their status as inheritors of the Prophet, and their rights over their murīds. He interprets the Quranic verse, "Do not treat Allah's Signs as a jest" (Sūrah al-Baqara, 2/231), implying Allah's Friends. In this verse, Allah elevates the status of the shaykhs as "His Signs", thus obliging murīds to hold taʿzīm for them.<sup>100</sup> Making an analogy, he parallels the relationship between shaykhs and their murīds to that of the Prophet and his companions. Just as his companions treated the Prophet with ādāb and veneration, murīds are similarly expected to do the same toward their shaykhs.<sup>101</sup>

The shaykhs are entitled to taʿzīm by virtue of their closeness to Allah, as there exists no veil separating them from Him. Therefore, not only them but also their belongings become eligible for veneration. Al-Būzīdī remarks that murīds should ascribe a sense of sanctity to the belongings of their shaykh, i.e., they should not use them but rather preserve them in higher places. This practice helps murīds to nurture taʿzīm for their shaykh and plays an integral role in developing taʿzīm toward Allah. We should note that al-Būzīdī does not ascribe inherent sanctity to the shaykh's belongings. For instance, he himself expresses that there is no issue in using the shaykh's prayer mat without knowing its owner.<sup>102</sup> Rather, this practice concerns a psychological attitude that is linked to the murīd's consciousness of taʿzīm and ḥurmah toward his shaykh. These principles are not the ultimate goals, but function as tools to practice the taʿzīm and adab. In this respect, al-Būzīdī's teachings differ from the

97 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 176-177.

98 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 37-38, 41.

99 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 176-177.

100 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 41.

101 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 342-344.

102 Būzīdī, *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*, 47, 59.

saint cults, where materials or locations inherently possess sanctity.<sup>103</sup> His reasonings and justifications regarding ta'zīm toward the shaykh and his belongings may also be perceived as an effort to differentiate these teachings from a cultish belief or saint worship. He makes it clear that they are not the end goals for a murīd, but ultimately lead him to Allah. In a time when ta'zīm and ḥurmah toward the shaykhs were considered innovations,<sup>104</sup> he may have sensed the necessity to clarify these matters.

## Conclusion

The 18<sup>th</sup> century emerged as a period of religious reforms and renewal throughout the Islamic world, including Morocco. While the Wahhābī teachings were spreading from Hijāz to the Islamic west through the pilgrims, Sūfī circles were also experiencing transformative changes in line with purist orientations. Whether they be Sūfī or non-Sūfī, the mainstream groups of this period shared a common attitude against practices of popular Sufism, and traditional structure of a shaykh-centred spiritual education. Amid these reformist waves, the Darqāwiyya ṭarīqa took a distinct path, rowing against the stream. Founded by al-Arabī al-Darqāwī through a spiritual revival within the Shādhilī ṭarīqa, it centred on ascetism and popular Sūfī practices, such as self-striving, seclusion, begging, and dhikr gatherings, strictly aligning them with *shari'a* principles. Above all, the Darqāwiyya's spiritual education revolved around the reverence (*ta'zīm*) and veneration (*ḥurmah*) of Sūfī shaykhs and emphasized their vital role as intermediaries between the Prophet and disciples. This approach attracted fierce criticisms from the Moroccan Sultan Mawlāy Sulaymān.

As an ascetic ruler and an affiliate of the Nāṣiriyya ṭarīqa, Mawlāy Sulaymān's purist-orientated approach was partly stemming from his religious ideal of "a return to stronger faith". He favored the Wahhābī teachings and took reformist steps in line with them, despite not fully embracing its creedal doctrines. He also supported purist-orientated Sūfī groups which had strong relationships with rulers and urban scholars. As for the other Sūfī groups, including the Darqāwiyya, he criticized popular Sūfī practices and viewed their passive way of life as a burden for society. Moreover, as a ruler, he saw them as a threat to his central authority, for they were rapidly flourishing among people. In quest of exercising control over the zāwiyas, he polarized religious understandings between two groups: the central authority with urban scholars, and tribal communities with zāwiyas, targeting the latter's religious legitimacy. The Darqāwiyya faced rigorous censures and restrictions during this period, despite their cautious attitude towards the rulers. Mawlāy Sulaymān launched anti-Sūfī religious policies in line with the Wahhābī teachings. He published a treatise downplaying the roles of Sūfī shaykhs and condemning popular Sufism. These attacks and restrictions

103 For the saint cults, see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Evliya Menâkıbnâmeleri*, 37.

104 Mansour, "Political and Social Developments in Morocco", 259-260.



weakened the zāwiya's religious, social, and economic influences and undoubtedly had an impact on the Darqāwiyya as well.

Within this context, Al-Darqāwī's successor Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Būzīdī must have been aware of the propaganda against Sūfī shaykhs, thus, needed to reestablish their role in the spiritual journey. He authored his Sūfī manual *Al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya li-sālīki ṭarīq al-ṣūfiyya* to teach essential etiquettes a murīd should observe in his/her interaction with Allah, the Prophet, and particularly his/her shaykh and fellow murīds in the tariqa. It is a comprehensive manual for the Darqāwiyya disciples and a useful document for modern researchers, as well as a portrayal of the lifestyle and worldview of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Darqāwī Sūfī. Written in the ādāb al-murīd genre, it details both the outward etiquettes (*al-adab al-zāhir*), concerning the physical behaviours and the inward etiquettes (*al-adab al-bāṭin*), concerning the heart. Although these are common themes in the Sūfī literature, what distinguishes al-Būzīdī's text is to place reverence (*ta'zīm*) and veneration (*ḥurmah*) at the centre of the book, constructing all the etiquettes around these concepts. For one-quarter of the chapters are devoted to their importance, as well as to their justifications with references to Quranic and Prophetic sources. While a murīd must maintain *ta'zīm* and *ḥurmah* towards his shaykh for spiritual advancement; the shaykh, as a vicegerent of Allah on earth, already deserves to be regarded with *ta'zīm* and *ḥurmah*. Al-Būzīdī does the same justifications in legitimizing popular practices of the ṭarīqa such as wearing patched cloaks, begging, and secluding. He makes it clear that they are not the end goals, but fundamental tools to lead disciples to Allah. Throughout the book, he gives reasonings to reinforce the central role of a Sūfī shaykh and reestablish their practices within the fold of *shari'a*, differentiating them from a saint worship or a cult-like belief.

In essence, while serving as a guide for the disciples of the Darqāwiyya, *Al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya* can also be considered as a Sūfī manifesto and a counter-narrative to the purist-orientated discourses and reforms targeting Sūfī practices of its time. Rejecting the notion of Sufism without a guide and reasserting the shaykh's authority, what the book does is to defend and restore the traditional Sūfī training. In summary, three primary motivations can be found in the writing of *al-Ādāb al-marḍīyya*: (1) a text of Sūfī etiquettes to guide the disciples of the Darqāwiyya ṭarīqa, (2) a manifesto to reestablish the authority of the shaykhs, (3) an apology to legitimize the popular Sūfī teachings and practices. Besides, the text provides valuable insights into the lifestyle and perspectives of 18<sup>th</sup> century Moroccan Sūfis for the modern researcher in Sūfī studies.

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