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A SUFI RULE FOR NOVICES
BY ABŪ AL-NAJĪB AL-SUHRAWARDĪ

Menahim Milson, trans., A Sufi Rule for Novices: Kitāb Ādāb al-Murīdīn of Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī, © 1975 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, pp. 34-45, 62-63. Reprinted by permission of the Harvard University Press.

Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (490/1097-563/1168) is best known as the founder (along with his nephew Shihāb al-Dīn ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī) of the Suhrawardī order of Sufis. In the 6th/12th and 7th/13th centuries, the great Sufi fraternities were beginning to be formed, creating a social base for mystical thought and practice that was far larger than the restricted Sufi circles of earlier centuries. Abū al-Najīb's work, Ādāb al-Murīdīn, was a guide-book for novices in the expanding Sufi community, although its scope was by no means restricted to the beginning stages of the path. The popularity of this book was immense, from India to North Africa, and a number of translations and commentaries on it exist, frequently written by authors from other than the Suhrawardī order.

Cast to some extent in the form of earlier ethical treatises from the secular adab tradition, Ādāb al-Murīdīn is a clear example of orthodox Sufism, presenting an ideal of complete agreement between the Sufis on the one hand and the scholars and jurists on the other. Abū al-Najīb himself was a professor of fiqh in the Nizāmīya college in Baghdad (he was dismissed from his post as a result of the struggle between the Caliph and the Seljukid Sultan, anticipating many Suhrawardīs who would later be involved in politics). Of special interest in this selection are rules governing the practice of "audition" (samāʿ), that is, the musical and poetical sessions that frequently ended in ecstatic dancing and rending of clothes. The necessity of controlling this practice and not allowing it to degenerate in artificial stimulation shows that samāʿ must have been extremely common at the time.

A Sufi Rule for Novices

Kitāb Ādāb al-Murīdīn of
Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī

AN ABRIDGED TRANSLATION
AND INTRODUCTION by
Menahem Milson

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37. The Sufis are distinguished by lofty sciences and noble states (*aḥwāl*), and they discuss the science of mutual relations, the faults of commission and omission, and the noble stations (*maqāmāt*). (Sufi technical terms signifying the various *maqāmāt* and *aḥwāl* are enumerated here by way of example.) They also have concepts which are derived [from the Quran and the Ḥadith] and which are beyond the understanding of the jurists. (Another list of Sufi terms is presented.) So they are the protectors of religion and its eminent leaders.

38. Whoever has difficulty in understanding one of the three sciences, namely, Ḥadith, jurisprudence, and Sufism should refer his questions to those who are experts in that particular science. Thus, questions relating to the study of Ḥadith should be referred to the traditionists, questions on matters of law, to the jurists, and questions concerning ethical scrupulosity and the inner states and stations (*aḥwāl* and *maqāmāt*), to the masters of Sufism.

39. The answers to questions about Sufism vary according to the spiritual station of the enquirer: the novice (*murīd*) is answered with regard to the external aspect of Sufism, that is, concerning mutual relations (ethics). The Sufi of the middle rank (*mutawassīṭ*) is answered with regard to the inner states (*aḥwāl*), and the knower (*ʿārif*) is answered with regard to the reality (*al-ḥaqīqa*). The beginning of Sufism is learning (*ʿilm*), the middle is praxis (*ʿamal*), and the end is grace.

40. Sufis are of three ranks: *murīd*, *mutawassīṭ*, and *muntaḥin* (he who has arrived at the final stage). The *murīd* is a man of momentary experience (*waqf*), the Sufi of the highest rank has inner spiritual states, and the Sufi of the middle rank is a man of reposeful breathing. The Sufi of the middle rank (*mutawassīṭ*) is in the process of ascending from one state to the next, but the consummate Sufi (*muntaḥin*) is in a position of stability, and he is immune to the effects of the changeful states of mind or harsh circumstances. Zulaykhā is presented as an example

PART II

33. With regard to the branches of religion and its ordinances, the Sufis agree that one should learn the ordinances of the *sharīʿa* so that praxis (*ʿamal*) would be in conformity with the teachings of the religious-legal science (*ʿilm*).³² They prefer the school of the traditionist jurists, but they do not disapprove of divergence among the religious scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) in matters of specific applications.

34. The religious scholars are classified in three groups: traditionists (*aḥbāb al-ḥadīth*), jurists (*fuqahāʾ*), and Sufi *ʿulamāʾ*. The traditionists are attached to the external meaning of the Ḥadith; they are the watchmen of religion.

35. The *fuqahāʾ*, who have received the knowledge of the traditionists, are distinguished by their understanding of legal matters and their ability to make legal inferences. They are the arbiters of religion and its distinguished authorities.

36. The Sufis are in agreement with the two former classes in their inner modes and their outward behavior. It is not of the Sufi way to seek [arbitrary] esoteric interpretations (*taʾwīlāt*) nor to follow one's desires.

³²Cf. Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, trans. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden: E. J. Brill, and London: Luzac & Co., 1911), p. 240.

³³Cf. *ibid.*, p. 390.

³⁴The requirement of conformity between practice and theory recurs in the book in various forms. One should notice in this connection the expression "the *ʿulamāʾ* who observe the law," in Arabic: *al-ʿulamāʾ al-ʿamīdīn*, literally, "the *ʿulamāʾ* who practice [what they teach]" (see sections 10 above and 59 below).

of one who has reached the position of stability. Zulaykhā, having attained to the position of stability in her love for Joseph, was not affected like her friends at the sight of Joseph.²² This is also attested to by the example of the Prophet, who at first had practiced solitude but afterwards mingled with people. Likewise, the "people of the portico," when they had reached the state of stability, became commanders and administrators, and mixing with the people did not damage their religious position.²³

41. This school (Sufism) has external and internal aspects (*ẓāhir* and *bāṭin*). The external aspect is to observe the rule of ethical behavior in relation to mankind, and the inner aspect is to launch into the *alwāl* and *maqāmāt* in relation to the Real One (*al-ḥaqq*).

42. When the Prophet saw a man jesting during prayer he said, "If his heart were humble, his limbs too would be submissive." Junayd disapproved of the manners practiced by Abū Ḥaṣṣ al-Ḥadlād [al-Nisābūrī] and termed them, ironically, princely manners. To this Abū Ḥaṣṣ answered, "External *adab* reflects the inner *adab*." It is said that the whole of Sufism is *adab*; each moment (*waqt*),²⁴ each state, and each station has its *adab*. "*Adab* is the support of the poor and the decor of the rich."

43. People are divided into three classes with regard to *adab*: people of this world, people of religion, and the choicest of the people of religion. The *ādāb* of the people of this world consist of knowledge of language and rhetoric, sciences, history, and poetry.

²²Zulaykhā is the name of the wife of Joseph's Egyptian master, according to post-Quranic Islamic legends. See *ET*, s.v. "Yūsuf b. Ya'qub."

²³The "people of the portico," a group of pious companions of the Prophet, were considered by the Sufis as the ideal prototype of Islamic piety; see *ET*, s.v. "Ahl al-Ṣūfā."

²⁴If *waqt* in the Sufi technical sense signifies the moment of experience. See Quhayrī, p. 33 and Meier, *Die Fuwā'id al-Ḥamāl*, p. 40.

The *ādāb* of the people of religion are, in addition to religious learning: to discipline oneself, to observe the legal prohibitions, to abstain from morally dubious things, and to hasten to do good works.

The *ādāb* of the choicest of the people of religion consist of preserving the heart and observing the secret (*sirr*)²⁵ and being the same both secretly and outwardly.

44. The novices vary in rank with regard to praxis, those in the middle position vary with regard to their *adab*, and the knowers, with regard to their spiritual ambition (*himma*). The value of each person is according to his *himma*. (Some sayings on *naḥs* (soul) and *himma*.)

45. The most noble characteristics of the Sufis are their moral qualities. 'Ā'isha said that the ethical nature of the Prophet was the Quran. The Prophet said, "The closest to me on the day of resurrection will be he who is best with regard to ethics." He also said, "Bad moral nature is a sign of ill fortune." A saying of Abū Bakr al-Katānī: "Sufism is ethical disposition, so whoever is better than you in his ethics is greater than you in Sufism."

46. (A list of some ethical qualities postulated by the Sufis.)

47. When Sahl b. 'Abdallāh [al-Tustarī] was asked about good ethical behavior, he said that its minimal requirements were to suffer evil with forbearance, to abstain from retribution, and to have compassion for him who wrongs you. It is these qualities which are characteristic of the Sufis and not what is said and committed by the simulators (*mutashabbihūn*); their perverted claims are denounced.²⁷

48. Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī saw a man who had made him-

²⁵*Sirr* signifies the loftiest element in the spiritual essence of man; the *sirr* is the place of the ultimate mystical experience. See Meier, *Die Fuwā'id al-Ḥamāl*, pp. 173ff. and *passim*.

²⁷It seems that this denouncement is directed against would-be Malāmatis who, under the guise of purposely incurring censure, actually sought to satisfy their desires.

self famous for his asceticism (*zuhd*) spitting mucus in the direction of the Qibla. Abū Yazīd said, "He cannot be trusted about a rule of the *sharī'a*, so how can he be trusted about his claim to sainthood?"

49. The stations (*maqāmāt*). *Maqām* signifies the position of man in worship before God. The stations are: awakening out of carelessness, repentance (*tawba*), returning (*ināba*), moral scrupulosity (*warā'*), examination of the soul (*muḥāsabat al-nafs*), aspiration (*irāda*), renunciation (*zuhd*),²⁸ poverty (*faqr*), veracity (*ṣidq*), and forbearance (*taḥabbur*), which is the last station of novices. Then come patience (*ṣabr*), satisfaction (*riḍā*), total sincerity (*ikhlās*), trust in God (*tauakkul*). (Each of the above stations is defined by one sentence.)

50. The states (*ahwāl*) and their definition. Junayd defined *ḥāl* as a form of inspiration which comes down to the heart but does not stay in it permanently. A list of the states: attentive observation (*murāqaba*), nearness (*qurb*), love (*maḥabba*), hope (*rjā'*), fear (*khauf*), diffidence (*ḥayā*). The last four are considered to result from the state of nearness, because, while in the latter state, some people are overcome by fear and diffidence and others by love and hope. Then come yearning (*shawq*), intimacy (*uṣṣ*), serenity (*ṭuma'nīna*), certainty (*yaqīn*), and the experience of vision (*mushāhada*), which is the last of the states. Then come various forms of divine inspiration: signs (*awāliḥ*),²⁹ appearances of light, and graces, all of which are ineffable.

51. The ways vary, but the goal is one. The ways vary because of the variation in the states and stations of those who follow them. Various possible ways are listed: worship, self-discipline, solitude and retirement, wandering and being

²⁸In translating the word *zuhd*, one should distinguish between *zuhd* as a general term, signifying the outlook and practice of early Muslim ascetics, and *zuhd* as one particular station in the system of *maqāmāt*. In the former sense it is translated as "asceticism," in the latter as "renunciation."

²⁹On the meaning of this term see Meier, *Die Firda'ih al-Gamāl*, p. 50.

remote from one's home, service to the brethren, self-mortification, and engagement in the *ahwāl*, forfeiture of one's social standing, [recognizing one's] weakness and failure, learning and inquiry. In any one of these ways one should have an instructor and guide in order to be protected from perplexity and temptation.

52. The merit of knowledge (*'ilm*). (Quran 3:18 is quoted.) In this verse God mentions the people of *'ilm* next to Himself and the angels. The Prophet said, "*'Ulamā'* are the successors of prophets." He said, "The learned man is superior to the [unlearned] worshiper as I am superior to the least man among you." He also said, "Men are of two kinds: the learned and those who strive to acquire learning, and the rest are riffraff." It is also said, "*'Ilm* is the root and *'amal*—the branch."

53. The majority of the Sufi masters consider *'ilm* to be superior to both *ma'rifa* (gnosis) and *'aql* (intellect or reason), because Allah has the attribute of *'ilm* and because *'ilm* has dominance over reason and not vice versa. (An argument to prove the preeminence of *'ilm* is drawn from the story of King Solomon and the hoopoe, and Quran 27:22 is quoted.)

PART III

54. Sufi ethics in conversation (*muḥāwara*).³⁰ Their purpose in conversation should be to offer advice and guidance and whatever can benefit other people. The Sufi should speak to people according to their intellectual capacity. (A saying of the Prophet on the latter point.) The novice should not speak on any question unless he is asked about it, and his answer should be suited to [the understanding of] the interrogator. (A saying of Junayd on this subject.)

55. The novice should ask only questions pertaining to his

³⁰Under the heading of this term, Suhrawardī deals with matters concerning the teaching and discussion of Sufi doctrine.

station. He should not speak about what he has not practiced, but some say that it is permissible. (A saying of the Prophet in support of the latter view.) Knowledge should be divulged only to qualified persons, although another view has it that it may be divulged to others as well. One should not speak in front of a more learned man.

56. One should not seek to obtain social standing or worldly goods through his knowledge. Two traditions of the Prophet on the above subject. One should strive to practice what he hears and learns. "Whoever hears something of the Sufi doctrine (*'ulūm al-qawm*) and practices it, it becomes wisdom in his heart, and those who listen to him will derive benefit from it; but whoever hears and does not practice, it is mere talk which he will forget after a few days." It is said: "If words come out of the heart they will enter the heart, but if they come from the tongue they will not pass beyond the ears."

57. The merit of speech and silence on different occasions. Junayd and Ruwaym disagreed on the question of preaching Sufism before the uninitiated (*al-'amma*); Junayd asserted that it was worthwhile whereas Ruwaym argued that it was of no avail. Junayd rebuked Shibli for pronouncing the word *allāh* on a certain occasion, and another time he rebuked him for asking a question.

As for the ecstatic utterances (*shathiyāt*) quoted from Abū Yazīd [al-Bisṭāmī] and others, these were uttered under the compulsion of *ḥāl* and the power of intoxication, and so they should be neither accepted nor rejected.

58. Saḥl b. 'Abdallāh said, "There are three kinds of *'ilm*: *'ilm* from God which is the science of law, *'ilm* with God which is the science of Sufi states and *'ilm* of God which is the knowledge of His attributes and qualities." The science of the inner aspect of religion is derived from the science of the external aspect.

59. [On *'ilm* as compared with *'amal* (praxis), *'aql* (in-

tect), and *ma'rifa* (gnosis).] There is a saying: "He who listens with his ears will relate [what he has learned], he who listens with his heart will preach, and he who practices what he has learned is guided and gives guidance." There is another saying: "*'ilm* calls out praxis, but if the latter does not respond, *'ilm* will go away."

'Ilm is conception of the object as it is, intellect is capacity and talent for perception by which one can distinguish between true and false, commendable, and repugnant. The learned man (*'ālim*) should be taken as an example for conduct, and the knower, the man of gnosis, should be a source of guidance. *'Ilm* is mediated information, whereas gnosis is experience of the senses.

60. [Some sayings in praise of intellect.] The pious would not deceive and the intelligent man cannot be deceived. Intellect keeps man away from destructive things. When passion becomes supreme, intellect disappears. You can distinguish between an intelligent man and a stupid man by the following rule: a stupid man will believe whatever absurdity he is told.

If you need the knowledge of a man, you should not examine his faults.

61. The rules concerning the stage of beginning. The first thing that the *murīd* should do after awakening from the state of carelessness (*ghafla*) is to go to a Sufi shaykh who will guide him to the Sufi way and teach him his rights and obligations.

62. The most appropriate thing for the *murīd* is to choose only pure food, drink, and clothes, for thus he will enhance his inner state. A saying of the Prophet: "To seek the permitted things is an obligation after the [explicit] obligations." One of the Sufis said, "To seek the permitted things is an obligation for people in general and to renounce the permitted things is an obligation of this group [the Sufis] except in case of compelling necessity."

63. The next thing is to fulfil the religious duties which he has neglected, and to correct wrongs which he did to people. (A saying of the Prophet on the above point.) For physical injury [which he caused in the past] he should be punished by retaliation, and for verbal abuses he should ask forgiveness from those whom he wronged. He should then recognize the lower soul (*nafs*) and discipline it by exercises, hardship, fasting, prayers, and vigils.

64. On repentance (*tawba*). He will then be one of the repenters who merit the love of Allah (Quran 2:222 quoted). A saying of the Prophet: "The repentant is the beloved of God." The repentant is one of those whose evil acts God will change into good ones,¹¹ (there follows a Ḥadīth on this point). Repentance is a religious duty for all Muslims. Failure to repent of a sin is more serious than committing the sin. There is time to repent until death or until the locking of the Gate of Repentance.

65. He should then adhere to moral scrupulosity (*wara'*) in all circumstances and he should know that God takes everything into account.

66. When the *murid* properly achieves the stations of repentance and scrupulosity and begins the station of renunciation (*zuhd*), then comes the time for him to wear the patched frock (*muraqqa'a*) if he aspires to it. He should observe all necessary observances attached to the wearing of the *muraqqa'a*. Wearing the *muraqqa'a* should not be taken lightly. The wearer of *muraqqa'a* should have disciplined his soul by the rules and have tamed it, and he should have passed the stations. Whoever is not thus qualified should not aspire to the rank of shaykh or *murid*.

67. On self-examination. The *murid* should recognize his own faults and know how to remove them. He should control

¹¹This idea and the following Ḥadīth are in reference to Quran 25:70.

his soul by exertions and by examination of conscience. He should reveal his inner state to his shaykh and constantly ask for his instruction and advice.

68. The *murid* should follow the stations (*maqāmāt*) according to their order, and he should not move from one station to another before he has properly accomplished its rules (*ādāb*), for example, he should occupy himself with the station of *zuhd* only when he has completed that of *wara'*. He should follow this course until the actions reach into the heart. One of the Sufis said, "It is nobler to engage in the movements of the heart than to perform outward acts [of worship]." Ḥadīth: the excellence of Abū Bakr's faith came from something which was in his heart, not from much prayer and fasting. When the actions come to take place in the heart, the limbs will be restless.

69. The novice should be heedful of each moment. He should be constantly occupied outwardly with supererogatory devotions and inwardly by aspiration, until inspiration descends upon him.

70. To render service to his brethren is more valuable for the novice than to be engaged in supererogatory prayers. 'Ā'isha said that the Prophet had always been busy with some charitable work. Abū 'Amr al-Zujājī said that he had not merited the blessing of Junayd by his constant worship but rather by an act of service, when he cleaned his place.

71. The *murid* should not leave his shaykh before the eye of his heart opens. The distinctive mark of the *murid* is "to listen and obey." Distinctive symptoms are suggested so as to recognize falseness on the part of *murid*, *mutawassit*, and *'arif*. Junayd said: "But for the distinctive marks, everyone would have claimed to be pursuing the Sufi way."

72. He should know that *maqām*, *ḥāl*, or any act of worship can be accomplished only by sincerity, namely by keeping

themselves. They should listen to such things that will prompt them to pious actions and will rejuvenate their aspiration.

The Sufis must learn the rules pertaining to *samā'*. Abū 'Amr b. Nuḡayd said: "To make one mistake in *samā'* is worse than to slander people for years."

139. It is improper to induce deliberately the state of ecstasy or to constrain oneself to rise up [to dance],⁴⁰ except if one is overcome by ecstasy or in order to help by way of solidarity a fellow who is in a state of ecstasy.

One may also do this by way of cheering himself without pretending to be intoxicated or affecting ecstasy, but it is better to avoid this. (A Ḥadīth is adduced against showing the emotions which are stirred by listening.)

140. It is disapproved for young men to rise up at the presence of shaykhs and show their ecstasy. A young disciple of Nuḡayd used to get into ecstasy whenever he listened to *samā'*. Nuḡayd forbade him to give vent to his ecstatic emotions and the young man controlled himself, but one day he died in a moment of rapture. There is no dispensation (*rukḥḥa*) whatever permitting adolescents to rise up and move [to dance]⁴¹ in *samā'* sessions, and most shaykhs disapprove altogether of their being present at *samā'* sessions.

141. When a moment of real ecstasy occurs, the person who participates by his own effort⁴² should not enter the dance, not even by way of solidarity. (A narrative about Dhū al-Nūn and a Sufi who affected ecstasy.)

To remain quiet, yet keep the heart attentive, is better than constrained participation in the dance because this is the oc-

⁴⁰In theory, dancing was acceptable only as a result of ecstasy but not as an inducement to it; see on this matter Meier, "Der Derwischtranz, Versuch eines Überblicks," *Asiatische Studien* 8 (1954), 127.

⁴¹See section 174 below.

⁴²That is, a person who is not spontaneously stirred by the *samā'*.

casion of "stability." To listen attentively is one of the rules of behavior when in the divine presence (Quran 46:29 and 20:108 quoted).

142. The *samā'* session should begin and close with recitations from the Quran.

143. It is disapproved for the *murīd* to listen to love poems and erotic descriptions. Only the knower ('*ārif*') can properly practice *samā'*. A saying by Nuḡayd: "If a novice is attracted to *samā'*, you can know that there is still in him a remainder of falseness." The *samā'* is [like the] *ṣirāṭ* bridge; it may lead some to the loftiest heights and throw others to the lowest depths. The *samā'* is more suitable for shaykhs than for novices.

144. A person who smiles or amuses himself should not be present at a *samā'* session. (A narrative by 'Abdallāh b. Khafīf about his master Aḥmad b. Yahyā as an example.)

145. Each mental faculty enjoys something in the *samā'*: the heart, words of wisdom; the spirit, melody; the lower soul, the mention of sensual pleasures which suit its nature.

146. Affected behavior in *samā'* may be of two different kinds. A person may act in an affected way to gain social respect or some other worldly benefit, and in this case it is deceit. On the other hand, a man may act in this way in quest of "the reality" (*al-ḥaqīqa*), seeking ecstasy (*waḡd*) by means of artificial ecstasy (*tawaḡjud*). The relationship between *waḡd* and *tawaḡjud* is the same as between "weeping" and "trying to weep"; the Prophet said: "When you see people suffering, you should weep, and if you do not weep, then try to weep."

it pure from any ostentation (a saying of the Prophet on this).³² However, if his acts of worship and *ahwāl* become publicly known without any ostentatious intention on his part, then this should give no cause for blame. Sincerity can be achieved only by recognizing the worthlessness of mankind.

73. The *murīd* should strive to watch his lower soul (*naḥs*) attentively and recognize its qualities because it is the *naḥs* that commands evil. The Prophet used to seek refuge in God from the *naḥs*. (A saying of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib on the need to watch over the soul constantly.) Abū Bakr al-Warrāq describes the soul as being always ostentatious, in most cases hypocritical, and sometimes idolatrous. A saying of al-Wāsiṭī: "The soul is an idol, looking at it with sympathy is idolatry whereas looking at it with scrutiny is worship." If the soul is excused, it will follow its caprice (Quran 41:51 is quoted.) Two similes on the misleading appearance of the *naḥs*: "It is like a glowing coal, it is beautiful in color but it scorches." "It is like clean, quiet water hiding the dirt under it."

74. *Naḥs* (the lower soul) is an opposite to God. *Naḥs* makes the same demands of obedience and admiration on man as does God. It is a "delicate matter" lodged within this mold [of the body]. The soul is the substratum of blameworthy qualities. The spirit (*rūḥ*) is the mine of good and the soul is the mine of evil. The intellect is the army of the spirit, and success which is granted by Allah is its reinforcement. Capricious desire is the army of the soul, and failure is its reinforcement.³³

75. All matters are of three kinds: those whose rightness is obvious, so they should be followed; those whose error is

³²Ostentation is considered here as tantamount to polytheism, because when a man performs an act of worship wishing to demonstrate it, he is not doing it exclusively for the sake of God; rather he is associating others with God.

³³By contrast with success, which is granted by God, failure is conceived as a state of abandonment, that is, failure to gain God's aid.

obvious, so they should be avoided; those which are dubious, and so should be left aside until the right course becomes clear. If you are in doubt as to which of two things is the best, follow the one which is farthest from your desire. The *murīd* should strive to exchange the blameworthy qualities of his soul for the opposite praiseworthy qualities.

76. The ethics (*ādāb*) of companionship (*ṣuḥba*). It is better to sit alone than with an evil companion, and it is better to sit with a worthy companion than to sit alone. Three sayings of the Prophet on friendship: "Man is in the religion of his friend, therefore you should consider carefully whom you befriend." "A man who mixes with people and endures their evil is superior to one who does not mix with people." "There is no benefit in him who does not befriend others and is not befriendened." Abū Ḥafṣ al-Nisābūrī on the rules of companionship among the Sufis: to respect the shaykhs, to have intimate friendship with their peers, to give advice to younger people, not to associate with people who are not of their kind, to act with altruism (*iḥār*), not to accumulate property, and to extend their help to others.

77. The Sufi should associate with people of his kind and those from whom he can benefit. "The man most worthy of your company is he who agrees with your religious beliefs and before whom you are ashamed [for your faults]." He should not associate with people who are opposed to his religious affiliation even if they are related to him. (The story of Noah is cited on this point: God told Noah that his scornful son is not of his family; Quran 11:45-46.)

He should associate with those in whom he has confidence as regards their religion and trustworthiness.

78. The Sufi should undertake to serve his brethren and companions (*khiḍmat al-ikhuwān*)³⁴ and help them in obtaining

³⁴On the emphasis on the value of *khiḍma* in Sufi ethics, see sections 51 and 70 above.