ABOUT THE JHS

For the last fifteen years many edited volumes, generally aimed at the international scholarly community, have considerably enriched our understanding of sufism and its varied lineages. During this period, more and more scholars in fields outside the disciplines of Islamic studies, philosophy, and history of religion have been getting involved in the investigation of sufism. Although many continue to study sufism as a mystical, philosophical or intellectual current, more and more researchers are focusing on sufı lineages as social organizations which involve social action, politics, art, music, and architecture. It is for these reasons that academics from anthropology, ethnology, sociology, literature, philosophy, history of art, and ethnomusicology have found the study of sufism and its lineages to be exceptionally rewarding. It is from these multiple perspectives that the Journal of the History of Sufism [JHS] proposes to engage scholarship of sufism in its manifold diversity. Our goal is to enhance our understanding of this influential socio-intellectual heritage in general and to increase our appreciation of Muslim culture in particular.

The JHS is the outcome of numerous collective scholarly endeavors. Alexandre Popovic (CNRS - Paris) and Marc Gaborieau (CNRS / EHESS - Paris) were among the first to initiate international gatherings which brought together specialists in sufism to focus on specific topics. Les Ordres mystiques dans l’islam. Cheminements et Situation actuelle, eds., Alexandre Popovic and Gilles Veinstein (Paris: EHESS, 1985), with a common theme of relating sufı lineages to historical processes, was the first publication to result from these meetings. The next set of publications, sponsored by the ESA group 8032 (Turkish and Ottoman Studies) of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique focused on individual lineages and their particular doctrines and practices in a specific historical context: 1) Naqshbandis. Cheminement et situation actuelle d’un ordre mystique musulman, eds., Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic, Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul : Éd. Isis, 1990); 2) Études sur l’ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach, eds., A. Popovic, G. Veinstein (Istanbul: Éd. Isis, 1995); and 3) Mélamî et Bayramî. Études sur trois mouvements mystiques musulmans, eds., Nathalie Clayer, A. Popovic, Th. Zarcone (Istanbul : Éd Isis, 1998). Two colleagues, Klaus Kreiser and Frederick de Jong, in addition to participating in conferences held in Paris, Strasbourg, and Istanbul, organized two colloquia at Bamberg and Utrecht. The proceedings of the Bamberg colloquium were published in a special issue of Osmanlı Araştırmaları (Istanbul, XIV, 1994). They deal with the history of the Mevleviyya and their sufı lodges (mevlevihâne). The Mevleviyya has received much attention in the past few decades due to the interest of Turkish scholars and institutions who have organized a number of colloquia and who have published multiple volumes of the proceedings, e.g., a special issue of Türkiye Araştırmaları Dergisi (2/2 [1996] Selcuk Universitesi, Konya) which concerns Mevlevi sufı lodges in the Ottoman Empire.


Certain proceedings of conferences deal with sufism and sufı lineages located in particular regions of the Islamic world. At the initiative of the Swedish Research Institute of Istanbul, organized by M. Elisabeth Özdalga, a recent international round table was organized to discuss the Naqshbendiyya. The proceedings will be published as The Naqshbandidis in Western and Central Asia: Change and Continuity, ed., E. Özdalga (London: Curzon Press, 1999), Hz. İstoria sufizma: İstehni i socia’naja praktika (Concerning the History of Sufism: Sources and Social Practice), ed., M.M. Khayrullaeva (İzdatel’svo: Fan Akademii Nauk Respubliki Uzbekistan, 1991) was the first collection of Uzbeki articles on sufism to break from the Marxist historical tradition. Anatolia Moderna / Yeni Anadolu (Vol. IV/1992) dedicated a special issue to Balkan sufı lineages, “Derviches des Balkans, Disparitions et Renaissances” while Le Temps des marabouts. Itinéraires et Stratégies islamiques en Afrique occidentale française v. 1880-1960,


This lengthy list of edited volumes does not include the numerous monographs published over the last years that have discussed sufism, Sufi lineages, popular Muslim practice and ritual tomb activity. The intention here has not to present an overview of Sufi studies but instead to show how colloquia and round tables have contributed to research on sufism. The effect of stimulating discussion through these conferences has enabled scholars to work on common subjects and produce in-depth articles in various fields of investigation. At the same time these gatherings have brought forth state-of-the-art publications such as *Nagshbandis* (Istanbul: Éd. Isis, 1990) which resulted from a 1985 colloquium in Sévres, and *Islamic Mysticism Contested* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), the outcome of a 1995 colloquium in Utrecht. JHS intends to promote a systematic regularity in the collective academic endeavors of those in Sufi studies.
by providing a venue for scholars to publish their work on sufism. In addition, JHS intends to keep scholars of sufism abreast of current research by publishing book reviews and a bibliography of recent publications dealing with sufism. This latter enterprise is facilitated by the gracious collaboration of our international editorial board and others who wish to contribute.

We would like to thank ESA 8032 (Turkish and Ottoman Studies) at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris), based in the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, for their support in creating JHS. Also we would like to extend our appreciation to the numerous specialists who have accepted our invitation to be members of our Editorial Board. One of the principles of the JHS is to represent the international academic community. As a result JHS has three editors from three different continents who work in consultation with specialists on the Editorial Board. Paris is the base for editing while the journal itself is published in Istanbul. Ibrahim Yılmaz, director of Editions Simurg in Istanbul, has enthusiastically accepted to assist JHS with his financial support, thereby bringing the project to fruition.

Alexandre Popovic, director of research at CNRS, both an Arabist and Turkologist specializing in Balkan Islam, has been without doubt one of the leading pioneers of the academic study of sufism and sufi lineages. He continues to be a valuable guide for younger scholars who seek to follow in his footsteps. For this reason JHS considers Alexandre Popovic to be a major inspiration for its mission. It is an honor and a great pleasure to dedicate this first issue on the Qadiriyya to this renowned scholar and rare friend.