L'*adab*, toujours recommencé

"Origins", Transmissions, and Metamorphoses of Adab *Literature*

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When Aesthetics Is Ethics, Forging *Adab* through Literary Imitation

The Irano-Turkic Case

Marc Toutant

The Persian language has preserved many expressions and terms containing the ethnic name *turk* that were used synonymously with coarse manners and aggressive behaviour. As remarked by Kinga Maciuszak, we read in some dictionaries that a word such as *turkāna* means like a Turk, Turk-like, but also quick, rough. Sometimes the authors of these dictionaries explain the meaning of this word as simply being "the opposite to *adab*".[1] Actually, they base their definitions on the way the word was used in classical literature. For instance, the sixth/twelfth-century Persian poet Khāqānī wrote in verses about *adab*:

> *nān-i Turkān makhur, wa-bar sar-i khān*
> *ba* adab *nān khur, wa* turkāna *makhur*[2]
>
> Do not eat the bread of the Turks and while eating food,
> Courteously eat bread at the table and do not eat like a Turk

Nevertheless, even though Turks have long personified the counterexample of *adab* in Persian classical literature, some of the most eminent Turk literati strove to teach their Turkic-speaking audiences the *adab* principles through their rewritings of Iranian classics. It is a well-established fact that much of Turkic classical literature consisted of translations and imitations from Persian. Less known, however, is the idea that some of those translations and imitations conveyed much more than a literary content expressed in a different language. In fact, when some of the major Turkic court poets of the late medieval period rewrote Persian masterpieces, they crafted their rewritings not only to entertain, but also to convey the Perso-Islamic *adab* into their own cultures.

1 Maciuszak, "The Beautiful and the Barbarian: Image of Turks in Persian literature", 244–245.

2 Quoted by Ma'dan Kan, *Nigāhī ba dunyā-yi Khāqānī*, 685. The emphasis is mine. As for the use of the word *turk* in Khāqānī's *dīwān*, see Mahdavifar, *Farhangnāme-yi ṣuvar-i khiyāl dar Dīvān-i Khāqānī*, 549–552.

"*Adab* functioned as one of the main venues through which an elite Turkophone identity was formed by translating courtly Perso-Islamic discourse and culture into [Turkic] terms", writes Andrew C.S. Peacock and Sara Nur Yıldız in a recent volume about the formation of a local Turkophone Islamic identity in pre-Ottoman Anatolia".[3] In a study examining works emanating from the Aydinid court, Yıldız showed that works composed in the newly emerging Anatolian Turkish vernacular were shaped within intense interaction with the classical Islamic traditions in Persian and Arabic.[4] We know that Islamic *adab* was "enriched with the splendours of Persian culture and became synonymous with refinement, civility, and sociability as practiced by court societies".[5] When early modern Turkish-speaking authors adapted into their own languages a variety of Persian literary and *adab* classics, they produced texts designed for a new audience that could nevertheless be integrated into the greater Perso-Islamic cultural tradition of *adab*. Through the process of literary imitation, they provided their readers with the kind of ethic-didactic writings that constituted a large part of classical Persian literature. For the Ottoman and Timurid empires, as was the case with the Aydinid court, this vernacularisation of Persian *adab* literature was critical in the formation of new aulic cultures.

In order to shed light on this process, I will focus on the works of two famous authors. The first one is a poet from the very beginning of the Ottoman Empire, namely Aḥmedī (d. 815/1412–3). The second one is Mīr ʿAlī Shīr Nawāʾī (d. 906/1501), who spent most of his life in Herat (in present day Afghanistan), at the court of the last great Timurid ruler Sulṭān Ḥusayn Bayqara (r. 873/1469–911/1506). Nawāʾī is considered to be the most emblematic representative of Chagatai Turkic literature, which thanks to him reached its apogee during the reign of Sulṭān Ḥusayn. Both the Ottoman and the Timurid poets rewrote Niẓāmī Ganjawī's (d. 605/1209) famous *Iskandarnāma* (The Book of Alexander), composed in Persian at the end of the sixth/twelfth century, in their respective vernacular languages. Interestingly, they also both crafted their imitations so as to stress a certain set of values that are part of the

3 Peacock and Yıldız, "Introduction. Literature, Language and History in Late Medieval Anatolia", 34.

4 Yıldız, "Aydinid Court Literature in the Formation of an Islamic Identity in Fourteenth-century Western Anatolia". The Aydinid corpus consisted of a variety of genres and writing modes with a strong emphasis on vernacular production: Turkish adaptations of Islamic sacred narratives (the accounts of the Prophets, Muḥammad and the Sufi saints) and lengthy couplets rendering Perso-Islamic *adab* classics such as *Khusraw and Shīrīn* and *Kalīla and Dimna* into Turkish.

5 Mayeur-Jaouen and Patrizi, "Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*", 3.

Perso-Islamic *adab*. The study of these rewritings therefore provides insight into the way a transfer of *adab* was realised through the literary imitation process. I will then examine what *adab* precisely meant for those authors by focusing more specifically on Nawāʾī's definition and illustration of *adab* through some of his major rewritings of classical Persian literature.

1 Conveying *adab* through the Rewriting of the Persian Alexander Cycle

The moral ideal of a king's behaviour proliferated in the literature of the Mirrors for Princes written in Persian, such as the *Qābūsnāma* compiled in 475/1082 or the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). In this genre, characters like Alexander the Great served as the prototypes of kings who practiced *adab*. In his *Iskandarnāma*, the Persian poet Niẓāmī Ganjawī portrayed the Macedonian king as a world conqueror and a hero, but also as a wise monarch guided by sages.[6] Like their model, the Ottoman and the Timurid poets depicted Alexander as the prototype of the perfect ruler. What distinguishes their depictions is the emphasis they both put on the explanation of ethical values, most of which are part of the *adab* tradition and supposed to be embodied by the *kosmocrator*'s biography.[7]

Tājeddīn Ibrāhīm b. Khiḍr (d. 815/1412–3), better known by his penname Aḥmedī, was the foremost eighth/fourteenth-century Anatolian Turkish poet. He composed his verse before the Ottoman dynasty rose to complete dominance over an Anatolia fragmented into several Turkish principalities (*beylik*). Aḥmedī variously attached himself to the Aydinids, the Germiyanids, and the Ottomans. His most lasting attachment was to the Ottoman prince Emīr Süleymān, the son of Bāyezīd I (r. 791/1389–804/1402).[8] Even though Aḥmedī's position and influence at the Ottoman court is difficult to assess, "it seems that Aḥmedī assumed he was some sort of consultant or even advisor".[9] Aḥmedī's *Iskendernāme* is not only the first account of Alexander's life in this language, but also one of the first *mathnawī*s of any kind in Ottoman

6 Niẓāmī's *Iskandarnāma* is a part of his famous *Khamsa*. From 568/1173 until 599/1203, Niẓāmī wrote a cycle of five epic poems (*mathnawī*), which earned him recognition throughout the Islamic world. After him scores of poets created series of five poems and the *Khamsa* became rapidly a genre which enjoyed popularity from the seventh/thirteenth century through the tenth/sixteenth century.

7 On this topic see Doufikar-Aerts, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus*.

8 Ambros, "Ahmedi".

9 Küçükhüseyin, "The Ottoman Historical Section of Ahmedi's *İskendernāme*", 291.

literature.[10] Over 8000 couplets long, the poem was composed in various stages from around 791/1389 to 812/1410. The manuscripts of the last version reveal that the *Alexandreid* was dedicated to the Ottoman prince Süleymān Çelebī (r. 805/1403–813/1411).[11] The story as given by Aḥmedī follows generally along the lines of the history of Alexander as detailed in Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma* and above all in the *Iskandarnāma* of Niẓāmī.[12] Yet, when we compare Aḥmedī's *mathnawī* with that of Niẓāmī, it is obvious that the Turkish poet is more inclined to the didactic articulation of values. Actually, the composition of the Ottoman *mathnawī* reflects a specific concern for didacticism towards its readers. Whereas Niẓāmī's narrative is straightforward – only occasionally does he allow himself to digress by inserting little stories that do not belong to Alexander's biography – Aḥmedī's procedure is totally different. Aḥmedī's *Book of Alexander* is composed of a succession of narratives or *dāstān*s, the function of each one being to tell an episode of Alexander's conquest. These *dāstān*s are usually, but not systematically, divided into three parts. In the first part (*muḳaddime-i dāstān* or *dāstān*), the poet calls on traditional figures of lyrical poetry (the amorous nightingale, the parrot, or the beautiful cupbearer), and does not refrain from reminding the reader of the transience of the world. There follows a depiction of an episode of Alexander's adventures that is told in a section usually named *maṭl-i dāstān* (beginning of the story). Finally, in a third section significantly called *der temthīl ve hātime-i dāstān* (about the allegorical meaning and the epilogue of the story), the poet delivers the ethical or the spiritual meaning of the episode in a didactic manner.

In order to illustrate this narrative process, I will focus on the episode in which Alexander succeeds his father to the throne. In this sequence, poets usually introduce the figure of Aristotle, who will play the role of Alexander's wise adviser throughout his journey. In Niẓāmī's text, a section is devoted to the education of Sikandar by the sage Lysimachus, the father of Aristotle. Niẓāmī depicts Aristotle as the prince's fellow-student. In a couple of verses, Lysimachus asks Alexander not to withhold his regard from his son in the future. Aristotle's teaching of Alexander is characterised and justified this way in Niẓāmī's *mathnawī*:

10 The word *mathnawī* refers to rather long poems that are versified in a rhyming couplets form.

11 Cf. *bayt* 6613 of the Ty. 921 manuscript, which comes from the library of the Istanbul University. This version was edited in *fac-simile* in 1983 by İsmaïl Ünver. It is one of the manuscripts that include the larger number of rhyming couplets (8754). I will use this edition to quote Aḥmedī's text.

12 Sawyer, *Alexander, History and Piety*, 19–20.

ba dastur-i ū shawī shughl-sanj	By his ministership you will be experienced in affairs
ki dastur-i dānā bih az tīgh u ganj[13]	For the wise minister is better than sword and treasure

This last verse gives the author the opportunity to tell his audience about the importance for a king to listen to his wise advisers. Surprisingly perhaps, we will not find any specific section following this episode that provides more details about this kind of exhortation.

By contrast, in Aḥmedī's *mathnawī*, thanks to the insertion of the section named *der temṣīl ve hātime-i dāstān*, Aristotle's teaching is conceived and explained to the reader in a way that allows the poet to dwell on this very topic. In the first section (*muḳaddime-i dāstān*), Aḥmedī announces the birth of Alexander and writes that the prince will benefit from Aristotle's instruction. In the second section, we are told that Alexander succeeds his father to the throne and begins to take good measures for his people. This fact is regarded as the direct consequence of Aristotle's wise teaching. The Ottoman poet develops this idea in the third section (*der temthīl ve hātime-i dāstān*), which starts as follows:

ʿaḳl Areṣṭū nefs Dhü l-Ḳarneyn-dür[14]	Aristotle is the intellect and Alexander the ego
rūḥ milk-i Rūm iy deryā-ı dür[15]	The land of Rum is the spirit, o sea of pearls!

The lesson is clear: Aristotle epitomises the *ʿaḳl* (intellect) that educates Alexander. Alexander symbolises the *nafs* (the carnal soul), which has to be educated for the benefit of the land of Rum. Aḥmedī pursues his didactic speech by telling his reader:

nefsüñi ʿaḳluñ eger teʾdīb ide	If your intellect educates your ego
ʿilm-ile ahlaḳuñi tehdhīb ide[16]	It refines your conduct thanks to knowledge

13 Niẓāmī, *Iskandarnāma*, 947.
14 Dhü l-Ḳarneyn is the Koranic name of Alexander the Great.
15 Aḥmedī, *İskendernāme*, f. 6a.
16 Aḥmedī, *İskendernāme*, f. 6a.

In these verses, the use of the word *te'dīb* (education), which comes from the same root of *adab*,[17] and the word *tehdhīb* (refinement), shows that the poet intends to focus on the control and the education of the ego (*nafs*), following the Sufi tradition of *adab al-nafs*.[18] And a little bit further in the same section:

ḳābil eyle nefsi ʿaḳluñ pendine	Move the ego according to the advice of your intellect
cānuñı düşürme şehvet bendine	Do not let drop your soul towards the shackles of lust
nefsdür kim sini iltür külhene	The ego drags you to the boiler room[19]
ʿaḳldur kim sini iltür gülşene[20]	The intellect takes you to the rose garden

This kind of explanation is repeated several times in other *der temthīl ve hātime-i dāstān* sections. For example, after the telling of Alexander's victory over Darab (king Darius III), the former is compared to the intellect (*ʿaql*) whereas the latter is compared to the carnal soul (*nafs*). Alexander's victory against Darius is thus presented as the victory of the intellect over the ego. Again, when Alexander defeats *Fūr* (Porus), the mighty Indian king who had come to fight him with a great army of strong elephants at the Battle of Hydaspes (326 BC), we can read in the *temthīl* section that:

Fūr-i hindī nefs-i emmāre-durur	Fur the Indian is the imperious ego
kim elinde kişi bī-çare-durur	In the hand of which everyone is hopeless
fīller nefsüñ ḳuvāsı-dur yaḳīn	The elephants are unquestionably the forces of the ego
ʿaḳl İskender-dür iy dānā-ı dīn	The intellect is Alexander, o thou who are learned in religion

17 An author such as Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 295/905–300/910) often employs the word *adab* interchangeably with *ta'dīb* (*te'dīb* in Ottoman) to mean "disciplining and controlling" the lower self or *nafs*; see Keeler, "The Concept of *adab* in Early Sufism with Particular Reference to the Teaching of Sahl b. ʿAbdallāh al-Tustarī (d. 283/896)", 82.

18 See Gril, "*Adab* et éthique dans le soufisme", 51.

19 The boiler rooms (*külkhene*) refer to these places where the water was heated in public bath. If the intellect leads to the garden of paradise, the ego leads straight to the gates of hell (where the flames stir as in the "külhane").

20 Aḥmedī, *İskendernāme*, f. 6a.

The inclusion of a section such as this one shows that Aḥmedī was eager to draw a lesson from the Alexander narrative that could be easily understandable. Not only does the Ottoman poet guide the reader's interpretation, but he also engages him directly. There is no such device in Niẓāmī's book. Consequently, the Ottoman poet probably felt the need to explain the key principles of *adab al-nafs*, for which man's realisation comes through the cultivation of *ʿaql* and the consequent discipline of the *nafs*. Niẓāmī's Persian readers were probably more accustomed to this subtle relationship between the outer act and the inner self that encapsulates the very notion of *adab*.[21]

It is the same kind of narrative process that is to be found in the famous Timurid statesman and poet's *Alexandreid*.[22] Although Nawāʾī's *Sadd-i iskandarī* (The Alexandrine Wall) is the rewriting of Niẓāmī's *Iskandarnāma*, it is also modelled around Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī (d. 725/1325) and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's (d. 987/1492) own imitations of Niẓāmī's book.[23] Since the Persian poet and Naqshbandi Sufi was close to Nawāʾī – Jāmī is said to have initiated Nawāʾī to the Naqshbandiyya order in 880/1476, and they remained close friends whose literary interests coincided throughout their lives – his 'Alexandrine Book of Wisdom' exerted a very marked influence on Nawāʾī's rewriting.[24]

Like Aḥmedī's rewriting, each episode (*dāstān*) of Alexander's life in Nawāʾī's *Sadd-i iskandarī* is accompanied by several sections that are meant to convey the signification of the episode on different levels.[25] However, by contrast with Aḥmedī's way of proceeding, the meaning of the episode is placed before its telling. Actually, each episode is preceded by three sections. The first section consists of a presentation of an ethical value or a moral principle such as aspiration (*himma*), justice, or leniency for instance, to which the poet urges his

21 For a more detailed analysis of the didactic aspects of Aḥmedī's *Iskendernāme*, see Toutant, "Le premier *Roman d'Alexandre* versifié en ottoman ou les fondements d'une didactique princière".

22 It is unlikely that Nawāʾī had knowledge of the work of his Ottoman predecessor. Unfortunately, there is no mention of Aḥmedī in any of the works of the Chagatai-Timurid poet.

23 Both were written in Persian. Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī's *Āʾīna-yi iskandarī* (The Alexandrine Mirror) was written in 698/1299–699/1300. Jāmī's *Khiradnāma-yi iskandarī* (The Alexandrine Book of Wisdom) was composed ca. 888/1484–889/1485.

24 See Toutant, "Evaluating Jāmī's Influence on Chaghatay Poetry".

25 For Nawāʾī's *Khamsa*, I use a manuscript copied in Herat in 889/1485. This copy comes from the University of Michigan (Special Collections Library, Isl. MS 450).

reader to conform (*andarz*-type section).[26] This section is then illustrated by the way of a short apologue (*ḥikāyat*) in the subsequent section. A third section depicts a discussion between Alexander and Aristotle, his wise adviser, which aims for a better and a deeper understanding of the theme that was introduced in the first section (*ḥikmat*). Finally, the last section narrates an episode of Alexander's life that serves as a kind of an empirical confirmation, so to speak, of the concept introduced in the first section (*dāstān*). This way, each episode of Alexander's career is preceded by three sections that are linked to the story by a didactic purpose, and eighteen themes are then subsequently addressed, illustrated, explained in depth, and finally embodied by Alexander's biography.[27] In this way, more than seventy sections comprise the boxes of this vast table which reveals how the poet's approach tended towards a kind of systematisation, which we do not find in the works of his Persian predecessors.[28]

Like Aḥmedī, and by contrast to his Persian models, Nawā'ī probably also felt the need to be more explicit with respect to the ethical values that are stake in the telling of Alexander's adventures. When these two Turkic literati rewrote 'The Book of Alexander' in their respective languages (Ottoman and Chagatai), they also worked to convey some of the *adab* principles to their new Turkish-speaking audiences in the most didactic manner. In their endeavour to build a culture of their own, these Turkic poets were eager to transfer the Islamico-Persian *adab* – as it revealed itself in Persian classical poetry – into their nascent Turkic courtly cultures. It was a kind of *translatio studii*, designed to forge an Ottoman *edeb* and a Timurid-Chagatai *adab* for which the poetic Alexandrian cycle appeared to be a particularly suitable means.[29]

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26 According to Shaked and Safa, "Andarz", "as a literary designation, the term *andarz* denotes the type of literature which contains advice and injunctions for proper behaviour, whether in matters of state, everyday life, or religion".

27 Here is a list of the eighteen thematic chapters: 1) aspiration/ideal (*himma*); 2) justice (*'adālat*); 3) rivalry (*mukhālafat*); 4) respect owed to the ranks of people; 5) the virtues of winter; 6) eulogy of the journey; 7) the proper use of youth; 8) leniency (*auf*); 9) rectitude (*tüzlük*); 10) hospitality (*mihmānliq*); 11) eulogy of spring; 12) the beauty of the world; 13) separation (*hajr*) and union (*wiṣāl*); 14) "traveling in the homeland" (*safar dar waṭan*), which is one of the most important Naqshbandi principles; 15) the "true" *himma*; 16) the treachery (*wafāsïzlïq*) of the world; 17) acquiescence (*riḍā*) and compassion (*hamdardlïq*); 18) the importance of having a good adviser.

28 For more details, see Toutant, "Evaluating Jāmī's Influence on Chaghatay Poetry".

29 This transfer of knowledge sets the bases of an *adab* aptly described by Yıldız, in the context of the birth of Ottoman courtly literature, as "a discursive tradition aimed at creating political and social elites through the transmission of canons of knowledge and ways of thinking that incalculate aesthetic, ethical and religious values". See Yıldız, "Aydinid

However, a question remains: What does the notion of *adab* more specifically mean for those Turkic *literati*? Despite the complexity of the question, we can at least provide concrete elements of a response in the case of the Chagatai-Timurid poet, who offered an explicit explanation of the notion in two of his writings. Given that Nawāʾī used a Persian literary frame to compose them, they offer us an interesting picture of how Perso-Islamic *adab* could be conceived in a Chagatai-Timurid context.

2 Vernacularising *Adab*: The Timurid Example

The Chagatai-Timurid poet deals more specifically with the notion of *adab* in two of his most famous works: *Ḥayrat al-abrār* (Bewilderment of the Righteous) and *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* (The Beloved of Hearts), both composed in Eastern Turkish respectively in 888/1483 and in 906/1500–1501. A work of ethics and morals written in a rhymed prose interspersed with verses, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* has been said to be inspired by two Persian masterpieces: Saʿdī's *Gulistān* and Jāmī's *Bahāristān*.[30] The treatise comprises an introduction and three sections. In the second of these, *adab* is listed among ten virtues,[31] each of which is described by an *andarz*-type development and then illustrated by an apologue (*ḥikāyat*). The second work in question, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, is the first *mathnawī* of Nawāʾī's *Khamsa*.[32] As such, it was conceived as an imitation of Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār*, Amir Khusraw Dihlawī's *Maṭlaʿ al-anwār* and Jāmī's *Tuḥfat al-aḥrār*.[33] Like its models *Ḥayrat al-abrār* is a didactic *mathnawī* that comprises, besides a good deal of introductory matter, twenty *maqālat*s or "discourses". Each of these discourses deals with some theological or ethical topic, which is first discussed in the abstract and then illustrated by an apologue (*ḥikāyat*). Interestingly, Nawāʾī is the only one among the poets quoted above (Niẓāmī, Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī and Jāmī) who devotes a specific *maqālat* to *adab*.

Court Literature in the Formation of an Islamic Identity in Fourteenth-century Western Anatolia", 198–199.

30 Subtelny, "Mīr ʿAlī Shīr Nawāʾī", 91.

31 This ten virtues are *tawba*, *zuhd*, *tawakkul*, *qanāʿat*, *ṣabr*, *tawāḍuʿ wa-adab*, *zikr*, *tawajjuh*, *riḍā*, *ʿishq*.

32 Being a rewriting of Niẓāmī's pentalogy, Nawāʾī's *Khamsa* is composed of *Ḥayrat al-abrār* (Bewilderment of the Righteous), *Farhād u-Shīrīn*, *Laylī wü-Majnūn*, *Sabʿa-yi sayyār* (The Seven Travellers), and *Sadd-i iskandarī* (The Alexandrine Wall).

33 Dihlawī's *Maṭlaʿ al-anwār* and Jāmī's *Tuḥfat al-aḥrār* are both imitations of Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār*.

2.1 *Addressing Several Types of* adab

In the sixth discourse (*maqālat*) of *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, the Timurid poet sheds light on various dimensions of *adab*. However, if his presentation reflects somehow the word's own "plasticity",[34] he does not compensate for this with a technical definition. Rather, his goal is to provide his audience with a broad understanding of the concept. Hence, his discourse often adopts a very didactic tone, and the reflections raised by the moralist are often illustrated by numerous poetical metaphors.

Adab is about relationships: the relationship to others, to God and to oneself.[35] According to this schematic vision, there have been numerous attempts to make up a classification. Sufi theorists have often treated *adab* in terms of various configurations of one's behaviour: "as proper comportment vis-à-vis divine law (*adab al-sharīʿa*), as proper comportment vis-à-vis others (*adab al-khidma*/*al-muʿāmalāt*), and as *adab al-ḥaqq*, or proper comportment vis-à-vis God".[36] Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), whose works were known to Nawāʾī thanks to Jāmī's teaching,[37] added a fourth dimension, as noted by Erik Ohlander, to this list: *adab al-ḥaqīqa*, or proper comportment vis-à-vis the divine reality.[38] As far as Nawāʾī's *maqālat* is concerned, we may distinguish three categories: *adab al-sharīʿa*, *adab al-khidma*, and an *adab al-ṭarīq*, which refers more specifically to those who intend to follow the mystical path.

It is obvious from the beginning of the *maqālat*, that Nawāʾī immediately adopts a Sufi perspective. The poet primarily addresses those who sit in "the house of request" (*ṭalab üyidä*),[39] those who "lower their height under the weight of service" (*khidma yüki*)[40] and "blind the eyes of arrogance" (*kibr közi*).[41] While the necessity to struggle against the lower soul (*nafs*) and its desire (*hawā*) is also repeated, the verses unfold a mystical terminology (*riyāḍa*, *ṣidq*, *rukhṣa*, etc.), which clearly refers to engagement along the Sufi path. The discourse thus concerns primarily those who intend to model their behaviour around an *adab* of the path (the word *ṭarīq* is used in this meaning in the eighth *bayt*).[42]

34 Mayeur-Jaouen and Patrizi, "Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*", 2.
35 Mayeur-Jaouen and Patrizi, "Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*", 6.
36 Ohlander, "*Adab* d) in Ṣūfism".
37 See Toutant, *Un empire de mots*, 492–494.
38 Ohlander, "*Adab* d) in Ṣūfism". See also Gril, "*Adab* et éthique dans le soufisme", 59.
39 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 49.
40 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 49.
41 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 49.
42 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 49.

Nawā'ī then urges this audience to engage on the *sharʿ ṭarīqi* (the path of the law),[43] meaning that Sufi apprentices should also conform to an *adab al-sharīʿa*. In this respect, the poet reaffirms the importance of religious duties (*farḍ*), especially when it comes to instruct people about what is good or bad:

farḍ u sunan olcha erür dilpathīr	What is convenient according to the [religious] duties and the Sunna
barchagha örgätmäk erür nāguzīr[44]	It is necessary to instruct everyone about it

It should be borne in mind that in the Timurid context, these words find a significant echo, owing to the persistence of Mongolian customs.[45] The *adab al-sharīʿa* that Nawā'ī promotes here first relates to family. Practical pieces of advice are given with respect to this matter. For instance, one should give a good name to his children so that they do not feel shame later. Children should also have a teacher (*muʿallim*) in order to learn knowledge and *adab*. Likewise, one's wife should stay at home (*anīs-i ḥarām*). She should adapt her conduct to the *sharīʿa* (*sharʿ ṭarīqi*), display a true sense of modesty (*ḥayā'*) and avoid the traps set by the carnal soul (*nafs*) such as vanity. To honour one's parents as much as one can is also an essential duty (*farḍ-i ʿayn*).[46] This kind of exhortations is indeed very common. Many hadiths link *adab* and the way a good Muslim should behave towards his children, his wife and his parents, giving the very same kind of advice.[47] These very concrete dispositions recall one of Nawā'ī's peers' statement: "*Adab* consists wholly of doing good deeds".[48] In the same line of thought, insofar as Islamic law is observed, the proper conduct requires nothing but wisdom (*khirad*), remarks Nawā'ī.[49]

Beyond the family circle, Nawā'ī extends the necessity to display *adab* toward anyone, as well as he urges to perform every service (*khidma*) with *adab*.[50] The rule of *adab al-muʿāmalāt* is as follows: if the person is of a higher rank, you have to serve him (*khidma*); if the person is of a lower rank you have

43 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 50.
44 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 50.
45 See Toutant, "La réponse du poète chaghatay Nawā'ī au poète persan Niẓāmī".
46 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 50.
47 See for example Muhammed Ali, *A Manual of Hadith*, 374, and 376–377.
48 Kāshifī, *Futuwwat-nāma-yi Sulṭānī*, cited by Loewen, "Proper Conduct (*Adab*) is Everything", 556.
49 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 50.
50 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.

to show him compassion (*raḥm*).[51] This is because *adab* is fruitful both for modest men (*kichiklär*) and noble ones (*ulughlar*). It is a cause of happiness (*saʿādatmandlïq*) for the former, and a motive of elevation (*sarbalandlïq*) for the latter.[52] In *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* Nawāʾī reiterates the idea that *adab* ensures civil peace and mutual respect between the young and the old. No friendship is possible at any level without *adab*.[53] Nevertheless, either in *Ḥayrat al-abrār* or *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, the argument that Nawāʾī stresses the most is that *adab* is even more necessary for people of high status (*sarāfrāz*). It is mostly because:

bolmas adabsïz kishilar arjumand	People without *adab* are not worthy of estimation
past etär ol khaylnï charkh-i baland[54]	The high sphere makes that people lower

We find the same idea in one of Nawāʾī's *protégés*,[55] Ḥusayn Wāʿiẓ Kāshifī (d. 910/1504–05), who wrote in his *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*:[56]

> And *adab* looks well in all men; especially in kings governing the earth, and in princes of high estate: because when they persevere in the paths of *adab*, the observance of the same propriety of behaviour becomes incumbent on their dependents; and by this cause their subjects also cannot deviate from the way of *adab*: and thus the affairs of government are duly regulated, and the comforts of the body of the people are provided for in conformity with sound principles

51 See this *ḥadīth* reported by Tirmidhī: "He is not of us who does not show mercy to our little ones and respect to our great ones". Cited by Muhammed Ali, *A Manual of Hadith*, 386.

52 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 49.

53 Nawāʾī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 71.

54 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 49.

55 In Herat, Nawāʾī had extensive patronage activities. Kāshifī, a well-know religious scholar, Sufi figure, and influential preacher of the Timurid capital, was patronised by Nawāʾī, to whom he dedicated a number of his works.

56 This treaty was presumably composed in 907/1501–02. See Subtelny, "A Late Medieval Persian *Summa* on Ethics: Kashifi's *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*", 602. For Kāshifī's approach is compilative (most of his works appear to be codification of the literature on the subject), his ideas provide us with a view of how a matter was traditionally tackled. On this subject, see Simidchieva, "Imitation and Innovation in Timurid Poetics: Kashifi's *Badāyiʿ al-afkār* and its Predecessors, *al-Muʿjam* and *Ḥadāʾiq al-siḥr*".

> "From God, we pray for the guidance of *adab*:
> He who is without *adab* is shut out from the grace of the Lord"[57]

Not surprisingly in a Mirror for Princes,[58] Nawā'ī devotes a substantial part to this specific aspect of the *adab al-khidma* which is the *adab al-khidmat-i shāh*. Ibn ʿArabī specifies that *adab al-khidma* is precisely based on the royal court etiquette.[59] Interestingly, the Chagatai-Timurid poet focuses on one aspect: the dangers of royal banquets (*shah bazmi*). Even though the term *adab* is linked to the idea of an invitation to a banquet (*ma'duba*), the conception of *adab* that Nawā'ī promotes does certainly not include such an invitation. When you serve the king, writes the poet, you have to stay away from the banquets even if they are wonderful (*dilrabā*). They are places full of dangers: "for a moment of pleasure (*ʿaysh*), there are one thousand torments (*bir ming āzārī*)".[60] In more general terms, Nawā'ī advises his audience to stay away from the service of the king:

angla bu qānūn ilä shah khidmatin	Understand with this rule the service of the king
ʿayshidin artuq gham ilä miḥnatin[61]	There is more sorrow and pain than pleasure [in it]

These verses were actually not written by a hermit or a recluse, but by a court poet who spent his whole life serving his king.[62] His tone is nonetheless equally vehement, especially when he compares to a fool (*telbä*) the man who wishes to do that.[63] The discourse then becomes mystical. The proper conduct with regards to *adab al-khidma* demands that one considers what true kingship is:

kimgä fanā ganjidin āgāhlïq	For whom is aware of the treasure of annihilation

57 Kāshifī, *Akhlāḳ-i Muḥsinī*, 26.
58 On the Mirror for Prince dimension of Nawā'ī's *Khamsa*, see Toutant, *Un empire de mots*, 623–635.
59 Patrizi, "*Adab al-mulūk*: L'utilisation de la terminologie du pouvoir dans le soufisme médiéval", 207.
60 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.
61 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.
62 See Qayumov, *"Hayratul-abror" talqini*, 95. In another *maqālat* of the same work Nawā'ī harshly criticises royal feasts. See Toutant, *Un empire de mots*, 394–396.
63 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.

mülk-i qanāʿatdä anga shāhlïq[64] He owes kingship in the kingdom of contentment

Proper *adab* is better than kingship and all its treasures. There is an illustration of this statement in an apologue told by another prolific prose-stylist of the Timurid era. Here are the words that the Persian writer Kāshifī places in the mouth of the Emperor of Constantinople:

> Wealth is a faithless friend, and an inconstant mistress; and no account should be made of it, and we should not be deceived by the deceitful corruptible of this world. I have adorned my son with the ornament of *adab*; and I have laid up in store for him the treasures of what is most noble in morals: wealth is subject to corruption and decay; but *adab* is safe from change and alteration.

The moral is encapsulated in a few verses at the end of the story:

> *Adab* is better than the treasures of Karun;
> It is superior to the kingdom of Faridun;
> Great men have never had any care for wealth:
> For riches have their face towards departure;
> They have turned their reins after wisdom and *adab*;
> For they have got their reputation by *adab*.[65]

Nawāʾī also writes in *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* that "for love (*muḥabbat*) the ornaments of *adab* are enough".[66] It is obvious then that, both from a mundane and a supramundane perspective, the practice of the various types of *adab* allows the Sufi apprentice to reach his 'fundamental goal' (*maqṣad-i aṣlī*), as the very last verses of the discourse (*maqālat*) say.[67] Now that we have seen which kinds of *adab* Nawāʾī promoted in his works, let us turn to the virtues that lay at the very basis of 'the proper conduct' according to our Chagatai-Timurid poet.

64 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.
65 Kāshifī, *Akhlāḳ-i Muḥsinī*, 27.
66 Nawāʾī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 81. Compare with this statement in Kāshifī's *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*, 26: "And holy men have said that the best possession and the richest ornament of the children of Adam, more especially in the kings of the earth, is *adab*".
67 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.

2.2 Tawāḍuʿ *and* ḥayāʾ*: The Two Pillars of* adab

According to Nawāʾī *adab* rests on two pillars: *tawāḍuʿ* (humility) and *ḥayāʾ* (modesty). The importance of humility (*tawāḍuʿ*) in the practice of *adab* is stressed at the beginning of the sixth discourse of *Ḥayrat al-abrār*:

bu ki tawāḍuʿdurur atï anïng	That is the name of humility
yā ki adab *keldi ṣifātï anïng*[68]	Or it has become the attribute of *adab*

The Chagatai-Timurid poet praises this virtue using poetical metaphors indicating that the entire world is 'powerless' in the face of such quality. However, Nawāʾī also uses a very didactic tone that sometimes makes his discourse look like a practical handbook. Even if *humility* is nothing but a matter of wisdom, tells the poet, there are many ways to use *tawāḍuʿ* according to one's rank. In that respect, a master (*beg*) should not show too much *tawāḍuʿ* to a slave (*qul*). Conversely, to pray in front of a beggar is not a sign of humility or generosity (one should rather give a dirham, tells the poet). Likewise, to stand up in deference to a child is acting like an arrogant man (*mutakabbir*) who reveals his frivolity (*yengilik*). The practice of *tawāḍuʿ* and *adab* requires insight:

garchi adab *sharṭi baghāyat keräk*	Even if *adab* is an extreme necessity
har kishi taurïda riʿāyat keräk[69]	It should be observed according to every kind of person

The conclusion of the *maqālat* urges listeners and readers to set themselves on the path of humility. According to a mystical conception of poverty (*adab al-faqr*), which reverses social values, the poet tells his audience that strength lies in lowness:

charkh kibi yetsä zabardastlïgh	If you acquire vigour like the sky
yer quyïsïda tilämäk pastlïgh[70]	On earth choose lowness

The Sufi terminology at the very end of the discourse indicates that *tawāḍuʿ*, as well as *ḥayāʾ*, leads the traveller to the end of his mystical quest:

68 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 50.
69 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 50.
70 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.

waḍʿ-i tawāḍuʿda wafā äylämäk	Trust in the disposition of humility
dāb-i adab *birlä ḥayāʾ äylämäk*	Be modest according to the custom of *adab*
tā bu wasīla bilä tapïb qabūl	So that with this means you will be accepted
maqṣad-i aṣlī sarï bolghay nuzūl[71]	And you will descend towards your fundamental goal

In *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, written some fifteen years later, Nawāʾī reaffirms the fundamental link between *adab* and *tawāḍuʿ*. The poet extolls the virtues of humility both from a mundane and a supramundane point of view. For *tawāḍuʿ* favours social harmony, the virtue is associated with a list of terms denoting friendship and love (*muḥabbat*, *mawaddat*, *dostlugh*, *uns*, *ulfat*). On the contrary, people who do not show humility are identified as being arrogant (*mutakabbir*) and hostile.[72] From a supramundane point of view, *tawāḍuʿ* offers salvation in the hereafter, if it is cultivated with aspirations towards a spiritual union. Needless to say, such a perspective is not given to the 'one who cultivates his ego' (*nafasparast*) and proves himself selfish (*khudbīn*). The mundane and the supramundane outlooks meet in the struggle against the lower soul (*nafs*). The emphasis on humility as being a pillar of *adab* reveals that Nawāʾī conceives *adab* first and foremost as a way to learn how to nurture or train one's soul. There is no *adab* without a strict control of the ego.

Even if the word *tawāḍuʿ* is not found in the Quran, the arrogance of man is condemned numerous times in the holy book,[73] whereas humility is praised as being the virtue of the servants of God.[74] In the Islamic traditions, "arrogance and haughtiness are discussed in relation to Muḥammad's preaching, with those who rejected it often being accused of arrogance".[75] While majesty is a divine attribute, haughtiness or pride for man is a sin.[76] "Those who are arrogant will enter Hell", says a hadith.[77] Good morals require selflessness and regard for other people. According to the Sunna, humility is the gateway to good conduct and the preeminent means of being near both to the created and the Creator: to know that God exists and requires humility leads to feeling and acting humble. This link between *adab* and *tawāḍuʿ* was stressed in Sufism as well.

71 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.
72 Nawāʾī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 80.
73 See for example Qur. 16: 23.
74 Qur. 25: 63.
75 Gilliot, "Arrogance".
76 Gilliot, "Arrogance".
77 Gilliot, "Arrogance".

Aḥmad Rifāʿī (d. 578/1182), the founder of the Rifāʿī Sufi order, stated that "the person who loves Allāh makes *tawāḍuʿ* a habit for himself".[78] A century earlier, the noted Sufi scholar of Nishapur, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), who acted as a compiler and transmitter of Sufism,[79] defined *tawāḍuʿ* as "the acceptance of the Truth and the use of good disposition (*khuluq*)".[80] In his *Muqaddima fī l-taṣawwuf wa-ḥaqīqatihi*, humility is clearly associated with moral education in a chapter significantly titled *Ḥusn al-khuluq wa-l-tawāḍuʿ*.[81] Recently, Paul Heck has shown that Ghazālī's (d. 505/1111) system advocates for an *adab* that leads to humility.[82] The pursuit of knowledge of God must be accompanied by the cultivation of disciplines (*ādāb*) that form one in humility and preference for others, allowing one to love them in God, that is, in the awareness of God being everywhere manifest.[83] In *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (The Revivification of the Religious Sciences), Ghazālī describes Muḥammad's ethics in terms of the humility (*tawāḍuʿ*) he would expect from a devout scholar, and more generally from every pious Muslim.[84]

In the *maqālat* he devotes to *adab*, Nawāʾī also stresses the importance of modesty (*ḥayāʾ*). In this regard, he tells his reader that honour does not come from rank or lineage (*jāh-u nasab*), but from the practice of *adab* and *ḥayāʾ*. There is a rather long development about laughing (*külgü*), which is qualified as a sign of *tark-i adab* (abandonment of *adab*). Nawāʾī displays several metaphors about the damaging effects of laughing. In any case the poet advises his reader to cry rather than to laugh in the most ridiculous manner. Tears cleanse the drunkard's sins, he tells us. The Chagatai-Timurid poet is therefore in line

78 Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī, *Al-Burhān al-muʾayyad*, quoted by Ansari, *Grand Masters of Sufism*, 109.

79 See Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 18.

80 *Kitāb al-futuwwa*, quoted by Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 379. Sulamī reserves a significant role to *adab* and humility in his work. In his *Bayān aḥwāl al-ṣufiyya*, Sulamī makes humility (*tawāḍuʿ*) one of the two cardinal virtues of the *faqīr*, the other being submission. See Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 234.

81 Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 450.

82 Actually, the use of a concept such as humility allows Ghazālī to moderate the arrogance of the scholastic philosophy. See Heck, "*Adab* in the Thought of Ghazālī (d. 505/1111): In the Service of Mystical Insight".

83 Heck, "*Adab* in the Thought of Ghazālī", 300.

84 Heck, "*Adab* in the Thought of Ghazālī", 304. Heck explains that the discussion about humility in the section on the Prophet's character in *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* sets forth a number of hadiths that portray circumstances in which the Prophet exemplifies the attitude. It is here that humility is given the significant designation of being the principal virtue of the pious. And in this regard, Ghazālī does not hesitate to remind his reader of this hadith: whoever is humble, God exalts him; whoever is haughty, God humiliates him.

with the Islamic tenets, which state that "the contrary of *ḥayā'* is mockery or sarcasm (*istihzā'*)".[85]

Even though a larger number of verses are devoted to explaining the importance of *tawāḍu'* in this *maqālat*, *ḥayā'* is at the core of the subsequent parable (*ḥikāyat*). Hence it is the concept of *ḥayā'*, and not *tawāḍu'*, which is illustrated in a story whose heading (*sarlauḥa*) reads as follows:

Nūshīrwānnïng ḥayā' baghïda nargis közidin közining nargisi uyalïb nargis közlük gulrukhïdïn kinār istämäy kanāra istägäni[86]	In the garden of prudishness (*ḥayā'*), the narcissus of the eye of Nushirwan being embarrassed by the eye of the narcissus, Nushirwan does not want to embrace the narcissus' eyes beauty,[87] and stands aside.

The anecdote features the Sasanid king Chosroes Anūshīrvān (Persian form: Nūshīrwān, r. 590–628), at a time when he was not yet king. The story relates that the young prince had fallen in love with a girl. One day he set a meeting with her in a remote meadow (*chaman*). When he straightened out his arm to hold her, his gaze fell upon a flowerbed of narcissi. He suddenly withdrew his hand and became perplexed (*mutaghayyir*). No less confused, his beloved asked him the reason of such gesture. The poet writes that the *shāh-i mu'addab* (the courteous king) answered that:

kim bu wiṣāl ichrä ki wāqi'dürür *nargis-i shahlā közi māni'dürür*[88]	In this embrace that is happening The eye of dark-blue narcissus is a forbidder

And the poet to comment on the king's reaction:

'ayn-i ḥayā' birlä futuwwat *anga bermädi ol amrda quwwat* *anga*[89]	His prudish eye and his noble heart Did not give him strength in this circumstance

85 Nwyia, *Exégèse coranique et langage mystique*, 289.

86 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 51.

87 In Persian poetry, narcissus is associated with eye. For instance, the beloved has eyes that resemble narcissus. See Fouchécour, *La Description de la nature dans la poésie lyrique persane du XI^e siècle*, 81–83.

88 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 52.

89 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 52.

The moral is simple and expressed in the form of a maxim in the last verses of the apologue:

ʿaysh Nawāʾī nechä dilkash durur	O Nawāʾī although pleasure is delicious
līk adab *birlä ḥayāʾ khūshdurur*[90]	Modesty and *adab* are better

As opposed to kings who let their egos get the upper hand during lavish banquets, such as those portrayed by Nawāʾ ī in a preceding *maqālat*,[91] the poet exhorts princes to take control of their behaviour in any circumstance. They should act like the great Sasanid monarch whose behaviour reveals the practice of an Islamic *adabʾ* ahead of his time.

Like *tawāḍuʿ*, the term *ḥayāʾ* does not appear in the Quran.[92] However, the importance of *ḥayāʾ* is also greatly emphasised in the Sunna. A hadith reported by Bukhārī says: "*ḥayā* does not bring anything except good".[93] Modesty is even said to be a pillar of Islamic morals and a strict relationship was established between *ḥayāʾ* (modesty) and *īmān* (faith) by the Prophet, who is reported to have declared: "The faith has over seventy branches, and *ḥayāʾ* is one of them".[94] According to a very famous saying, "every *dīn* has a distinctive quality and the distinctive quality of Islam is modesty".[95] If the virtue of Islam is modesty,[96] it is easy to understand the proximity between *adab* and *ḥayāʾ*, especially from a Sufi perspective. This other hadith is well-known: "If you do not feel ashamed, then do whatever you like".[97] It indicates the role of modesty in self-control, for if one loses his *ḥayāʾ*, then there is no obstacle that causes him to abstain from bad and forbidden things.[98]

Not surprisingly *ḥayāʾ* is one of the terms that encapsulates Sulamī's spirituality.[99] In his *Sulūk al-ʿārifīn* (The Progress of the Gnostics), the renowned Sufi scholar made *ḥayāʾ* the penultimate stage of the spiritual progression, just

90 Nawāʾī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 52.
91 See the third *maqālat* about the sultans.
92 Benkheira, "Sexualité", 817.
93 Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, VIII: 88.
94 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, I: 27. See also Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, VIII: 89.
95 Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, V: 329.
96 Malik reports this tradition in his *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, 378: "each faith had a virtue of its own, and the virtue of Islam is modesty".
97 Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, VIII: 90.
98 On this point, see Māwardī, *Adab al-dunyā wa-l-dīn*, 241.
99 Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 302.

after *tawakkul* and before *irāda*.[100] This explains why Sulamī is said to have "used the hadith and the sayings of the first masters as a foundation, thus bringing together *adab*, *futuwwa*, and *ḥayā'*".[101] Another monumental Sufi figure, Ibn ʿArabī, wrote this kind of statement about *ḥayā'*: "Note that the protecting light bestows shame (*ḥayā'*) upon the person receptive to it. This is because shame demands awareness of God's presence and activity in keeping with *iḥsān*, which the Prophet defined as worshipping God as if you see Him. Shame is an internal luminosity that preserves the servants from disobeying their Lord".[102]

Nawā'ī thus stresses a link between *adab* and *ḥayā'* that may have been less explicit in other works, but yet not less acknowledged with respect to its importance. Interestingly, this link is reaffirmed in an apologue of *Lisān al-ṭayr* (The Language of the Birds), a *mathnawī* composed in 904/1499 as a rewriting of another famous Persian poem, Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's *Manṭiq al-ṭayr* (573/1178 or 583/1187). In this apologue Nawā'ī tells the passionate love of Shaykh Ṣanʿān for a Christian girl, who forces him to leave the Muslim faith.[103] At some point of the story, the Shaykh is so enamoured of the Christian girl that he is in agony when he does not see her. One day, she comes to see him to mock his pitiful state:

dedi shūkh ey murshid-i ʿālī ṣifāt	The cruel beauty said: O guide endowed with noble qualities
ahl- i islām ichrä yoq ermish uyat	I have heard that among Muslims there is no shame
sen kibi islām eligä muqtadā	A leader of Muslims like you
ne parīshān nuktalar qïldïng ādā	You have spoken such incoherent words
ne ḥayā' *fahm oldï sendin ne* adab	You had neither the sense of modesty (*ḥayā'*) nor *adab*
sen ʿajab degän sözüng sendin ʿajab	Your strange words were even stranger than you

100 Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 499–500. For the importance of *ḥayā'* in Sulamī's work, see also his *Fuṣūl fī l-taṣawwuf* as quoted in Thibon, *L'Œuvre d'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī*, 354.

101 Mayeur-Jaouen and Patrizi, "Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*", 35.

102 Quoted by Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God*, 309.

103 Nawā'ī, *Lisān al-ṭayr*, ff. 166b–172b.

kimki bolsa ahl-i ʿishq ey pīshwā	O elder, whoever is in the state of love
bil anï maḥḍ-i adab *kān-i* ḥayāʾ[104]	Know that he should be pure *adab* and a source of *modesty*[105]

Through the mouth of the Christian girl the poet emphasises two things: the link between *ḥayāʾ* and *adab*, and the necessity for the Sufis (*ahl-i ʿishq*) to show both in their behaviours.

This passage reveals that Shaykh Ṣanʿān had totally lost control of himself and was no longer able to show his *ḥayāʾ*. The emphasis on virtues such as *ḥayāʾ* and *tawāḍuʿ* indicates how essential the control of the self (*nafs*) is in the definition of *adab*. *Ḥayāʾ* and *tawāḍuʿ* are two outward expressions of the self, which both ultimately reveal the quality of inner conduct and consequently one's relationship with God. Like Kāshifī, and many other Sufi thinkers, Nawāʾī conceives of proper *adab* above all as a way to domesticate the ego (*nafs*).[106] If the Chagatai-Timurid poet does not bring anything really new in the definition of *adab*, it is probably because his Turkish-speaking audience, less accustomed to Islamic tradition than their fellow Persian speakers, needed clarity and didacticism more than originality. And it is precisely out of these concerns, clarity and didacticism, that Nawāʾī was not afraid of using the Persian literary tradition in a way that best fit his purpose.

3 Performing *adab*, Reframing the Literary Tradition

The literature of *adab* deals with texts and examples "lived out and retraced by anecdotes (*ḥikāyāt*), with accounts handed down and patiently incorporated".[107] The Persian literary tradition is full of texts, ranging from the *Qābūsnāma* to the numerous *akhlāqī* treaties of the medieval and early modern periods, that concern themselves with ethical topics and that make prominent use of *ḥikāyāt*. Didactic literature is said to have reached its zenith in the works of Saʿdī Shīrāzī (d. 689/1291 or 693/1294). In his *Gulistān* and *Bustān*, the Persian poet prefers "to impress moral lessons on the reader's mind by means of exemplary anecdotes and vivid comparisons rather than dry statements of

104 Nawāʾī, *Lisān al-ṭayr*, f. 169b.
105 My emphasis.
106 On this matter, see Loewen, "Proper Conduct (*Adab*) is Everything".
107 Mayeur-Jaouen and Patrizi, "Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*", 5.

principle".[108] These short stories, in fact, use colourful anecdotes and lively narrative devices to show the reader how to enact these lessons. They have "the dual goal of exploring formal construction and offering ethical content".[109] Nawāʾī's method of staging two most important aspects of *adab*, *tawāḍuʿ* and *ḥayā'*, reveals that the poet was not only concerned by providing them with an illustrative literary framework, but also by exploring new possibilities that he would find more appropriate for his targeted audience.

3.1 *Muqbil, the Humble Sufi Traveller*

Curiously, as noted above, *tawāḍuʿ*, a virtue that was so central in the sixth discourse of *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, is not the quality that is being illustrated in the corresponding apologue (*ḥikāyat*). Instead, Nawāʾī chose to focus on *ḥayā'* and kept the illustration of *tawāḍuʿ* for an apologue that he would insert in his *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* some seventeen years later. The apologue that we find in *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* describes events that take place within the context of imperial Iranian history, during the reign of Khusraw Parwīz (r. 590 to 628). While hunting, Khusraw Parwīz loses one of his crown's precious pearls without realising it. When they come back to the castle, people start looking for it. The herald announces that the man who will find it will be greatly rewarded. Accidentally, the two protagonists of the story, two fellow travellers, meet while they are searching for the precious stone. Mudbir, whose name means unfortunate, is careless (*ghāfil*) and arrogant. On the contrary, Muqbil, whose name means fortunate, is careful and modest. In the course of their research they finally enter a town, at the gate of which stands a man. Full of pride, Mudbir passes by the man without looking at him, whereas Muqbil shows his humanity (*insāniyat*) and bows his head with *tawāḍuʿ* and *adab* before him. It is then, at that very moment, that Muqbil notices the pearl at the feet of the man. He takes it, kisses it, and gives it to the man, who is in fact a representative of the king. The man takes Muqbil's hands, goes back to the town and explains to Khusraw Parwīz what happened. The king rewards Muqbil beyond his expectations. Because of his pride, Mudbir is employed as a worker in the boiler room of the public baths of the town.[110] As usual, the last verses of the *ḥikāyat* encapsulate its overall meaning:

108 Shaked and Safa, "Andarz".

109 Mayeur-Jaouen and Patrizi, "Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi *adab*", 3.

110 See Aḥmedī's verse quoted above: *nefsdür kim sini iltür külkhene* (The ego drags you to the boiler room).

mutakabbir kezibän shaharda khwār-u mardūd	The proud walks in town humiliated and rejected
mutawāḍiʿni ghanī äylädi dar maqṣūd[111]	As for the humble one he became rich in his goal

The allegory is transparent: Fortune smiles on those who are humble. However, as Nawāʾī stated a few lines above, this humility is a product of knowledge, or at least awareness:

ghāfil jahl yüzidin khudpisand āgāh tawāḍuʿ wa adab zaywaridin arjumand[112]	The one who is careless because of his ignorance is egoist; the one who is aware is distinguished because of the ornament of *adab* and humility

This is exactly the same conclusion that closes the story in another apologue from *Lisān al-ṭayr*, in which we find the same two characters. At the very end of his journey, Muqbil, the humble man, receives an opportunity to speak with the king and obtains high status (*ʿālī maqām*). The selfish man (Mudbir), however, finds only punishment.[113] The two characters are also present in a story told to Bahrām Gūr while the Sasanid monarch is visiting the sixth pavilion, in Nawāʾī's rewriting of Niẓāmī's *Haft paykar*.[114] Here again the two travellers' names accord with their acts and get exactly the same type of rewards. The prototypes that served as models for Mudbir and Muqbil are to be found in a tale of Niẓāmī's *Haft paykar*. The Persian tale features two fellow travellers. The first one, Khayr, as his name indicates, personifies good, whereas the second traveller, Sharr, embodies evil. At the end of the story, Niẓāmī tells us that through fortune's grace Khayr was given an empire and a throne, whereas Sharr only got what he deserved.[115]

Why did Nawāʾī decided to turn Khayr into Muqbil and Sharr into Mudbir? In *Sabʿa-yi sayyār*, his rewriting of Niẓāmī's *Haft Paykar*, Nawāʾī gives this explanation with regard to the names of the two characters:

111 Nawāʾī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 83.
112 Nawāʾī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 83.
113 Nawāʾī, *Lisān al-ṭayr*, ff. 163b–164a.
114 Nawāʾī, *Sabʿa-yi sayyār*, 622–630.
115 Niẓāmī, *Haft paykar*, 774.

Muqbil āzāda-yi humāyunfāl	Muqbil [was] free and blessed by Prosperity
elgä maqbūl etib anï iqbāl	Good Fortune made people love him
Mudbir andaqki barsa har sarï	As for Mudbir, whenever he went
öltürüb yüzdä gard-i idbārī[116]	The dust of misfortune settled down on his face

It seems clear from these verses that the poet assigned his characters these names so that they would recall for the reader their ties to Good and Bad Fortune. Interestingly, in the apologue of *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, Nawā'ī adds epithets: he characterises Mudbir as being a *jahāngard* and Muqbil as being a *jawānmard*.[117] If *jahāngard* denotes simply a man who travels around the world, *jawānmard* clearly refers to a Sufi-oriented behaviour. In other words, if Muqbil and Mudbir are both travellers, the first one is clearly engaged on a Sufi path. And the fact that his name is an echo of Prosperity and Good Fortune reveals what awaits him at the end of his journey. Naming his characters Muqbil and Mudbir, instead of Khayr and Sharr, could have provided Nawā'ī's readers with a clearer reference to the sense and the outcome of their journeys. Muqbil is not only an example of good (*khayr*), but also an embodiment of the Sufi traveller engaged on the mystical path.[118]

Thanks to his awareness of *adab* and *tawāḍuʿ*, Muqbil had reached his goal (*maqṣūd*), and had found quietude (*ārām*) in the king's flower-garden (*shāh gulshani*), writes Nawā'ī at the end of the apologue.[119] This represents another way of saying that the practice of *tawāḍuʿ* leads the Sufi traveller to the right path. Nawā'ī took up Niẓāmī's literary framework and reframed the allegory so that it fits his Sufi-oriented purpose. It is nothing but knowledge and awareness (*āgāhlïq*) that allow the traveller to control his ego (*nafs*) and perform *tawāḍuʿ*, the key value to the practice of a real Sufi *adab*.

116 Nawā'ī, *Sabʿa-yi sayyār*, 622.

117 Nawā'ī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 83.

118 This is all the more plausible that the Arabic word *muqbil* means "going toward, coming", whereas *mudbir* signifies "going away, fleeing". In a religious perspective, *muqbil* can denote the behaviour of the man who is going towards God. Such meaning is present in Tustarī's *Tafsīr*, 186: "It was related of Uways al-Qaranī and Haram b. Ḥayyān that they met one day and Haram said to Uways, 'Make a supplication to God [for me]'". So he prayed, "May He make your intention (*niyya*) and your heart (*qalb*) sound, for there is nothing more seriously in need of curing than these two. For while your heart [seems to be] going towards [God] (*muqbil*), it may [in fact] be going away [from Him] (*mudbir*), and while your heart [seems to be] going away, [it may, in fact] be going towards [Him]".

119 Nawā'ī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 83. See again Aḥmedī's verse quoted above: *ʿaḳldur kim sini iltür gülshene* ('The intellect takes you to the rose garden').

3.2 *Anūshīrvān's* ḥayā'*: A Prophetic Embodiment?*

As pointed out above, the poet illustrates the discourse (*maqālat*) about *adab* in *Ḥayrat al-abrār* by telling a story about the pre-Islamic king Anūshīrvān, in which the latter shows his *ḥayā'*. In his rewriting of Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār*, Nawā'ī could have chosen to stage a Turkic monarch rather than a Persian sovereign in order to illustrate the way a king could perform *adab*. After all, the Chagatai-Timurid poet had illustrated the discourse about sultans (third *maqālat*) by using the figure of Ḥusayn Bayqara, the sultan of his own time.[120] Likewise, Amir Temür (Tamerlane) is present in the apologue illustrating the eighth *maqālat*, and the sultan of Khwarezm is depicted having a conversation with Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 605/1209), the famous theologian, in the eleventh *ḥikāyat*.[121] As for the sovereigns who are not Turkic in origin, the body of Alexander the Great (*Iskandar*) appears in his coffin in the fourteenth *ḥikāyat*, while the Sasanid king Bahrām Gūr faces the consequences of his love for wine in the nineteenth *ḥikāyat*. Rather Nawā'ī decided to illustrate the discourse devoted to *adab* with the famous Persian king Anūshīrvān, proverbial for his sense of justice. In Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma* (The Book of kings), a work that Nawā'ī probably knew well due to its popularity in Timurid courts, the Sasanid king is known to be surrounded by men of talent and knowledge and to hold discussion with them. That which most contributed to the glory of his reign is the reputation of his vizier Bozorgmehr, who is a model of wisdom as Anūshīrvān is of justice. They have been credited each with a number of stories illustrating the qualities for which they were renowned.[122] For instance, here is how Firdawsī portrays the royal court:

120 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-*abrār, 41–42.

121 Nawā'ī speaks of Sulṭān Muḥammad Khārazmshāh (*Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 69). There are two sultans who bear the name Muḥammad in the dynasty. Muḥammad I ruled between 490/1097 and 520/1127. Muḥammad II ruled between 596/1200 and 616/1220. For Muḥammad I died before Farkh al-Dīn Rāzī was born, we may think Nawā'ī talks about Muḥammad II, assuming that the poet was aware of these chronological data. The Khwarezmian dynasty was a Persianate Sunni Muslim dynasty of Turkic mamluk origin. On this subject, see Bimiyatov, *A History of the Khorezmian State*, 188.

122 Mohl, *An Introduction to the Shah-Nameh*, 108.

dil-i shāh kisrā pur az dād būd	King Kesrā[124]'s heart was filled with justice
ba dānish dil-u maghzash ābād būd	His heart and mind were ennobled with knowledge
ba dargāh bar mūbadān dāshtī	At his court he kept mages
zi har dānishī bikhradān dāshtī	And sages versed in all branches of knowledge
hamīsha sukhangū'ī haftād mard	There were always seventy men of eloquent speech
ba dargāh būdī ba khūb-u ba khard	At his court they slept and ate
har āngah ki pardakhta gashtī zi kār	Whenever he rested from his occupations
zi dād-u dihish az may-u az shikār	Of dispensing justice, giving largesse, wine-drinking or hunting
zi har mūbadī naw sukhan khāstī	He demanded new discourse from each mage
dilash rā ba dānish bīārāstī[123]	He adorned his heart with knowledge

Then, in a series of seven festive sessions held at weekly intervals, Bozorgmehr propounds his views on religion and his political philosophy in didactic form.[125] Many words of wisdom about different matters are thus exchanged. Much of Firdawsī's account of Anūshīrvān's reign consist of Bozorgmehr's advice on how to rule. This advice, combined with the king's own naturally just and careful character, ensured Persian prosperity during his reign.

Although a Zoroastrian, the Sasanid king had long been associated with justice in the mind of Perso-Muslim thinkers. The contents of Ibn Sīnā's *Ẓafarnāma* seem to be based on the advice and sayings offered by Bozorgmehr in response to Anūshīrvān's questions. Another body of advice ascribed to Anūshīrvān is found in the eighth chapter of the *Qābūsnāma*. This section comprises fifty-eight recommendations, each epitomising a moral principle, which according to Kaykāwūs were inscribed on the wall of Anūshīrvān's tomb.[126] In the poetry of ʿAṭṭār, on which Nawā'ī modelled part of his work, when the Persian poet evokes the figure of the Sasanid monarch, it is mostly

123 Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, VII: 176.
124 Another name of the king in classical sources.
125 See also how the author of the *Shāhnāma* described the king's wise attitude (VII: 107 *et passim*).
126 Shaked and Safa, "Andarz".

for his great sense of justice. In the *Ilāhī-nāma*, an apologue is titled "Story of Nushirwan *the Just* and the aged cultivator",[127] and another simply "Story of Nushirwan the Just".[128] In Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār*, the model of Nawā'ī's *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, there is precisely a *ḥikāyat* about Anushirvan and his vizier. The anecdote illustrates the second discourse, which deals with the necessity for a king to maintain justice. Niẓāmī depicts the reaction of the king who had suddenly realised that he had to protect and enforce justice in his kingdom. The reader learns that Anūshīrvān then spent his life spreading justice throughout the country and destroying tyranny until his last breath.[129] In Dihlawī and Jāmī's rewritings of Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār* one *ḥikāyat* about Anūshīrvān is absent. However, the Sasanid monarch is the hero of a *ḥikāyat* from Jāmī's *Subḥat al-abrār* (The Rosary of the Pious, ca. 886/1482–887/1483) designed to illustrate the justice of sultans (Jāmī speaks of *'adl-i Nūshīrwān*).[130] Similarly, in his *Bahāristān* (written around 892/1487), the great Persian poet and Naqshbandi thinker states in the "third garden" that: "Although Nushirwan was a stranger to religion (*az dīn bīgāna būd*) he was unique in his justice and uprightness, so that the prince of created beings (i.e. the Prophet Muḥammad), upon whom be the most excellent benedictions, has said, boasting: I was born in the time of the king Nushirwan".[131]

For Nawā'ī, however, Anūshīrvān's behaviour is first and foremost a model of *ḥayā'*. Although I have not found many examples in Persian classical literature that link the Sasanid king with such a virtue, there is an interesting passage in Kāshifī's *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī* that drew my attention. In this treaty composed nearly a decade after *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, one can read that:

> A sense of *adab* is another part of this feeling (*ḥayā'*); as where, although an action is such; that according to law and reason, the performance of it is not forbidden; a sense of *adab* prevents the man from doing it.

And Kāshifī precisely chose the figure of the Persian king to illustrate this statement:

> Thus Nushirwan would never converse with his wives and slaves in a house where there were any Narcissus-flowers; and used to say that the

127 'Aṭṭār, *The* Ilāhī-nāma, 53.
128 'Aṭṭār, *The* Ilāhī-nāma, 280. See also in this work, 193 and 232.
129 Niẓāmī, *Makhzan al-asrār*, 40.
130 Jāmī, *Subḥat al-abrār*, 557.
131 Jāmī, *Bahāristān*, 52. My emphasis.

> eye of the Narcissus resembled eyes which have sight. But in truth this behaviour, as coming from Nushirwan, is not a sense of *adab*; for that is a sense of *adab* which grows out of the Faith; and he was a fire-worshipper: indeed, it was nothing but a form of *adab* which he used to observe; but when princes of the true Faith observe such forms it is a sense of *adab*.[132]

Kāshifī insists on the fact that Anūshīrvān was not a Muslim, and as such was only able to display a 'form of *adab*' but not the 'sense of *adab*' that is only accessible through the [Islamic] Faith. We do not find this kind of distinction in Nawā'ī's arguments. Whereas Jāmī and Kāshifī emphasise the fact that the Sasanid monarch *was a stranger to religion* (to use Jāmī's words), the Chagatai-Timurid poet seems to be less concerned by this issue. At the end of the apologue, Nawā'ī returns to the king's proverbial sense of justice. But here again, the poet links this disposition with *ḥayā'*:

> *nargisini tolduruban yashdïn*
> *qoptï daghï kechti ol ish bashïdïn*
> *tā anï ākhir bu arīgh niyati*
> *bilä ḥayā' shīwasi khāṣiyati*
> *jumla-yi ʿālam ara shah äylädi*
> *ʿadilini ʿālamgha panāh äylädi*[133]
>
> Filling his narcissus [i.e. his eyes] with tears
> He stood up and renounced doing this thing
> Till at the end with this pure intention
> This shyness that was so particular to him
> Made him king for the entire world
> And his justice a refuge for the world

Even though Nawā'ī returns to the idea of justice at the end of the apologue, what comes first is the king's *ḥayā'*. His justice (*ʿadl*) is nothing but a consequence of his shyness (*ḥayā'*). For *ḥayā'* is a key feature of *adab*, and therefore of Islamic behaviour. Thus it is as if Anūshīrvān had acted as a true Muslim before becoming king. And according to our poet that is the reason he became a great king.

Anūshīrvān's reaction in this short apologue did not only recall how a true Muslim should react, but also how the first of them was actually said to have

132 Kāshifī, *Akhlāḳ-i Muḥsinī*, 23.
133 Nawā'ī, *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, 52.

reacted. In hadith literature, it is narrated that the Prophet forbade the seclusion together of individual men and women who are not married to each other. Muslims were instructed to behave with *adab* in public by following the example of the Prophet, who is described in the Sunna as being "shyer than a veiled virgin girl".[134] Obviously, Anūshīrvān also reacted in this apologue as if he were *shyer than a veiled virgin*. At the time in which Nawā'ī was writing we know that there was "a tendency, in the Naqshbandiyya in particular, towards a special, closer relationship with the Prophet and his experience".[135] It appears that Naqshbandis were looking for an "embodiment, rather than simple imitation, of the Prophetic ideal".[136] Moreover, like other Sufis, Naqshbandis derived their rules of discipline from the Hadith and professed their allegiance to the ideal model of the Prophet as "the epitome of the ways of behaviour (*majmaʿ al-ādāb*)".[137] Nawā'ī could thus have been among these Naqshbandi Sufi thinkers who worked to restore the Muhammadian model. If "the Prophetic paradigm remained the central concern of the Naqshbandiyya" during the ninth/fifteenth century,[138] it may not be irrelevant to suggest that Nawā'ī made Anūshīrvān a kind of Prophetic model, the Prophet being "the supreme type of *adīb*". In constrast to Jāmī and Kāshifī, who were both his *protégés* and his fellow-Naqshbandi thinkers, the Chagatai-Timurid poet did not refrain from making the great Sasanid monarch a paragon of pure Islamic *adab*, close to the example of the Prophet himself, ahead of the actual date of Muḥammad's preaching. Regardless of the value of this assumption, the way Nawā'ī made use of the figure of Anūshīrvān reveals at least that he was not afraid to reframe the Persian literary tradition when he intended to show his Turkish-speaking courtly audience the outcomes of a truly performed *adab*.

4 Conclusions

Nawā'ī wrote his works during the heyday of the Naqshbandi Sufi order, which had come to dominate the socio-religious and the political life of Timurid Khorasan. In such context what Arley Loewen said about Ḥusayn Wāʿiz Kāshifī also applies to him: "his stress on outward sobriety and inner spirituality gave

134 Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 8:89.

135 Papas, "Shaykh Succession in the Classical Naqshbandiyya", 37. Throughout its pre-modern history, the Naqshbandi order tried to maintain a rigorous continuity, in practice and in doctrine as well, oriented toward the Sunna and the Prophetic model.

136 Papas, "Shaykh Succession", 36.

137 Bowering, "The *Adab* Literature of Classical Sufism", 67.

138 Papas, "Shaykh Succession", 38.

further weight to the principle of *khalwat dar anjuman* (solitude in society), which came to be one of the most distinctive slogans of the Naqshbandis".[139] Unquestionably, illustrating the concept of *adab*, and more precisely the notion of *ḥayā'*, as Nawā'ī does in *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, by using the character of one of the most famous Iranian kings, Chosroes Anūshīrvān, situates straightaway the discussion in a political perspective. This political tone is all the more obvious as the whole *mathnawī* was dedicated to another young prince (*mīrzā*), one of Ḥusayn Bayqara's sons: Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā (d. 919/1514).[140] Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā was the sultan's eldest son. He soon became an ardent political rival of his father and eventually succeeded him for a very short period.[141] We know that as a result of his unique position at Timurid court, Nawā'ī was entrusted by Sulṭān Ḥusayn with matters such as acting as intermediary in the frequent conflicts between the sultan and his sons.[142] It is therefore possible to imagine that Nawā'ī crafted his *ḥikāyat* in order to urge the young hot-headed heir to exhibit proper behaviour, and more generally, to control his *nafs*. Besides, the exhortation of exhibiting "an outward sobriety" by following the precepts of *adab* is consistent with the advice that Nawā'ī delivers to Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā in the last discourse of *Ḥayrat al-abrār*, which closes this Naqshbandi Mirror for Princes.[143]

Like Chosroes Anūshīrvān, Alexander the Great embodies the figure of perfect sovereignty and ideal royal behaviour. Featuring both sovereigns in Turkic works, such as Aḥmedī and Nawā'ī's rewritings, remind Ottoman and Timurid princes, to whom these works were dedicated, to model their attitudes on their example, and eventually to conform their behaviour to a correctly understood *adab*.[144] Aḥmedī and Nawā'ī acted as "practitioners" of *adab*.[145] They crafted texts that were meant to be a part of a high intellectual corpus for a court-centred elite. Being both deeply influenced by Sufism, their works merged a mystical ethos with a courtly *adab*. Like the *udabā'* who "see themselves as architects of [new] civilization and guarantors of its survival in the teeth of political upheavals",[146] Aḥmedī and Nawā'ī used the process of literary

139 Loewen, "Proper Conduct (*Adab*) is Everything", 547.
140 See Qayumov, *"Hayratul-abror" talqini*, 90.
141 Subtelny, *Timurids in transition*, 53.
142 Subtelny, "Mīr 'Alī Shīr Nawā'ī", 90.
143 See the twentieth and last *maqālat* of *Ḥayrat al-abrār* and my interpretation in Toutant, *Un empire de mots*, 518, 525, 527.
144 On this matter see Abbès, *Islam et politique à l'âge classique*, 79.
145 The expression "practitioners of *adab*" is taken from Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, 39.
146 Bray, "Adab", 13.

imitation as a way to build a vernacular *adab*, fully Islamic as to the substance, Persian as to the framework, but firmly Turkic as regards the language. At a time when Ottoman and Timurid aulic cultures were rising, the Ottoman and the Chagatai poets strove to turn respectively the *homo ottomanicus* and the *homo timuridus* into a real *homo islamicus*, according to what a certain conception of Sufi *adab* meant to them.

One of the usual goals of *adab* is to educate and to delight. With emphasis on edification through entertainment, it was designed largely for the political elite. "*Adab* literature thus facilitated the creation of a political culture which bound elites and common subjects to a ruler based on notions of equity and divine sanction of rule", write Peacock and Yıldız.[147] We may add that such a literature with its ethic-didactic meaning "could also work imaginatively with the more refined reader to enact moral transformation".[148] This moral transformation, which a certain conception of *adab* encourages and that these Turkic literati sought to promote within their royal court environments, could not go without a mastery of aesthetics. Aḥmedī and Nawā'ī, like other pre-modern Turkish-speaking authors, acquired this mastery through the imitation of Persian masterpieces of literary *adab*. In their opinion, it was only through this aesthetics process that ethics could have a chance to be realised in its fullest sense.

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