



SUMMER SCHOOL

STUDIES IN SUFISM

2ND EDITION

**THE LIGHT OF THE PROPHET
IN THE ISLAMIC TRADITION
TEXTS AND COMMENTARIES**

**23 AUGUST- 2 SEPTEMBER 2018
PALERMO (ITALY)**

Introduction

We are pleased to announce the second edition of the Summer School “Studies in Sufism”, organized by the association Perennia Verba (Parma, IT) in collaboration with the University of Palermo (IT), Scuola di Lingua italiana per Stranieri (IT), the Officina di Studi Medievali (Palermo, IT), the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (IT), the Istituto per l’Oriente Carlo Alfonso Nallino (Rome, IT), and the Istituto di Scienze dell’Uomo (Rimini, IT), that this year will take place in Palermo on the Italian island of Sicily.



The aim of this second edition of the Summer School “Studies in Sufism” is to bring together a group of senior scholars, emerging researchers and postgraduate students working on Islamic thought, for a set of lectures, conversations and reading sessions on the theme of the Muhammadan Light (*al-Nūr al-Muḥammadī*) and the Muhammadan Reality (*al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*) in the history of Sufi thought and practices. Lessons will be in English, but as some of the sessions will consist in analyses of original texts, the ability to read classical Arabic is also desirable (it is not a prerequisite for admission to the Summer School though).

Nūr Muḥammadī

The main topic of this year edition will be the study of the position and relevance of the concept of *Nūr Muḥammadī* within Islamic spirituality and literature. The school program will be organized around two main activities: one morning study session (approximately 2 hrs. plus 1 hr. discussion) and one afternoon lab dedicated to texts analysis. Each morning lesson will provide the students with the theoretical (historical and doctrinal) background they need to explore and discuss a specific aspect of the concept of *Nūr Muḥammadī*. In the afternoon students will work in groups and will have the opportunity to directly confront themselves with the primary Arabic sources that were at the core of each morning session. This will allow for an in-deep study of the various topics and for a more profound understanding of the textual and intellectual traditions that stemmed out from the notion of *Light of the Prophet Muhammad*.



The lessons will address earliest textual evidences of the concept of *Nūr Muḥammadī*, from the so-called "*ḥadīṭ Ḡābir*" to the Sufi commentaries that used this prophetic tradition as a basis for the development of a complex metaphysical doctrine and a large corpus of devotional texts and practices. The sources analysis will start with the *Muṣannaḥ* of 'Abd al-Razzāq, and then move to the development of these traditions in *dalā'il* and *ḥaṣā'is al-nubuwwa* (Ibn Diḥya, 'Izz al-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Salām, al-Suyūṭī, al-Qaṣṭallanī). Metaphysical aspects of the *Nūr Muḥammadī* will be discussed on the basis of chapter 6 of Ibn 'Arabī's *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* and other texts from exponents of the akbarian school, like Farḡānī and al-Ġilī.

As metaphysical developments stemming out from the notion of Light of the Prophet were not confined to the esoteric domain, lessons will also deal with devotional poetry (like the *Burda* and the *Hamziyya* of al-Būṣīrī) and prayer on the Prophet (as in the *Dalā'il al-ḥayrāt* of al-Ġazūlī and in al-Nabahānī's *Afḍal ṣalawāt 'alā al-Nabī*) that helped popularizing the ideas rooted in *ḥadīṭ* traditions and in their Sufi elaborations. This will show how all these trends did not grow separated from each other, but represent a single thread that runs throughout Islamic history.

Program

Key lectures, by Paolo Urizzi (Perennia Verba), Demetrio Giordani (Università di Modena – Reggio Emilia), Ruggero Vimercati Sanseverino (University of Tübingen), Michele Petrone (University of Copenhagen), will be given in the morning. Lectures will address the key topics mentioned above from different academic and methodological perspectives (metaphysics, *ḥadīth*, devotional literature, spiritual practice).

During afternoon lab activities, coordinated and supervised by Andrea Brigaglia (Cape Town University, ZA), Michele Petrone (University of Copenhagen, DK), and Federico Salvaggio (University of Genoa, IT), texts, in the Arabic original and in English translation, will be analyzed from literary, historical and doctrinal points of view, and discussed against their social and theoretical context. Students' contribution to this part of the school will be essential as they will be guided by school collaborators to develop and express their personal understanding of the proposed passages and materials.

The working language of the Summer School will be English.



This year Summer School will take place, from the 23rd of August to the 2nd of September, in Palermo, in the Italian region of Sicily. Located in the heart of the Mediterranean, the city has always been a crossroads of peoples, cultures, languages, and religions. Capital of the Emirate of Sicily (9th-11th centuries) and simply called *al-madīna* by its inhabitants, it counted over 300 mosques and numerous Sufi *ribats*. It was the home of a vibrant Islamic civilization whose influence can be still observed today in its architecture, urban design, agricultural and irrigation system, as well as in the local cuisine and language, and even in some of the cultural habits of its contemporary dwellers. UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2016, Palermo has been awarded with the title of Italian Capital of Culture of the year 2018 and this summer is getting ready for an exciting series of cultural activities and events taking place, day and night, in and around its palaces, museums, galleries, streets, and open-air markets.



Summer School Venue and Accommodation

All lectures and workshops will take place within the premises of the Scuola di Lingua Italiana per Stranieri, Piazza Sant'Antonino 1, 90134 Palermo. Set in the historic city centre, it will be the ideal starting point for after-school walking distance visits to most important Arab-Norman sites and many other tourist attractions. This year Palermo, as the Italian Capital of Culture, will host a series of conferences, happenings and artists from all over the world. Being close to the main train, bus, and underground stations (just 2 min. walking distance), from the school you will be able to easily reach any part of the city and you won't miss any of the amazing events taking place. From there, in 15 minutes, you will even be able to walk to the beautiful Foro Italico gardens for a relaxing lunch break on the seafront!

The course fee is of 350 euro and does NOT include travel and accommodation costs. The course fee is NON-REFUNDABLE, with the exception of specifically documented cases. The organization will provide information about partner hotels to the admitted students. There is also the possibility of an accommodation in a hosting structure of the University of Palermo. Prices and availability of places will be communicated to the admitted students. Those coming from U.S. or from African/Asian countries are asked to proceed to the visa request as soon as their admission to the school is confirmed. The organization is not responsible in any way for the administrative procedures regarding visas, but we will provide all possible help and information.



Application

The application should be sent in pdf form to summerschoolpalermo2018@gmail.com . It must include:

1. A cover letter introducing the applicant's profile.
2. A CV, with level of knowledge of Classical Arabic and English. It may also include a list of selected publications (MA/PhD thesis, articles, books).

The deadline for the submission of the application is the 30th of June 2018. Applications will be processed as they are received up to the fulfillment of the available posts.

Organizing Committee:

Paolo Urizzi (Association Perennia Verba, IT)

Demetrio Giordani (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, IT)

Michele Petrone (University of Copenhagen, DK)

Federico Salvaggio (University of Genoa, IT)

Andrea Brigaglia (Cape Town University, ZA)

For any information please contact summerschoolpalermo2018@gmail.com.

Application form for the Summer School “Studies In Sufism”

2nd Edition – THE LIGHT OF THE PROPHET
IN THE ISLAMIC TRADITION - TEXTS AND COMMENTARIES

26 August – 2 September 2018, Palermo (Italy)

Personal information

First Name	
Surname	
Nationality	
Date of Birth	
Place of birth	
Current Address	
Phone	
Email	

Document

Type	
Nation	
Number	

Languages

	Level
English	
French	
Arabic	
Other languages	

Levels are: Native speaker, Excellent, Good, Basic, None. You can refer to overall proficiency for your English level and only to perceptive skills for your proficiency level in other languages.

Education

Please indicate the highest academic or school degrees acquired.

Institution	
Country	
Kind of title	
Year	
Other useful information	

Institution	
Country	
Kind of title	
Year	
Other useful information	

Institution	
Country	
Kind of title	
Year	
Other useful information	

Other experiences related to the topic of the School

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Please attach to the present document a motivation letter in which you illustrate why you are interested in attending the Summer School, how you think you can contribute to it (based on previous academic and non-academic experiences) and your expectations about it.

Please also attach a list of relevant publications (if any, max. 10 titles).

If your application is successful, you will be contacted by the organizers to confirm your attendance and to prepare the necessary documentation for visa.

I consent that the Associazione Perennia Verba will use my personal data for the sole purpose of the organization of the Summer School “Studies in Sufism”.

Date

Signature